



Hall of Fame

Leonard "Len" Soler

Inducted: November 6, 1992

Len Soler was born in St. Paul, but spent a large part of his youth in Switzerland. The family returned to St. Paul when Len was 10 years old.

Despite never competing as a junior skier, Soler compiled an impressive record as a ski jumper. In 1933, he began to compete in Class "B" competitions held at the Mounds Park Ski Slide in St. Paul.

Soler soon became a dominating jumper. He won the Class "B" championship at Mounds Park in 1936, 1937 and 1938.

In 1936, he placed fifth in the National Ski Tournament held at Red Wing, MN. In 1939, in the first tournament held at the newly constructed Battle Creek Ski Slide in St. Paul. After walking two miles to get to the tournament, and skiing on the hill for the first time the day of the tournament, Len won the Class "B" National Championship title.

His victory at Battle Creek elevated him into the elite Class "A". He finished third & fifth in competitions held at Battle Creek prior to his entering the army.

At age 32, Soler was drafted and went on to distinguish himself as a member of the famed 10th Mountain Division. During his tour of duty, Soler was awarded the Silver Star for bravery under fire.

Following the war, Soler continued his winning competitive ways. He was the best St. Paul ski jumper, in competitions held at Battle Creek, in four of the next six years.

When it was retired in 1947, Soler was awarded permanent possession of the Jens Larsen Memorial Trophy - symbolic of the best performance by a St. Paul skier in the annual tournament - as a result of his outstanding performances.

Soler narrowly missed a spot on the 1948 US Olympic Team, placing seventh in competition held at Snoqualmie, Washington.

Soler is a past member of the St. Paul Ski Club Board of Directors. He was the Hill Captain at Battle Creek for many of the competitions held during that era of the club's activities.

His long and outstanding career as a ski jumping competitor, as a coach for junior skiers, along with his continued enthusiasm for the sport of skiing, earned him the lasting respect and friendship of his peers.