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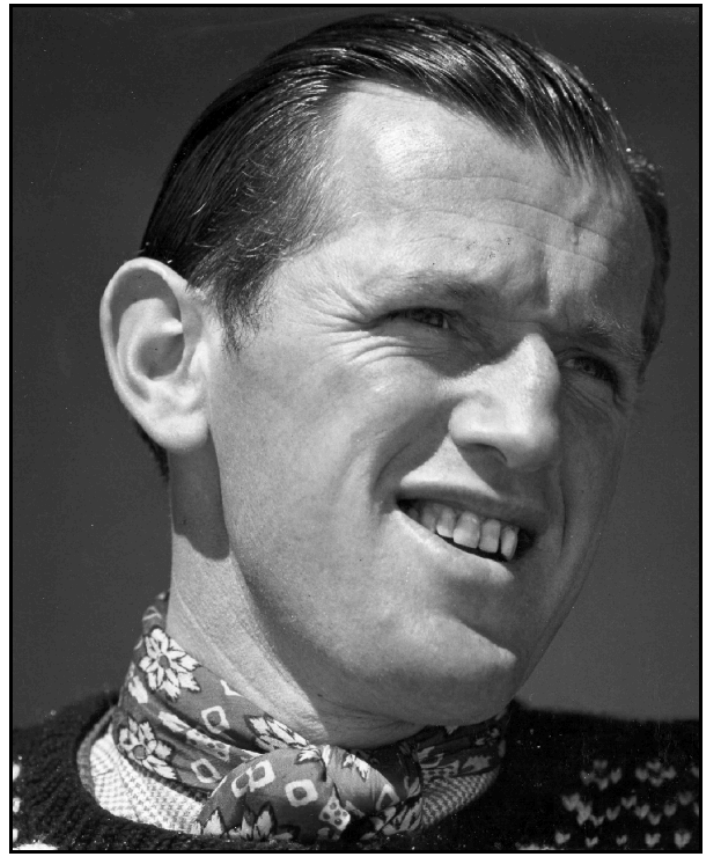
Hannes Schroll

Born: 1909 Died: 1985

A native of the Austrian Alpine region, Hannes Schroll was virtually born with a love of skiing. An excellent competitive skier, he later became an inspired skiing instructor.

Hannes Schroll was born in the Austrian Alps and skied almost from the time he could walk. After competing in his native country, he immigrated to the United States in 1935 in order to race. As a representative of the Austrian Ski Federation in the National Ski Association's First National Alpine Championships in 1935 near Seattle, Washington, he swept the entire slate of events – slalom, downhill, and slalom-downhill combined – to win the NSA championship.

Hannes remained in the U.S., where he was a fierce competitor and a respected member of the international ski scene. In 1935, he became director of the Yosemite Ski School at Badger Pass, California – one of the foremost ski areas in the country at that time. While there, two fellow Austrians – brothers Bill and Fred Klein – invited him to join them at a site near Donner Summit. Schroll declined at first, but after a falling out with Mary and Don Tresidder, the gurus of Yosemite, he took up the Klein's offer. He fell in love at first sight with Sugar Bowl (so named in 1919-20). In search of funds to bankroll the envisioned ski area, super-salesman Schroll convinced film maker Walt Disney to invest \$2,500 – the equivalent of a million dollars today. The Sugar Bowl Corporation was formed in 1938, and the area opened in December 1939 with the first chairlift in California.



Sugar Bowl became a mecca for Bay Area society. Movie stars Errol Flynn and Norma Shearer arrived, together with moguls, socialites, and captains of industry. A showman and party animal, Schroll often entertained guests with tall tales and unrivaled yodeling. After Charlie Chaplin filmed *The Gold Rush* at Snow Bowl, Hannes would parody *The Little Tramp*.

Still an inveterate racer, Schroll inaugurated and foreran the Silver Belt race – a giant slalom down the steep face of Mt. Lincoln – in the spring of 1940. Over the years, the Silver Belt lured such prestigious skiers as Gretchen Fraser, Friedl Pfeifer, Alf Engen, and six-year-old Jimmy Huega.

Schroll remained head of Sugar Bowl until 1945, when he stepped down. An inspired ski instructor, he had the capacity to convey his own enthusiasm to everyone he taught. It was a rare student who did not become a good technical skier after a season of Schroll's instruction.

To honor his competitive accomplishments and his service to skiing, Hannes Schroll was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1966.