Ski Jumping in the Northeast: An Oral History

by

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The patch of ice at the top of the 20 meter ski jump seemed to angle off into the dark, steep woods that pitched down towards the frozen swamp below. My nine year old icy fingers fumbled with stiff bindings that wouldn't give, and my heavy, old wooden jumping skis kept skittering away before I could fasten the bindings. Finally ready, I spread both arms wide to brace myself on the two knotty posts at the top of the jump, and beheld what seemed like an endless, steep, icy inrun. Heart clenched, I willed myself to inch forward. Then I heard the familiar, comforting voice of my coach calling up to me: "ready, Ariel?" I was ready.

Bear Mountain, New York, 1935[1]

[1]"Bear Mountain," Ski Jumping Hill Archive, accessed March 25, 2020, http://www.skisprungschanzen.com/EN/Ski+Jumps/USA-United+States/NY-New+York/Bear+Mountain/0700/.

Ski jumping is a sport in which an individual skis down a steep snow covered ramp called an inrun in a low "inrun position" and jumps off the ground at the takeoff, which is sloped slightly downward. The jumper then flies through the air in an aerodynamic position--leaning forward over the skis which are positioned in a "V" underneath the skier so as to create the surface area that will catch the most air. As the jumper glides through the air and clears the knoll, which is the flat or gently sloping area just below the takeoff before the hill plunges steeply downward, they stay relatively close to the ground, following the shape of the hill they will eventually land on, called the landing hill. At the bottom of the landing hill, the slope flattens out, and the progression from steep to flat is called the transition. The flat area that the jumper eventually comes to a stop in is the outrun.[2] The inrun of the jump can be built into a tower or trestle, sometimes towering high over the rest of the landscape. Other times, the entire ski jump is built into a hillside. The landing hill is shaped to mimic the trajectory of a perfect ski jumping flight.

Why do people ski jump? Some point to the thrill and excitement of jumping, some explain that it's just simply fun. I think it's the particular feeling a jumper gets in the air--it's as close as you can get to flying: "It's thrilling and daring," says Mark Picton, "and when you watch it, it's beautiful. The idea of leaving the earth and soaring through the air is almost in everyone's dreams. It's in the subconscious, and here's a place in the real world where you can try that out; it's designed for that… but I think it's as much about the feeling of doing it as it is

[2] Hans-Heini Gasser (SUI), "Jumping Hills Construction Norm 2018 Implementing Provisions for Art. 411 of the ICR Ski Jumping," *FIS*, November 2018, accessed March 25, 2020, https://assets.fis-ski.com/image/upload/v1542377868/fis-prod/assets/Construction-Norm_2018-2.pdf.

about belonging to a group of people who do it."[3] Former jumper Walter Malmquist describes the feeling:

> Time dilates because your heart rate slows down… When you explode off the takeoff into your flying position and you rotate over the knoll, the world has slowed down and you can see more things than you could see if you were standing still. At 60 miles per hour, the world expands… In that moment, you're seeing things much more closely. Everything is magnified; time stands still until you put your front foot forward with a perfect landing, and then you put two hands up as you go through the transition, and the crowd erupts. That's what ski jumping can present.[4]

This paper covers aspects of the history of ski jumping with a focus on the Eastern United States. In 2019, there were 737 active ski jumpers in the United States, and only 164 jumpers in the Northeast.[5] However, for a sport that has struggled in the U.S. for several decades, there is a strong and intangible draw to ski jumping that has the ability to gather communities together to keep the sport going. Through my interviews and research, I have come to a greater understanding of the cultural, social, and organizational history of ski jumping, and with this paper I hope to paint a picture of the ski jumping world as I know it: its identity, obstacles the sport has faced and why it prevails as a sport in America.

I decided to research and conduct an oral history project about ski jumping because it occurred to me that so many people I know in the ski jumping world have interesting viewpoints and stories to tell. On top of that, the atmosphere surrounding the sport and the ski jumping community is special, and I wanted to try to define and communicate that in writing, using the words of people immersed in the ski jumping world. I identify some key issues that have had negative and positive impacts on the sport over the past century. There are many issues and

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[3] Mark Picton, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 3, 2020.
[4] Walter Malmquist, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 4, 2020.
5 Jed Hinkley, Jeff Hastings, "US Athlete Participation 2018/19," USA Nordic Documents, Spring Summit 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, https://www.usanordic.org/ who-we-are/documents/.

elements of the sport that I have left out, but this paper's focus is on ski jumping at a more local, personal level. Another reason I wanted to write about this subject is that I found very little written material focusing specifically on ski jumping in the Northeast, and I wanted to partially fill that gap.

My interest in ski jumping began in 1999, when I was nine years old at the Salisbury Winter Sports Association (SWSA) in Salisbury, Connecticut. I continued ski jumping until I was 15, and took part in two Junior Olympic competitions in 2004 and 2005, more recently known as the Junior Nationals and Junior Championships. Anyone who ski jumps knows it is an incredibly mental sport--more mental than it is physical, and with the increasingly limited options for training in Connecticut at the time, due to a lack of snow and no coach, I found it hard to excel at the sport and quit in 2005. At that point, I was the only remaining jumper at my club.

In 2015, I came back to watch the ski jumping event in Salisbury and decided to try jumping again. Living in Vermont at the time, I got involved at the Lebanon Outing Club in Lebanon, New Hampshire, ski jumping and helping out with snowmaking and hill preparation. That winter I also came to Connecticut to help SWSA get ready to hold Junior Nationals on the 70 meter jump, and during that week the president of SWSA, Kenny Barker, asked if I would like to be the next SWSA ski jumping coach. I gladly accepted, and for four years now I have coached young ski jumpers in Salisbury on the 20 and 30 meter hills. Being a coach reacquainted me with the ski jumping community and inspired me to dig into the history of ski jumping with this project.

This paper begins with a brief background of the development of skiing and ski jumping in Chapter 2. While the ski can be traced back thousands of years, ski jumping evolved much more recently in Scandinavia in the mid 19th century. Immigrants from that region introduced the sport to the United States just before the turn of the 20th century.

