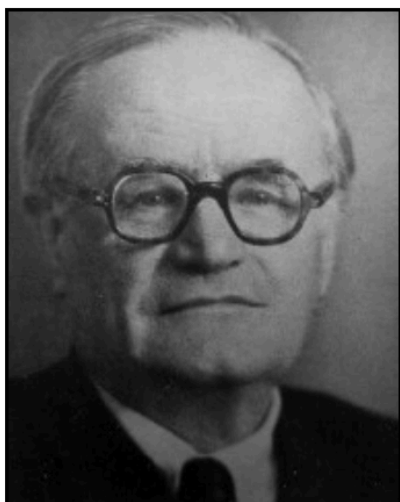


#65

Sir Arnold Lunn

Born: 1888 Died: 1974



Arnold Lunn was introduced to skiing when he attended a conference in the Alps with his parents. Sir Arnold Lunn fell in love with the mountains and helped found one of the earliest ski races, the ROBERTS OF KANDAHAR CHALLENGE CUP, first run in 1911.

Arnold Lunn was born on April 18, 1888, in Madras, India, the son of an English medical missionary. He visited the Alps in 1892 during a religious conference and from that day forward, his love of the mountains did not diminish, particularly the Bernese Oberland. He climbed the Lauberhorn with his nurse at age six, and he first skied at Chamonix, France, in 1898, at age ten.

In 1908, Lunn founded the Alpine Ski Club. He was continually searching for some suitable test of alpine skiing ability. When climbing in Wales in 1909, he was nearly killed in a fall. The accident severely injured his right leg. The wound remained open for many years, and his right leg became shorter than his left. In 1910, Lunn was the prime organizer of a race that was destined to become the premier of all downhill ski races. January 7, 1911, marked the first running of the Roberts of Kandahar Challenge Cup, a race that continues annually to this day.

After World War I and the attendant hiatus in international skiing, Lunn wintered again in the Bernese Oberland. In January 1922, on the grounds of the Palace Hotel in Mürren, he set the first modern slalom course when he persuaded some friends to race against the clock (and without regard to form) through a series of short paired poles stuck in the snow. In 1924, Lunn founded the Kandahar Ski Club in Müren, Switzerland, to promote alpine-combined racing. At the invitation of Walter Bernays, he visited St. Anton in 1927, and set up, for a school race, the first slalom course ever seen in Austria. This event stirred up so much interest that it was decided the Arlberg and Kandahar Clubs would meet the following year. In 1928, Sir Arnold and Hannes Schneider organized the first open international alpine combined – the Arlberg-Kandahar, run on March 31 and April 1. Winners were decided on the combined results of downhill and slalom. The “AK” attracted the largest number of competitors in Europe and outshone the St. Moritz Olympics of the same year. It soon spawned a host of imitators, such as the Hahnenkamm-combined in Kitzbühel and the Lauberhorn at Wengen, Switzerland.

Realizing that all competitions must operate within a regulatory framework, Lunn drafted the first downhill/slalom racing rules and saw them passed over the open doubts of the skeptics at the F.I.S. Congress in Oslo in 1930. With the F.I.S. stamp, Lunn immediately began to organize the first Alpine World Championships, which were held at Mürren in 1931.

In 1934, Lunn was instrumental in having the first U.S. women’s ski team established in European international competition. The American women’s keen interest and their surprising success made their team one of his favorites. Along with Roland Palmedo and Alice D. Kiaer, Lunn helped the American women become firmly entrenched competitors.

At the Winter Olympics of 1936 at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, Arnold Lunn had the pleasure of introducing slalom and downhill as an Olympic sport. He also acted as a referee in the men’s slalom. Lunn’s sport had finally arrived!

Sir Arnold Lunn wrote over 80 books on various subjects. Two books, *The History of Skiing* (1927) and *The Story of Skiing*, in 1953 to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of the Ski Club of Great Britain, are important works that bridge the gap from the origins of skiing in Scandinavia to its subsequent world popularity. In 1920, Sir Arnold co-founded the influential *British Ski Yearbook* which he edited for 54 years.

A mountain climber of some distinction, Lunn climbed every peak within sight of Mürren, except for the Grosshorn. When he climbed his last mountain at the age of 68, he arranged to have predated letters sent to wife so that she would have no inkling of his escapade. He was 82 when he made his last ski run.

In 1952, Queen Elizabeth knighted Arnold Lunn for “services to British skiing and Anglo-Swiss relations,” and from that day forward he was Sir Arnold Lunn.

Sir Arnold Lunn was elected to the U.S. National Ski hall of Fame in 1968.



Arnold Lunn pictured with Andrea Mead Lawrence in