

SNOW
EAST!

Karen Lorentz

Karen has been skiing since 1958 and covering the sport since 1979. She has produced over 3,000 articles and three ski books. In 2006 Karen was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award in Ski Journalism by The International Skiing History Association. She resides in Vermont with her husband John.

Stein Eriksen! His "locked leg" style has had many skiers attempting to "Ski like Stein" to this day



Stein Eriksen

The skiing "Icon" is honored at Sugarbush by the New England Ski Museum

As a ski instructor extraordinaire, Stein Eriksen helped propel the popularity of the sport with both his graceful style and his acrobatics. He was a natural athlete who wowed the world not only with his three World Championships and medals at the 1952 Olympics, but also with his movie star good looks, ski technique, and approach to directing ski schools.

In the United States, it was all about Stein's style. His counter-rotated shoulders with two legs held tightly together so they appeared to be working as one defined skiing elegance for more than a generation, starting in the 1950s and continuing through the 1960s and beyond. Some say even until today!

Many of these skiers were in attendance at the 30th annual meeting of the New England Ski Museum held at Sugarbush in November 2007. They enthusiastically recalled his ski school and his graceful flips during his days at the mountain in the 1960s.

After being presented with the Spirit of Skiing Award by the museum, Eriksen, now 80, regaled the audience with tales of his career.

It began in his youth when his parents manufactured and sold Eriksen skis in Norway. At that time a young German Nordic and Alpine skier lived in their home and worked with his father Marius as his coach. In turn, the athlete, a young Willy Bogner, who became a Nordic champion and famous for his clothing line, taught Stein to ski, contributing to his love of the sport and affinity for racing.

After coming to prominence in the 1952 Olympics with a gold medal run in giant slalom and a silver in slalom, Eriksen moved to the U.S. at the invitation of Boyne Mountain founder Everett Kircher.

"He offered me \$5,000 by telegram, and I told the coach [of the Norway National Team] that the time had come to make a living, and so I got his blessing to accept. I sent a return telegram saying, accepted if you double it. It was a hell of a deal," he quipped.

Stein went on to operate ski schools at Boyne Mountain, Heavenly Valley, Aspen Highlands, Sugarbush, Snowmass and Park City. He eventually settled in at Deer Valley, where he remains to this day as Director of Skiing.

He still skis and still exudes appreciation for "skiing as a way of life."

His legacy at Sugarbush is known as "Stein's Run."

"We were riding the gondola and I said it's a funny mountain," Stein said. Not realizing he was talking to Jack Murphy, the general manager who had laid out the early trails, Stein complained about the runs not being in the fall line.

Murphy told him, "You're such a smart guy, lay out a run yourself." And that's how the half-mile, black diamond trail, Stein's Run, came to be.

Aware that many had tried to emulate his graceful style, Stein quipped that he was glad that they couldn't quite duplicate it since this was what had propelled him to fame and fortune.

On a more serious note, he said, the key to the ski business is to "love what you are doing. . . . I've gotten so much from skiing and I have had a wonderful life," he added, as he thanked everyone

"for the wonderful compliments and honor" he had just received that evening.

Stein Eriksen really may be skiing's all time great! ❄️