Chapter 3 examines aspects of ski jumping in the United States that led to a marked decline in the sport in the later 20th century. While there were once well over 120 ski jumping sites in the East, there are now only 10 active clubs in the Northeast that offer ski jumping.[6] Based on interviews I conducted, I narrowed in on three issues leading to this deterioration in the sport. First, in the 1970s and 1980s, Scandinavian immigration to America had slowed, leading to a reduced Scandinavian presence in the United States, and therefore a waning pool of people interested in keeping the sport going. Secondly, ABC's "Wide World of Sports: Agony of Defeat" video clip of a ski jumping crash likely deterred many youngsters from trying the sport. The third and most important reason I identified was the National Collegiate Athletic Association's drop of ski jumping as a sanctioned college sport in 1981; this had a catastrophic effect on the sport as it led to the atrophy of ski jumping at many levels in the United States.

Chapter 4 covers some of the reasons ski jumping in the United States has remained viable despite all of the obstacles the sport has faced. I point to the Olympics as a constant guide and inspiration for up and coming ski jumpers, as well as the International Olympic Committee finally agreeing to include women's ski jumping as an Olympic sport in 2014. I also identify the element of tradition in ski jumping as an important aspect that carries the sport along. Lastly, I

[6] Walter Malmquist, e-mail message to author and "Eastern Jumps" spreadsheet attachment, April 5, 2020.

examine the important role volunteers play in the continuation and success of clubs around the Northeast.

My senior project is based on nine interviews I conducted with members of the Eastern ski jumping community from December 2019 to March 2020. Most interviews were over the phone, with the exception of Mat Kiefer, whom I interviewed in Salisbury, Connecticut as he walked around fixing sap lines for his maple syrup production. I asked my interviewees about the themes I examine in my paper, and in doing so, at times had to adjust my thinking about certain issues. I gained a better understanding of ski jumping and its trajectory through time as well as a better sense of the sport's identity. I wanted to find out why we, members of the ski jumping community, love this sport so much.

My sources for this paper include the nine interviews I conducted, secondary books, newspapers, journal articles and online sources. I used newspaper articles dating back to the early 1900s about ski jumping events in the East. The few books I found about ski jumping were very helpful. They include Tim Ashburner's *The History of Ski Jumping,* which was published in 2003 and serves as a broad history of the progression of ski jumping. Harold "Cork" Anson, *Jumping Through Time: A History of Ski Jumping in the United States and Southwest Canada*, published in 2010, outlines major national events and shifts in ski jumping in the United States and Canada, with a focus on the competitive element of the sport. *License to Jump! A Story of Women's Ski Jumping,* edited by Nybelius Marit Stub and Annette R. Hofmann in 2015 is an excellent compilation of essays which focus on the development of women's ski jumping in Europe and the United States.

Other books on the history of skiing which I relied upon and deserve special mention are Roland Huntford's *Two Planks and a Passion: The Dramatic History of Skiing,* Ted Bays' *Nine Thousand Years of Skis: Norwegian Wood to French Plastic,* John Fry's *The Story of Modern Skiing,* and E. John B. Allen's *From Skisport to Skiing: One Hundred Years of an American Sport.*

Though I did not tap into the following source for this paper, I want to mention that USA Nordic, the central organization created to promote ski jumping in the United States, has assembled a collection of ski jumpers' stories called the "USA Nordic Story Project." The stories can be accessed at the following page: https://www.usanordic.org/story_project_archives/

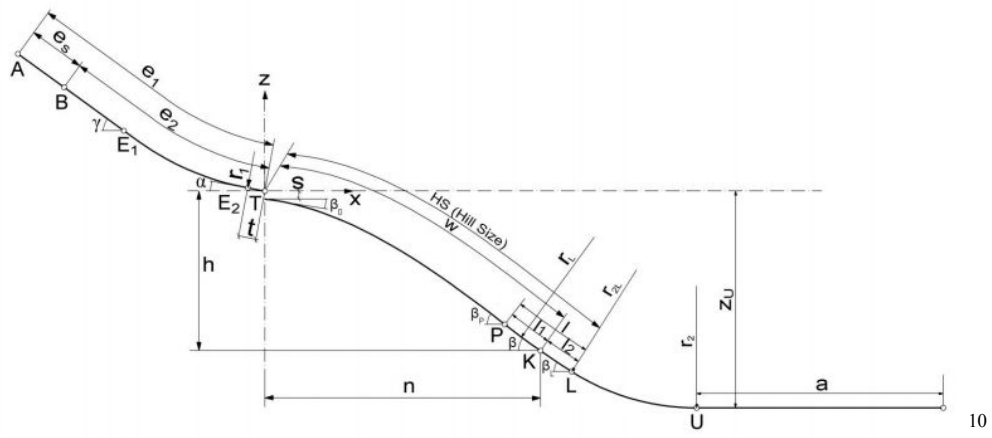
How Ski Jumps are Measured and Scored

Ski jumps are measured in meters, not feet, and the size of a ski jump corresponds to the measurement from the takeoff to the farthest distance a jumper can safely jump before the hill flattens out. The size of a ski jump is either referred to by its "K point" or "Hill Size." The K Point of a hill is the farthest distance a jumper can land before the hill begins to flatten out; at this point, the hill is still at its steepest. The Hill Size is a measurement farther down the hill, and is calculated based on certain hill data. The Hill Size is the farthest point on the hill that a jumper can still safely and reasonably land. The jumping community now officially uses the Hill Size (HS) measurement to refer to the size of a hill, such as an HS70.[7] The same jump can also be referred to as a K65, where K refers to the K Point. In this paper, I will often refer to a jump

[7] Hans-Heini Gasser (SUI), "Jumping Hills Construction Norm 2018."

by its K Point, or in the case of a K65, simply call it a 65 meter jump, because many of the jumps I mention are still commonly referred to according to their K Point.

A ski jumper is scored on their style as well as on their distance. Style points are based on three components of a ski jumper's execution of the jump; the flight, landing, and outrun. A jumper's flight should be controlled, balanced, and use the air pressure effectively to create the maximum flight potential, using the "combination of body and ski to build an entire flying system."[8] Their landing should be in the Telemark style, landing with one foot in front of the other, and should be steady, controlled, and without squatting or touching the ground with the hands or back. The jumper should ski into the outrun demonstrating full control.[9]



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[8]Hans-Heini Gasser (SUI), "Jumping Hills Construction Norm 2018."
[9]Hans-Heini Gasser (SUI), "Jumping Hills Construction Norm 2018."
[10] Guy Rouleau, "Simulating the Olympic Ski Jump Competition," MathWorks, February 13, 2018, accessed March 25, 2020, https://blogs.mathworks.com/simulink/2018/02/13/simulating-the-olympic-ski-jump-competition/.

