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Selden Hannah

Born: 1913 Died: 1991

Selden J. Hannah was a North American ski great with championships won in nordic and alpine competitions of the NSA, Canadian Amateur Ski Association, Intercollegiate Ski Union and USSA during a continuing 50-year ski career.

Selden Hannah was born on November 9, 1913, in Berlin, New Hampshire. Sel, as he was better known, started to ski when he was four years old. He entered his first competition in 1926, a ski jumping tournament, and won first place in Class "C."

Hannah was a true four-event skier. He raced in the first National Downhill at Mooselauke in 1933, finishing 5th, before going on to college. Sel attended Dartmouth College where he ran four-events for 4 varsity years. He was captain of the Dartmouth Team in 1935, the year he graduated. Sel went on to attend McGill University in Montreal, Canada, in 1936, where he skied on

the McGill University Varsity Team in four-events. He was the Intercollegiate Cross-country Champion in 1936 and Nordic Combined Champion of the Province of Quebec the same year.

A member of the United States Nordic Combined Team, Sel represented the United States on the F.I.S. in 1940. He was the Eastern Downhill Champion in 1941 and 2nd in the combined that year. In 1942, he joined the army where he instructed paratroops in Alta, Utah.

After the war, Sel returned to Franconia where he coached at Dartmouth College.

Sel Hannah was a "skier's skier," having represented college teams, ski clubs in the National Ski Association, the Canadian Amateur Ski Association, and the Intercollegiate Ski Union. He skied more than 250 mountains throughout North America. Hannah was a four-way competitor and won championships in all phases competition. He began designing and building ski areas in 1934. Sel and his family ran the Ski Hearth ski lodge in Franconia. Sel was founder of Sno-Engineering, formed in 1958. Hannah was the president of the Franconia Ski Club for several years, always taking an active part in putting on races. At the National Ski Association Nationals in 1946 and the Junior Nationals in 1956, Sel set courses for both nordic and alpine events and officiated at the meets. Sel also helped every year at the Dartmouth Winter Carnival.

Sel and his wife Paulie had four children, two daughters and two sons. Perhaps Joan Hannah, a member of the United States Ski Team and an Honored Member of the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame is best known, but the whole family were excellent skiers. Sel's wife was not a competitor before she was married, but she began to compete after the birth of their youngest son. Paulie made remarkable progress, and was the Eastern Giant Slalom champion in 1949, and was rated as a real "comer," when she was stricken with polio. This setback removed her from the slopes and placed her in a wheelchair, but it failed to dampen her enthusiasm. She remained an active partner running the family farm in Franconia and raising money for the USSA from her office.

Sel Hannah was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1968.

