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Siegfried Steinwall

Born: 1893 Died: ?

Sig Steinwall enjoyed a sixty year skiing career. He was first a successful amateur skier in Sweden, and then immigrated to the North America and resumed his ski career in the United States and Canada. He was a top United States amateur jumper in an era when ski jumping was ruled by professionals.

The lengthy ski career of Siegfried Steinwall involved honors won under two flags and on two continents. A founder and the first-honored lifetime member of the Swedish Ski Club of New York, Sig's career spanned 60 years. A successful amateur in Sweden, the United States, and Canada, he then organized clubs, tournaments, and numerous other activities connected with skisport.

Invited to Chicago by the Norge Ski Club in 1918, Sig was soon rated the nation's top amateur jumper during an era when so-called pros were capturing the Class "A" tourneys. In 1920, as a result of a recommendation of NSA Secretary Eugene Petersen, Steinwall as the top-rated amateur was invited to Revelstoke, B.C.,

Canada, which at the time had the world's largest jumping hill. Thereafter, he went to Banff and Calgary in Alberta, with the giant hills in Colorado to follow at Dillion and Steamboat Springs. Sig set a new amateur record at Dillion with less speed allowed the professionals.

He was a four-time Holmenkollen tourney veteran before reaching America, and then went back in 1931 as an American citizen to compete in the veterans' class for the United States Eastern Amateur Ski Association. His initial Holmenkollens while representing the Swedish Ski Association were Boys' Class in 1913, Class "B" in 1915 and Class "A" in 1917. In 1914, he was a member of the Swedish team which outscored Norway and Finland at Holmenkollen. For these ski feats, Steinwall was awarded the Fiskartorpspokalen Cup, greatest distinction for Swedish jumpers.

Steinwall served Darmouth College as ski sports director in 1927 and 1928, a period which saw several Big Green skiers make the 1928 Olympic team. For the 1932 Winter Games at Lake Placid, New York, Sig became associated as an attaché to the Swedish team, having become familiar with organizational aspects of American skiing while serving the USEASA as a delegate representing the New York Metropolitan Council. Previously he had assisted in building the first ski jump at Bear Mountain Interstate Park and had also become engaged in exhibition ski jumping involving a snowless steel tower and a landing area constructed of wood and canvas.

Sig's exhibitions spanned a 33-year period. His itinerary included the Century of Progress Fair at Chicago in 1934 and the New York World's Fair of 1939-40. During the latter exposition Sig made 1000 exhibition leaps and, along with 14 other American athletes of foreign birth, was honored on the Wall of Fame of Sports. This career climaxed November 23, 1968, when Sig was the USSA's official representative to the Swedish Ski Association's 60th anniversary celebration in Stockholm.

Former N.S.A. Secretary Petersen recalls that Steinwall was "... a stylish jumper with good distance and very steady; positively in the top bracket of ski jumpers in the United States and a great credit to the sport."

Sig also did much to promote organized skiing through the years. An expert gymnast, he always kept in top physical condition and only gave up jumping to a heel injury. However, Sig continued recreational skiing. He lived by a motto: "Skiing for Everybody"

Siegfried Steinwall was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1969.