[11]

Berlin, New Hampshire, ca. 1940[12]

[11] "Highest Ski Jump in the United States," Vintage Postcards and Collectibles, accessed March 25, 2020, https://www.cardcow.com/708596/berlin-new-hampshire-highest-ski-jump-united-states/.
[12] "Nansen Ski Jump Named to National Register," Business NH Magazine, July 26, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, https://www.businessnhmagazine.com/article/nansen-ski-jump-named-to-national-register.

Tara Geraghty Moats[13]

[13] "Tara Geraghty-Moats," USA Nordic, accessed March 25, 2020, https://www.usanordic.org/national-teams/women-ski-jumping/tara-geraghty-moats/.

Chapter 2: Background

For thousands of years, skiing was a means of transportation in snow covered regions of Northern Europe, Siberia and Russia. Skis enabled travel over otherwise impassable terrain, making communication and trade possible in inhospitable environments. Roland Huntford, a scholar of Polar history and exploration, refers to skis as "one of the few Stone Age implements handed down to us in their original form...The origins of skiing are bound up with the emergence of modern man."[14] 3,500 year old wooden skis have been discovered in peat bogs in Finland. Petroglyphs from 5,000 BC point to the use of skis, and Medieval texts identify groups of nomads on skis called Skridfinns, who traversed the icy north from the 6th to the 16th century.[15] A skiing god and goddess Ullr and Skadi have presided in Norse folklore for centuries.[16] In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Norwegian military used skis to transport troops in the winter, and soldiers kept boredom at bay by sliding down hills on their skis.[17]

Ancient skis have been found in Europe and Asia, but not in America. Huntford explains that when European colonists arrived in America, "the snowshoe was part of Indian tribal culture,"[18] but skis were not: the "deep, loose (snow) variety of the North American forests and the Great Plains needed the snowshoe. The more compact form that mantled steppe and tundra favoured the ski...the ski belonged to the Old World alone. It existed where the winters were long and stable, with consistent snow."[19]

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[14] Roland Huntford, *Two Planks and a Passion: The Dramatic History of Skiing* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2008) 2.
[15] Ted Bays, *Nine Thousand Years of Skis: Norwegian Wood to French Plastic* (Ishpeming, MI: National Ski Hall of Fame Press, 1980) 20.
[16] Andrew Denning, *Skiing Into Modernity: A Cultural and Environmental History* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015) 31.
[17] Bays, 26.
[18] Huntford, 4.
[19] Huntford, 5.

Ski jumping's birth and the emergence of skiing as a modern sport coincided with the mid 19th century's Industrial Revolution and a shifting attitude towards nature. In America as well as Europe, as the land exploded with the noise and grit of expanding cities, many people who once worked at their own homes and farms were forced into dark, filthy factories, utterly detached from the outdoors. This spurred a reaction: many began to look towards untouched, wild landscapes, sparking a movement back towards nature.[20]

In the United States, a new importance was placed on conserving natural spaces and promoting the public use of land, some of which would be used for ski trails, ski areas and ski jumps. Spaces were created within cities and the country that would at once be protected from growing sprawl and the ravaging effects of humans on the natural landscape, and provide people with a way to experience and appreciate nature. City parks like Central Park in New York City, designed in 1857 by Frederick Law Olmsted, were created for this purpose and to provide an escape from city life.[21] Congress designated the first National Park of Yellowstone in 1872[22] in an attempt to preserve some of the most unique natural spaces of the country. In the decades that followed, early environmentalist John Muir pushed for the designation of national parks in the West, and Woodrow Wilson established the National Park Service in 1916.[23] Moreover, organizations devoted to public wellness were established during this period, with a focus on

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[20] Brandon Haynes, "Romanticism and Urbanization," Romantic Politics, accessed March 30, 2020, http://web.utk.edu/~gerard/romanticpolitics/urbanization.html.
[21] Witold Rybczynski, *A Clearing in the Distance: Frederick Law Olmsted and America in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, NY: Scribner, 1999) 271.
[22] "Yellowstone: History and Culture," National Park Service, last modified September 18, 2019, accessed November 22, 2019, https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/historyculture/index.htm.
[23] "Quick History of the National Park Service," National Park Service, last modified May 14, 2018, accessed November 22, 2019, https://www.nps.gov/articles/quick-nps-history.htm.

recreation and physical activity.[24] A renewed focus on natural spaces prompted excitement about their use in outdoor pursuits like skiing and ski jumping.

In the late 19th century, outdoor focused clubs and organizations began to appear. In the Northeast, an outdoor social scene emerged; hiking and camping became popular and colleges formed ski clubs and built wilderness cabins in the mountains and lakes of New England and the Adirondacks.[25] The Appalachian Mountain Club, which had been established in 1876, was devoted to preserving wilderness and facilitating its public use by cutting hiking trails and setting up camps and cabins.[26] The AMC became an early supporter of winter recreation and skiing in the mountains in the early 1900s.[27] This shift to outdoor pursuits in America was embedded in a cultural attitude that was, by the late 1800s, ready to welcome the new sport of ski jumping. Long before becoming an American sport, however, ski jumping belonged to the Norwegians.

