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## Ole Hegge

Born: 1899 Died: ?

*Ole Hegge was considered the “grand old man of skiing” in the early and mid-thirties. Hegge immigrated to the United States in 1929 with a brilliant record on ski jumps and cross-country trails across Europe, particularly in his home country of Norway, and neighboring Sweden and Finland.*

Ole Hegge was born in Bardu Troms, Norway, a town near the Arctic Circle, in 1899. He was the “grand old man” of nordic skiing in the early and mid-thirties. A transplanted Norwegian, he left his ski tracks on trails and jumps throughout his native and adopted lands – tracks that will long remain indelible.

Prior to coming to the United States in 1929, Ole, who had been skiing since he was six, captured five Norwegian national titles in cross-country and combined, three runner-up posts in the famous Holmenkollen, two King’s Cups from the late King Haakon VII for Norwegian supremacy in the combined, a gold cup from Sweden’s Crown Prince, and a first in the combined Nordiska Spelan, which to Sweden was comparable to the Olympics.

During the 1928 Winter Olympics at St. Moritz, Switzerland, Ole captured the silver medal in the 17-mile cross-country and placed fifth in the 50-kilometer race.

Even after many years had elapsed since he left Norway, Ole was remembered for his dominance of the sport in his native country. Small and compact, he practically grew up on skis, and at an early age began to win prominence.

Ole moved to the state of Washington in 1929 and won second in a jump there, and then went to Salisbury a year later and immediately helped establish it as an important ski center in the East. Working with others like the Satre brothers to build a jumping hill and cross-country trail, they were an interested group of enthusiasts who were the fore-runners of the Salisbury Winter Sports Association. The tale is told that one of the first jumps in Salisbury was off a barn roof. Later, Salisbury not only had an enlarged 60-meter hill but also two smaller hills for younger jumpers, an established cross-country trail, and a rope-tow hill for beginners.

The next fifteen years or so, Hegge competed not only in Salisbury but all over the world. Not yet a citizen, he competed as a member of the Norwegian Olympic Team in 1932 at Lake Placid, and placed fourth there in the 50-kilometer cross-country race.

During a national meet held in Salisbury, he was runner-up in the cross-country and the combined contests. Later he won two Eastern titles at Lake Placid, another held at the now defunct hill at Norfolk, and a fourth at Rumford, Maine. He won first places in the 50-km., 18-km., and combined at Lake Placid, Brattleboro, Bear Mountain, Berlin, New Hampshire, Laconia, New Hampshire, Salisbury Mills and Rosendale.

After an active career of 17 years, Ole retired in 1936 but remained active as an international judge. He also taught at Vassar College and the Millbrook School for Boys. In Salisbury, he was a director of the Salisbury Winter Sports Association, continued to act as an official at all jumping events, and worked with and inspired the younger generation of skiers in both jumping and cross-country, including his own grandchildren.

Ole Hegge, all told won over 50 tournaments in his career, and was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1970.



### One Good Turn Deserves Another

*John J. Clair, Jr., President of the New York State Winter Sports Council and former Olympic Ski Games Chairman, congratulates another member of the Ski Hall of Fame, Ole Hegge.*