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## Toni Matt

Born: 1919 Died: 1989

*Toni Matt became a favorite ski student of Hannes Schneider and followed him to the United States in 1938 to teach at Schneider's school. He became known as the "Babe Ruth of American Ski Racing."*

Born in St. Anton in Arlberg, Austria, Toni Matt eventually settled in Quaker Hill, Pawling, New York. There are valid reasons Toni is known as the "Babe Ruth of American Ski Racing." Matt was a favorite instructor of the late Hannes Schneider (Hall of Fame Honored Member), and came to the United States in 1938, with the skimeister's blessing, to join Benno Rybizka's (also an Honored Member) Arlberg ski school in Jackson, New Hampshire. In 1939, Toni became National Downhill Champion followed, in 1941 by the National Downhill and Combined Championships.

A highlight of Toni's fourteen-year ski racing in the U.S. was his winning, in 1939, the renowned Inferno on Mt. Washington's headwall by running it straight, a first, after misjudging a control flag.

Toni Matt served the United States in the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Infantry Division during World War II, entering the ski troops as an enlisted man and emerging a second lieutenant.

Toni's zeal for ski racing carried onto slopes all over North America, captaincy of the United States Ski Team during the 1950 F.I.S. World Championships at Aspen, Colorado, and, in 1953, Toni had entered the Harriman Cup Competition in Sun Valley in hopes of winding up his competitive career by winning the event for the third time and thus retaining the trophy. However, a broken leg took him out of the race, and he almost became a cripple for life. Then, from 1954 to 1956, Toni served as president of the Northern Rocky Mountain Ski Association.

Toni Matt had a brilliant alpine career winning nearly every major alpine event in which he participated and served organized skiing in many capacities as an executive on the division level. Toni was as technically perfect a skier ever to set foot on a slope, and although Tuckerman Ravine will always be synonymous with the name of Toni Matt, this one event was merely one of a string of accomplishments in his career. For the Eastern Slope Ski Club of North Conway he was an outstanding competitor, for the National

Ski Association he raced in world championship events, and for the Northern Rocky Mountain Ski Association he served in an executive capacity. Truly, Toni Matt's career is synonymous with all that the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame stands for.

Toni Matt was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1967.