By the end of the 19th century, skiing had become an important part of Norwegian life. Ski jumping began as just one component of a Norwegian overland ski tour or commute: skiing was the means for travel from one place to another in the winter, and without dedicated trails between farms and towns, ski jumping transpired as an efficient way of clearing obstacles on the way down a hill.[28]

In the 1860s, a simple innovation in ski bindings revolutionized skiing and made ski jumping viable as a sport. Until the 1860s, skis were strapped to the feet by a simple toe strap, but when Sondre Nordheim, born in 1825 in Morgedal, a small town in the Telemark region of

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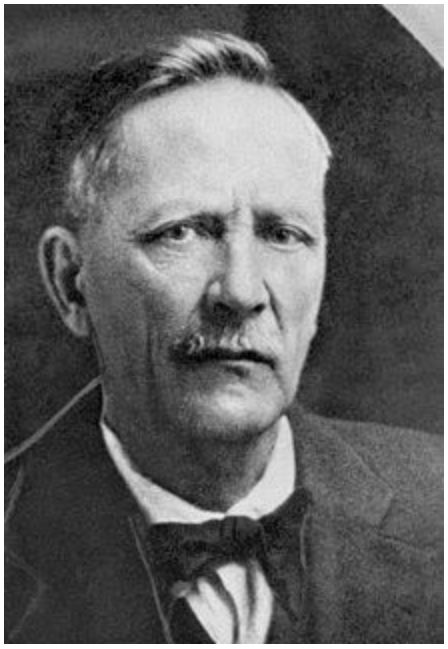
[24] J Hanson, "Recreation Movement in the United States," Virginia Commonwealth University, 2013, accessed November 22, 2019, https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/youth/recreation-movement-in-the -united-states/.
[25] Laura and Guy Waterman, *Forest and Crag: A History of Hiking, Trail Blazing, and Adventure in the Northeast Mountains* (Boston, MA: Appalachian Mountain Club, 1989) 183.
[26] Waterman and Waterman, 191.
[27] Waterman and Waterman, 540.
[28] Tim Ashburner, *The History of Ski Jumping* (Shrewsbury, England: Quiller Press, 2003) 11.

Norway, invented the heel strap, effectively fastening a skier's boot down to the ski, the sport of skiing was forever changed. The heel strap gave skiers control of their skis, allowing them to turn and stop with ease, and retain control while airborne.[29] Nordheim demonstrated the use of his new technology, astounding a crowd by ski jumping beautifully through the air and landing victoriously at the first ski jumping competitions in Telemark and Christiania, Norway, in 1866 and 1868.[30]


Sondre Nordheim[31]

Nordheim came from a small village in rural Norway, yet he became a national icon, Huntford argues--something Norway could be proud of: "Like most Telemark skiers, Nordheim was poor and belonged to the land. He scratched a living as a country carpenter making spare parts for the handlooms that were still a staple of almost every farm...Insignificant in a crowd, on

[29] Harold "Cork" Anson, *Jumping Through Time: A History of Ski Jumping in the United States and Southwest Canada* (Florence, OR: Port Hole Publications, 2010) 18.
[30] Anson, 19.
[31] "Sondre Norheim," Wikipedia, accessed April 27, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sondre_Norheim.

a pair of skis he came into his own."[32] While he eventually moved to the United States with his family, Nordheim would be remembered in Norway as "The King of Skiing."[33]

Over the next decade, ski jumping progressed into a competitive sport. More jumps were built in Telemark, Christiania, Holmenkollen, and other small communities in Norway, and with new jumps came the formation of ski clubs and manufacturers across the country.[34] By the mid 19th century the Norwegian phrase *Ski-Idraet* had come to embody an important but difficult to define idea. Central to the Norwegian tradition of ski jumping, ski historian E. John B. Allen describes Idraet as "the idea of striving (through skiing) to perfect the individual soul as well as the body, and ideally would develop 'the physical and moral strength of nations.'"[35]

In the late 1800s, skiing's popularity took off. In 1888, Fridtjof Nansen, a Norwegian skier, explorer, scientist and diplomat, won fame that popularized skiing worldwide when he became the first to ski across Greenland, as well as making an ambitious attempt on skis to reach the North Pole a few years later:[36]

> He set off for Greenland with specially designed skis and sleeping bags… the proposed four month trip became a grueling yearlong ordeal, as the men hauled sledges in temperatures that froze their noses, larynxes and even their urine… the party crossed Greenland for the first time, without loss of human life, and was rewarded with some 50,000 people turning out on the Oslo quayside to greet the men.[37]

Nansen's Greenland expedition on skis sparked international excitement for the sport.[38] Soon, the skiing craze spread across Europe and crossed the ocean to America.

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[32] Huntford, 83.
[33] Ashburner, 23.
[34] Anson, 20.
[35] E. John B. Allen, *From Skisport to Skiing: One Hundred Years of an American Sport,* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), 11.
[36] Allen, 47.
[37] Annette Kobak, "No Man Is a Hero to his Sled Dogs," *New York Times,* May 16, 1999, accessed March 30, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/109922864/61F26BD044824B10PQ/1?accountid=14171.
[38] Huntford, 155.

In America as early as the eighteenth century, Siberian fur traders used skis to cross snow-covered Alaskan terrain to maintain their traps.[39] In the 1850s during the California Gold Rush, miners held ski races down mountain chutes outside of mining towns in the West,[40] and postal workers delivered mail on skis through mountain passes to snowbound towns. During the 1850s, "Snowshoe" Thompson delivered mail on skis over a 90 mile stretch through mountain passes from Carson Valley, Nevada to Placerville, California.[41] Thompson, whose name was Jon Torsteinsson Rue, was also from Telemark, Norway, and is often credited with bringing skiing to the American West.[42] Though "Alpine" skiing, the freeform method of skiing down hills while making turns, gained in popularity, ski writer John Fry argues that "Norwegians, in particular, clung to the belief that the Nordic competitions of cross-country and jumping were the only true tests of skiing. The new alpine races were seen as possibly impure."[43]

From the 1860s to the 1920s, Norwegians immigrated to America in large numbers; ski jumping, a cultural marker, came with them.[44] Challenging economic and religious circumstances contributed to the surge in Norwegian immigration to the United States: in particular, an 1860s famine, a failure in herring fisheries in the 1880s, and in the 1890s, a shipping depression.[45] In America, Norwegians sought work as sailors and farmers, and scrambled for land with the Homestead Act in 1862, which offered 160 acres of land to settlers

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[39] John Fry, *The Story of Modern Skiing,* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2006) 5.
[40] Bays, 76.
[41] Allen, 17.
[42] Ashburner, 23.
[43] Fry, 9.
[44] Mary Kupiec Cayton, Elliot J. Gorn, and Peter W. William, ed., *Encyclopedia of American Social History,* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993) 703-705.
[45] Cayton, Gorn, and William, 703-705.

