



Photo by RALPH W. BROWN, HANOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

The 1935-36 Dartmouth Ski Team: Warren Chivers (1936 Olympics); Howard Porter Chivers; Jack R. Durrance; coach Walter Prager, one time Swiss all-around champion and twice international downhill champion; Richard Henry Durrance (1936 Olympics); Stephen Joseph Bradley; and David John Bradley.

Skiing

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My Dad recalled many times, "They adopted me as a kind of mascot – I was just 14, and they would invite me to ride in the back of their truck on their way to practice."

Think knickers, knee-high socks, laced ski boots – little more than hiking boots – leather-strap bindings and skis a foot taller than my 6'2" father. My grandfather was the superintendent of buildings and grounds at Dartmouth for 33 years. Consequently, my father and his three sisters grew up in Hanover, across the street from the Chivers family.

The story of American skiing has European roots going back to the 1840s in Berlin, New Hampshire. Scandinavian immigrants recruited to lay track for the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad from Portland to Montreal, eventually took up logging for the Winslow Co., setting in Norway Village on the outskirts of Berlin. The Norwegians brought their winter sports way of life with them, ski touring and leaping off home-made jumps on Sunday afternoons. In February 1872, they formed the first "skiklubben" in America, renamed the Nansen Ski Club in 1912 for the famous Norwegian explorer Fritjof Nansen, who skied across Greenland. Members paid "dues" by contributing to the community effort – building a hut, making or repairing ski poles or the year-round clearing of ski trails.

Two years before that, in 1910, Fred Harris, '11, founded the Dartmouth Outing Club which organized the first Winter Carnival and instigated pioneering efforts in skiing. On Jan. 31, 1912, Carl Shumway and G.S. Foster led the first ski exploration of Mount Moosilauke. On Feb. 4, 1914, Dartmouth physics professor Charles Proctor led a party of 12 students and faculty to Canada to challenge McGill skiers in the first collegiate ski race.

Skiing developed simultaneously in three directions in the mountains of New Hampshire – ski instruction, ski racing and ski trail design. When British tourists became intrigued by skiing and

began to take lessons, Germans and Austrians – used to skiing for practical reasons – realized there might be a livelihood in ski instruction. As early as 1922, Dartmouth began hiring European coaches – one early Dartmouth coach was Hungarian World War I Austrian ski trooper Col. Anton Diettrich.

Meanwhile, since 1900, Peckett's-on-Sugar-Hill, a farmhouse inn on the edge of the White Mountains, opened yearly for tobogganing, skating, snowshoeing and ski touring. In 1928, Kate Peckett, impressed by European ski operations she had seen in Switzerland, convinced her father to clear a hill and open a ski school. In 1929, Peckett's opened the first ski school resort in the country.

In 1930, German-born Otto Schneibs, the fourth Dartmouth College coach, brought with him the new "Arlberg" technique developed by Hannes Schneider, former head ski instructor of the Austrian army. In place of the upright stance and graceful telemark style of ski touring, Scheider championed a crouched style with lift and swing methods to master steeper hills. Schneibs, an avid Schneider disciple, urged Dartmouth skiers to adopt the new technique to maneuver the mountains – and downhill skiing was born.

Schneibs and DOC John McCrillis pioneered ski instruction by producing the first ski technique book – Modern Ski Technique, serialized in the Dartmouth Alumni Magazine in 1931-32. By 1937, it was in its eighth printing. They also produced the first ski film shown at the National Ski Association meeting in Chicago. The film became a key tool in the promotion of downhill and slalom skiing as competitive sports.

In the meantime, the dramatic topography of the White Mountains – particularly bowl-shaped Tuckerman's Ravine – inspired "extreme skiing" as early as 1914. The first slalom race in the country was held at Dartmouth in 1923, one year after the first race in Murren, Switzerland. On March 8, 1927, a DOC down-mountain race on Mount Moosilauke was the first official downhill ski race in the country, won by Dartmouth professor Charles Proctor.

In 1933, Kate Peckett mobilized the Civilian

Conservation Corps to cut the first official ski trail in the country – the Richard Taft racing trail at Cannon Mountain, named after the proprietor of the Profile house, the inn that burned down a decade before. That same year, the CCC built more than 30 miles of ski trails.

My father got through winters in Syracuse, New York, sharing his passion with his family, strapping up the laces of four pairs of ski boots so our family of six could set out each weekend to ski at a family run co-op hill in Cazenovia – at \$64 a season! I will never forget looking out over pristine snow-covered hills as the panoramic view of nature clears the mind and takes the breath away. Now, as I await the next Olympian to enter the starting gate, I am there again listening to his stories about skiing in New Hampshire – birthplace of American skiing.

Dartmouth College – with its Dartmouth Skiway, Nordic training trails at Oak Hill and its D-plan allowing nationally and internationally competitive skiers to race in the winter – continues to be more closely identified with the sport of skiing than any other college or university in the country. Here is the list of Dartmouth Olympians on Team USA competing in Korea:

Men's Cross-Country
Patrick "Paddy" Caldwell '17

Women's Cross-Country
Rosie Brennan '11; Sophie Caldwell '12; Annie Hart '14; Ida Sargent '11

Men's Slalom
David Chodounsky '08;
Nolan Kasper '14

Men's Super-G
Tommy Ford '12; Andrew Weibrecht '09

Women's Biathlon
Emily Dreissigacker '11;
Susan Dunklee '08

Women's Paralympic Alpine Skiing
Staci Mannella '18

NOTE: Internationally, for Team Canada, Dartmouth women's hockey coach Laura Schuler will coach Team Canada women's hockey, which includes Team Canada member Laura Stacey '16. Tucker Murphy '04 will be competing for Team Bermuda.

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