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## Alice Damrosch Wolfe Kiaer

Born: 1893 Died: 1967

*Mrs. Kiaer served the N.S.A. Women's Team in various capacities; on committees; as a chaperone; as a greeter welcoming foreign skiers to our shores, and in one case, with a friend, Mrs. Stanley Mortimer, wholly outfitted the women's team with funds from their own pockets. She was a true devotee to women's skiing for over thirty years.*

Alice Kiaer was born in New York in 1893. She was the daughter of Walter Damrosch, conductor of the renowned New York Philharmonic. Kiaer was married to Dudley Wolfe who, like Alice, was an experienced mountain climber who lost his life attempting to climb K2 in India, the world's second highest mountain. She later married Herman Kiaer, a Norwegian exporter and industrialist.

Kiaer was the initial promoter of international skiing competition for women of the United States. As a dedicated worker, she was responsible for assembling the first United States Women Ski Team, a group which competed in the F.I.S. Championships of 1935, and the U.S. Olympic Team of 1936. Her active interest in women's affairs of the National Ski Association of America spanned more than 30 years, including events in most of the European nations and many sections of North America.

In 1930, she visited Switzerland on a mountain climbing expedition. While there she learned to ski and won her first medal at the 1931 Parsenn Derby at Davos. Upon her return to the United States, and as a member of the Amateur Ski Club of New York, she worked with Roland Palmedo to organize the 1935 F.I.S. and the 1936 Olympic Team and become the manager of the women's team. As a colorful woman of ski sport she helped assemble great arrays of ski talent. This set a fine example and influenced many women ski competitors to follow her in promoting the sport and encouraging other women to compete. Anxious to safeguard the standard that had been established for women racers, she served as chairman of the N.S.A Women's Sub-Committee and was chairman of the 1952 Olympic Selection Committee for the women. She was the first American woman ever to represent the N.S.A. at F.I.S. Congresses – 1939, 1949, 1951, and 1953.

Mrs. Kiaer served as chaperone for the women's team during the Winter Olympics of 1948 in Norway. While a team training period was established, the budget was low and the ladies did not have a coach. Women were forced to ski with the men's team, which she felt was confusing. Kiaer became responsible for hiring Walter Haensli to coach and assist with preparations. It was her belief that the women should be coached in a manner responsive to their individual needs.

Alice Kiaer's work with the 1952 Olympic Ski Games Committee also was well known. She was a tower of strength during the games at Norefjeld, Norway. Records show that she and Mrs. Stanley Mortimer wholly outfitted the girls' team and she also helped with many routine problems connected with the men's team.

Mrs. Kiaer next had a close association with the 1954 World Games Committee and the 1956 Olympic Games Committee. She spent the winter of 1954 in Austria, Sweden, and Norway acting as chaperone, manager, and constant advisor.

Ahead of the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley, California, Mrs. Kiaer from 1956 onward established close relationship with the various reception committees. Because of her help it was possible for the New York welcome groups to receive all the teams and their officials in a manner that made them think of their own old world customs of warmth and hospitality and as a result they all left for California knowing that they were in a friendly land.

Mrs. Kiaer's ski sport efforts, for three decades, affected women's competition. She established her presence; it will not just fade away.

Alice Damrosch Wolfe Kiaer was elected in the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1969.