in the West. Attracted to areas of America that most resembled their homeland in climate and farmland, Norwegians settled across the Northeast and Midwest in large numbers.[46]

Where Norwegians settled, they built ski jumps: in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin in the early 1880s and 90s, many ski jumps were erected, all organized by Norwegians and often requiring Norwegian ancestry to join.[47] The Berlin Mill Ski Club in Berlin, New Hampshire was the earliest ski club in the Northeast, founded in 1872. Named after the town's sawmill industry, the club held winter carnivals and was renamed Skiflubben Fridtjof Nansen after the Norwegian skier. Later, the name was shortened to the Nansen Ski Club. Berlin's 80 meter ski jump became the largest hill in the East, enabling it to hold the 1939 Olympic Jumping Team Tryouts and the 1940 U.S. National Championships.[48]

Norwegians introduced ski jumping throughout the Northeast wherever they settled. Lake Placid in Upstate New York became a ski jumping hub in the early 1900s, aided by the easily accessible New York Central Railway system. The Lake Placid Club, a resort established in 1895, began ordering skis from Norway in 1904 to promote winter activities for their guests, and in 1921, the club built several ski jumps. Lake Placid hosted the first Eastern Championship in 1924 and the first Winter Olympic Games held in the United States in 1932.[49]

Many Norwegians settled in New York City starting in the mid 1800s. A 1971 *New York Times* article stated that Norwegians

> ...began settling in Brooklyn 150 years ago, largely in the Red Hook section, and then they moved gradually until about 75 years ago, when they took hold in Bay Ridge. There are still 30,000 Norwegians in Bay Ridge, with the building trades the predominant

[46] Cayton, Gorn, and William, 703-705.
[47] Anson, 22-27.
[48] Anson, 62-64.
[49] Anson, 65, 69.

> occupation… as one resident put it: 'Bay Ridge is the fourth largest city of Norway. First is Oslo, second is Bergen, third is Stavanger--and fourth is Bay Ridge.'[50]

Because of this concentration of Norwegians in the New York City area, ski jumping clubs and nine jumping hills sprouted up in the area,[51] including the Norway Ski Club of Westchester County, the Norwegian-American Ski Club and the Norsemen Ski Club of Brooklyn.[52] There was even a ski jump towering 90 feet high in White Plains, NY, built by a group of Norwegians in 1927. During the building process, a strong wind destroyed it, and members of the community volunteered to help rebuild it in time for its first competition. A *New York Times* article recounted that with 5,000 spectators watching, "Thirty jumpers showed up, and most were hesitant because in the rush to rebuild, the workers had not removed all the old stumps and boulders in the run-out. As an expedient, they marked them with red flags and assumed the jumpers would be able to ski around them after they landed."[53] About an hour north of New York City, Bear Mountain's 45 meter hill was the largest jump in the New York City area and an important training jump for the Northeast through the 1980s, sometimes attracting a crowd of 35,000.[54]

The predominance of ski jumping in the New York City area was matched by the enthusiasm for the sport in the state of New Hampshire. Ski jumping clubs were established throughout the state, such as the Winnipesaukee Ski Club in 1918,[55] the Dartmouth Outing Club

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[50] "Norwegians of Bay Ridge, a Proud and Tight-Knit Community," *New York Times,* May 16, 1971, accessed March 30, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/119307342/9F858DA17A794A41PQ/1?accountid=14171.
[51] Suzanne Dechillo, "Ski Jumping Faces Long Decline," *New York Times*, January 24, 1982, accessed October 1, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/1982/01/24/nyregion/ski-jumping-faces-long-decline.html, 2.
[52] Anson, 71-88.
[53] Dan Grabel, "County Was a Ski-Jump Destination," *New York Times*, April 19, 1998, accessed April 3, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/1998/04/19/nyregion/county-was-a-ski-jump-destination.html.
[54] Dechillo, 2.
[55] Anson, 80.

in 1922 in Hanover, and in the 1930s, jumps were built in Lebanon and Gunstock. Many more ski jumps were built over the next decades in New Hampshire. In Vermont, the Brattleboro Outing Club was established for ski jumping in 1922. Brattleboro hosted State, New England and National Championships, and starting in 1924, held an annual "Ski Jump Ball" after the event, with Paul Whiteman's Leviathan Orchestra playing the first year.[56] To the north, the Poland Spring resort in Maine offered ski jumping to their guests starting in 1916, and in the 1920s and 30s ski jumps were built in Rumford, Augusta, Portland, and Bethel, Maine.[57] [58]

Massachusetts and Connecticut were also home to numerous ski jumps. In Salisbury, Connecticut, the Salisbury Outing Club was founded in 1926 by two Norwegian brothers, John Olaf and Magnus Satre, who immigrated from Norway in 1924. In the *New York Times,*

> Local legend says that in 1926, John Satre, a Norwegian who immigrated to the area, climbed to the top of a barn that still stands in town. The local mountains, the highest in the state, had reminded him of home. From the peak of the barn's roof, Satre put on his skis and flew down the shingles on one side. He landed 30 feet away and lived to tell about it. More important, so did the 200 townsfolk who watched.[59]

The Salisbury Outing Club, now the Salisbury Winter Sports Association, held their first tournament in 1927, and in 1929, hosted the first Connecticut Championships, followed by the Eastern Regionals of the Olympic Trials in 1931 in front of a crowd of 8,000.[60] The towns of Winsted,[61] Norfolk[62] and Sharon,[63] Connecticut also held ski jumps. In Massachusetts, jumps

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[56] Dana Sprague, "History Timeline," Harris Hill Ski Jump, accessed November 22, 2019, https://harrishillskijump.com/history/.
[57] Anson, 83.
[58] "Bethel," Ski Jumping Hill Archive, accessed March 30, 2020, http://www.skisprungschanzen.com/EN/Ski+Jumps/USA-United+States/ME-Maine/Bethel/0704/.
[59] Bill Pennington, "The Ski Report; A Jumping Event Lands in Salisbury," *New York Times,* February 8, 2001, accessed November 22, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2001/02/08/sports/the-ski-report-a-jumping-event-lands-in-salisbury.html?pagewanted=1?pagewanted=1.
[60] Anson, 81.
[61] Anson, 71
[62] Alice V. Waldecker, ed., *Norfolk, Connecticut 1900-1975* (Winsted, CT: Winchester Press, 1976), 228.

were built at the Berkshire School as well as in Williamstown for Williams College students, and Pittsfield.[64] There was also a 50 meter jump in Ayer, a 30 meter in Quincy, a 40 meter in Bolton, MA,[65] as well as a jump in Greenfield that attracted "more than 2,000 spectators to a single event during the height of competition."[66]

Ski jumping and skiing in the Northeast gained popularity with the organization of college ski clubs, "Ski Trains" or "Snow Trains," and winter carnivals in the early 1900s, which brought the spectacular snow sports to cities and towns, and inspired excitement for winter in the American public. Ski jumping was even featured in the circus acts of Barnum and Bailey in 1909; the most notable ski jumper in the act was Carl Howelson, who emigrated from Norway in 1905 and became known as the "Flying Norseman."[67] In 1916, *The New York Times* reported: "Dartmouth's sixth annual Winter carnival… reached its full swing this afternoon with a Varsity hockey match, ski-joring, skiing, snowshoe races, and an exhibition of ski jumping before a record breaking crowd assembled from all parts of the United States and Canada."[68] "Ski Trains" transported new winter sports enthusiasts on the railroad to northern mountain towns for weekend trips.[69] A 1938 *New York Times* announced: "250 on Special Ski Train: The first de luxe 'snow train' of the season, the Saks Fifth Avenue Laurentian-Quebec Special, left last night

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[63] Jeremy K. Davis, "Sharon Mountain Ski Area," New England Lost Ski Areas Project, December 23, 2006, accessed March 30, 2020, http://www.nelsap.org/ct/sharon.html.
[64] Jeremy K. Davis, *Lost Ski Areas of the Berkshires* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2018), 111, 120, 219.
[65] "Massachusetts," Ski Jumping Hill Archive, accessed March 30, 2020, http://www.skisprungschanzen.com/EN/Ski+Jumps/USA-United+States/MA-Massachusetts/.
[66] Jason Butynski, "Jaywalking: Local scene once a ski-jumping mecca," *Greenfield Reporter,* July 22, 2014, accessed March 30, 2020, https://www.recorder.com/Archives/2014/03/spt-Jaywalking-GR-031114.
[67] "Colorado Ski History Timeline 1900-1919," Colorado Ski History, accessed March 30, 2020, http://www.coloradoskihistory.com/history/timelines/1900.html.
[68] "Dartmouth's Big Carnival," *New York Times,* February 12, 1916, accessed March 30, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/98017431/6277200A5D994F31PQ/3?accountid=14171.
[69] Allen, *From Skisport to Skiing,* 106.

from the Grand Central Terminal with a capacity party of 250 skiers aboard."[70] Skiing was increasingly a social activity, a place to meet people and a fun weekend activity for those who could afford it. Founder of the New England Lost Ski Areas Project Jeremy Davis adds that "The trains also were portable resorts in a way, often acting as a base lodge with food service, restrooms and a space to warm up. They also provided for much social interaction, often hosting parties, music, dancing and meals."[71]

Dartmouth Winter Carnival, 1930[72]

[70] "250 On Special Ski Train," *New York Times*, December 27, 1938, accessed November 22, 2019, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/102407569/fulltextPDF/8FE1BDFFBA474691PQ/1?accountid=14171.
[71] Davis, 15.
[72] Katie Hamlin, "Winter Carnival Photo Gallery: Skiing, Skating, and Sport," Dartmouth, February 5, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, https://250.dartmouth.edu/news/2019/02/winter-carnival-photo-gallery-skiing-skating-and-sport.

Skiing was becoming a part of New England winter culture. In the 1930s, ski jumps were erected for winter ski shows in Madison Square Garden in New York City, the Boston Garden, and for the New York World's Fair, where jumpers showed off their skills in front of huge crowds, introducing city dwellers to the excitement of winter sports.[73] A 1936 *New York Times* article announced the upcoming show in Madison Square Garden: "This carnival, probably the most comprehensive ever attempted in New York, will find the Garden transformed. An Alpine setting--snow and scenery reminiscent of the Tyrol as well as the popular snow spots of New York State and New England, will be the background… Ski-jumping, the greatest spectacle of all, will hold the Garden's spotlight."[74]

In the 1930s and 40s, skiing in the United States exploded in popularity.[75] Skiing was inexpensive, and many small towns in the Northeast established their own ski hill operations, making the sport accessible to a large swath of the population. In 1936, a ticket to ski at Stowe in Vermont was $1,[76] and with the first rope tow in Woodstock, VT in 1934,[77] the public could ski without having to hike back up to the top of the hill for another run. As ski journalist and historian Morten Lund points out, "Many of the ropes were conveniently situated, close to towns and cities, making entry into the sport easy in every sense. The state of Maine eventually put up over a hundred rope tows."[78] Where there were ski areas, there were often ski jumps, too.

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[73] Fry, 7.
[74] Frank Elkins, "Ski Curtain Rises: Big Show at Madison Square Garden to Mark the Opening of the New Season," *New York Times,* December 6, 1936, accessed March 30, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/101809192/543FA00 E18C24067PQ/1?accountid=14171.
[75] Morten Lund, "The 1930s: The Unexpected Blossoming of Alpine Skiing," International Skiing History Association, accessed March 30, 2020, https://skiinghistory.org/gallery/1930s-unexpected-blossoming-alpine-skiing.
[76] "Stowe Mountain Resort," New England Ski History, September 25, 2019, accessed March 30, 2020, https://www.newenglandskihistory.com/Vermont/stowe.php.
[77] Amanda Thibault, "This Place in History: First Ski Tow in the U.S.," My Champlain Valley, November 16, 2017, accessed March 30, 2020, https://www.mychamplainvalley.com/news/this-place-in-history-first-ski-tow-in-the-u-s/.
[78] Morten Lund, "The 1930s: The Unexpected Blossoming of Alpine Skiing."

Ski jumping wasn't just a sport for the elite. Born in 1944, former ski jumper and U.S. Head Ski Jumping Coach Larry Stone currently coaches ski jumping in Lake Placid. As Stone recalls, "All these blue collar worker guys had a sport to go to in the winter. It was clubs against other clubs; it was a really neat part of country living."[79] Jumpers and volunteers from the community worked together on the hills to get them ready for practice, and kids jumped after school with their friends at their local hills. As Coach Stone noted of his hometown, Salisbury, Connecticut,

> 'When I grew up in the '50s here,'...'there were eight, maybe nine jumps in town. We all even had them in our backyards. We'd make them on little hillsides. And you just grew up here doing it like kids play baseball anywhere else.' Stone and his neighbors competed against kids from places like Norfolk, Bear Mountain, White Plains and Rosendale, N.Y. Back in the 1950s, ski jumping was a normal part of small town culture in New England. But, somewhere along the way, that culture was lost. 'All those towns that I was talking about, they don't have jumps anymore,' Stone said. 'Used to be dozens of them and now there's just a handful.'[80]

Though a booming American sport through the middle of the 20th century, ski jumping's popularity began to wane. A 1982 *New York Times* article noted that "Ski jumpers...appear to be heading for the endangered species list of sports, going the way of gladiators and jousting knights."[81] Today, only a handful of clubs remain active. Moreover, ski jumps require hard work to keep snow-covered and maintained throughout the winter for training; most ski jumping programs rely on volunteers to keep the sport going.

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[79] Katherine Erwin, "Salisbury, Connecticut's Jumpfest 2015," Cool Hunting, February 10, 2015, accessed November 26, 2019, https://coolhunting.com/culture/jumpfest-connecticut-2015/.
[80] Karen Given, "Salisbury: 1 Town, 1 Ski Jump, 53 Junior Olympians," *WBUR Boston's NPR News Station*, February 26, 2011, accessed November 22, 2019, https://www.wbur.org/onlyagame/2011/02/26/ski-jump.
[81] Dechillo, 1.

Paula Lamberg, Austria, ca. 1911[82]

Women's ski jumping, an entire subject in its own right, is only briefly mentioned here. For much of the 20th century, ski jumping was a male dominated sport. Though women have ski jumped since the 1860s, until recent decades, the sport excluded women from taking part in high level competitions. In 1863, Norwegian Ingrid Olsdatter Vestby was the first recorded female to compete in ski jumping,[83] and in 1896 the first unofficial national competition for women was organized by the Norwegian Asker Ski Club, called the "Landesrennet for Damer," in which twenty women took part. Known as the "Floating Baroness," Paula Lamberg, an Austrian Baroness competed with men in ski jumping competitions around 1911.[84] Women persisted in ski jumping internationally throughout the 20th century, finally fighting their way to the front and demanding equality in the sport in the 21st century. After a long fight for inclusion, women

[82] Jane Ridley, "Women Ski-Jumpers Take the Leap for First Time in 90 Year," *New York Post,* February 4, 2014, accessed April 27, 2020, shttps://nypost.com/2014/02/04/5-women-to-watch-in-ski-jumping-at-the-sochi-games/.
[83] Annette R. Hofmann and Gerd Von Der Lippe, "European Pioneers of Women's Ski Jumping: The "Floating Baroness" from Austria and Norway's "Queen of Skis" in *License to Jump! A Story of Women's Ski Jumping,* ed. Nybelius Marit Stub, and Annette R. Hofmann, (Falun, Sweden: Scandbook, 2015), 25.
[84] Hofmann and Lippe, 26

were finally allowed to compete in the Winter Olympic Games in 2014, but the fight for full inclusion at the highest levels of the sport continues.

During the 2018-2019 winter season, there were fewer than 1,000 jumpers in the U.S. and less than 200 ski jumpers in the Northeast.[85] Ski jumping in the Northeast endured significant challenges to its survival in the 1970s and 80s; today, some clubs and jumping programs struggle to stay afloat, yet there is a certain draw to ski jumping in the Northeast that can gather communities together to keep kids jumping.

[85] Jed Hinkley and Jeff Hastings, "US Athlete Participation 2018/19," USA Nordic Documents, Spring Summit 2019, accessed September 9, 2019, https://www.usanordic.org/ who-we-are/documents/.

Chapter 3: A Dwindling American Sport

Though a booming American sport through the 1950s and 60s, ski jumping began a decline in the 1970s and 1980s that was marked by a drop in participation, the deterioration of jumping facilities, and in many cases, the abandoning of ski jumps altogether. There are several reasons for this trend. First, fewer Scandinavians were immigrating to the United States, and Scandinavian communities in the Northeast that were once ski jumping's driving force were dissipating. Second, a viral video clip made ski jumping famous in 1970 for one terrible crash, increasing public perceptions that the sport was dangerous. Third, in 1981, the National Collegiate Athletic Association voted to drop ski jumping as a college sport, a decision that was felt in every corner of the U.S. ski jumping community. The subsequent move away from the traditional four event skiing discipline known as "skimeister" further diminished the sport. Skiers no longer competed in ski jumping together with cross country skiing, slalom skiing and giant slalom skiing, and while the more widely practiced sports of cross country and alpine skiing took off, ski jumping was left behind. These challenges caused the pool of jumpers, coaches, officials and volunteers to shrink, leading to the collapse of many ski jumps throughout the Northeast.

Norwegian immigration and its influence on ski jumping helped carry the sport through the mid 20th century, but with fewer Norwegians immigrating to the U.S. in the 1970s and 1980s, locally run ski jumps began to suffer. From 1825 until 1924, roughly 800,000 Norwegians settled in the States.[86] The 1924 Immigration Act aimed to stop immigration from parts of Southern and Eastern Europe, but it also slowed Norwegian immigration to the U.S.[87]

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[86] Krishnadev Calamur, "Why Norwegians Aren't Moving to the U.S.," *The Atlantic,* January 12, 2018, accessed March 2, 2020, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/01/trump-shithole-norway/550382/.
[87] Calamur, "Why Norwegians Aren't Moving to the U.S."

Norwegian yearly immigration dropped further in 1970 to under 4,000 per year, a number that continued to decrease: in 2016, only 93 Norwegians became U.S. citizens.[88]

Ski jumping in America followed the rise and fall of Scandinavian immigration, as a 1982 *New York Times* article commented: "Scandinavian immigrants brought the sport to this country in the late 1800's. Today there are pockets of ski-jumping activity where they settled."[89] At one point, over 200 ski jumps existed in the Northeastern United States.[90] Mark Levasseur, born in 1960 in Worcester, Massachusetts, remembers Norwegian-Americans including: "Sig Evenson, who came over (from Norway) in his 40s and settled about 10 miles south of Bear Mountain. They would work on the hill, they would coach, they judged, they would do anything and everything."[91] Erling Heistad, a second generation Norwegian American born in 1939, grew up in Lebanon, New Hampshire. His father, also Erling, emigrated at age 15 from Norway in 1912 with his younger sister and introduced ski jumping to Lebanon in 1923. Heistad recalls that his father:

> ...coached and was interested in jumps, so he built eight of them... well, his write up in the National Ski Hall of Fame says seven jumps in Lebanon, but I know of eight. His goal was that every neighborhood should have a jump that the kids would be responsible for. You had your own jump, your own place that you took care of, and you went and you cut the brush, and you cut the grass and you packed it out and you maintained your place.[92]

In the Brooklyn based ski jumping community, Art Tokle was born in 1949 into a family notorious for its ski jumpers: Art's father, a two time Olympian and former U.S. Head Coach was one of five brothers, all ski jumpers, who came to the United States from Norway in the

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[88] Calamur, "Why Norwegians Aren't Moving to the U.S."
[89] Suzanne Dechillo, "Ski Jumping Faces Long Decline," *New York Times,* January 24, 1982, accessed March 2, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/1982/01/24/nyregion/ski-jumping- faces-long-decline.html.
[90] Walter Malmquist, e-mail message to author and "Eastern Jumps" spreadsheet attachment, April 5, 2020.
[91] Mark Levasseur, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, December 21, 2019.
[92] Erling Heistad, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 17, 2020.

1920s and 30s. The Tokle family settled in Brooklyn, New York. Tokle confirms that "There was a big Norwegian community in the Bay Ridge section, and there were a lot of jumpers that came out of that part of Brooklyn."[93] Larry Stone remember's ski jumping's heyday as well: "There were jumps all over the East--there was a place in New York State called Rosendale; there was another place just north of Bear Mountain called Salisbury Mills; there were all kinds of hills, all over the place…. and most of (the clubs) were Norwegian, or had that kind of heritage or had been introduced to it."[94]

Slowly, however, interest in maintaining many of these Norwegian-built neighborhood ski jumps collapsed. 1980 Ski Jumping Olympian Walter Malmquist, who was born in 1956 and grew up in Thetford, Vermont remembers seeing dormant ski jumps in many Vermont towns including Barre, Montpelier, Underhill, and Middlebury in the late 1960s: "I would see these sights where ski jumps had gone dormant because communities made up of Scandinavians, the people that brought the sport from Europe with them, and the interest of those families did not survive from generation to generation, except in some communities."[95] By the 70s and 80s, ski jumping in the Metropolitan area was also running on fumes. Levasseur recalls that "My favorite place to ski jump was Bear Mountain, New York. It was a bunch of Norwegians who started it, and it was a group of Norwegians who were there organizing it, and when they all died off, the whole thing crumbled. So we don't have that--that generation is gone. Ski jumping was booming here in the East because of the Norwegians."[96] The Bear Mountain ski jump, once in

[93] Art Tokle, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 25, 2020.
[94] Larry Stone, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, March 3, 2020.
[95] Walter Malmquist, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 4, 2020.
[96] Mark Levasseur, December 21, 2019.

the running to be used in the 1932 Winter Olympics, went dormant in 1990: the natural inrun and landing hill are now overgrown.[97]

Similarly, in New Hampshire, many of those jumps Heistad's father built, along with others in the state, fell out of use in the 1970s and 80s. Heistad describes one overgrown and dormant jump: "There was a cribbed up log takeoff. The logs have now settled into the ground, but you can still take a brush scythe and you could still go ahead and mow that out and jump it if you wanted to...most of the jumps when they get disused and not maintained anymore, they go back to mother nature."[98]

Television, which brought ski jumping to the general public, was ironically instrumental in the decline of its popularity. In the 1970 Oberstdorf World Cup Ski Jumping Championships in West Germany, Slovenian Vinko Bogataj fell spectacularly while skiing down the inrun of the jump, tumbling off the high takeoff and down the side of the slope, scattering hill markers and spectators. The crash was picked up by ABC and played every Saturday afternoon as the opening to ABC's "Wide World of Sports" for decades. In the introduction, host Jim McKay would dramatically announce, "Spanning the globe to bring you the constant variety of sport…the thrill of victory…and the agony of defeat…the human drama of athletic competition…This is ABC's Wide World of Sports!"[99] For many, watching ABC's "Wide World of Sports" was a Saturday afternoon tradition, as sports writer Dave Miller remembers: "Growing up in the 60s, sports were an important part of my life... Often, the entire day was

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[97] John Patrick Schutz, "'Olympic Village' of Nyack," *Nyack News and Views,* February 19, 2014, accessed March 2, 2020, https://nyacknewsandviews.com/2014/02/jpshutz_olympics/.
[98] Erling Heistad, February 17, 2020.
[99] Dave Miller, "Jim McKay: The Thrill Of Victory...The Agony Of Defeat," *Bleacher Report,* June 14, 2008, accessed February 18, 2020, https://bleacherreport.com/articles/29612-jim-mckay-the-thrill-of-victorythe-agony-of-defeat.

consumed with things like baseball, football, badminton, or even croquet. Except on Saturdays at 3:30. That's when we all headed inside for a little break to watch "The Wide World of Sports." [100]

Bogataj's failed ski jump attempt and ski jumping itself likely came to represent "the Agony of Defeat" for many Americans. Malmquist recalled the video's effect on ski jumping: "It puts salt in a wound, definitely. You don't see that many ski jumps that end up in a fall, but you take the worst imaginable situation and you televise that on a weekly basis, to people who are watching other sports..its just…it's not a representation of our sport. And it clearly prevents some people from considering trying it out."[101]

Heistad noted that "I think the 'Wide World of Sports' did more to bring jumping into the doldrums than anything else--that one clip showed over and over again...an awful lot of parents became convinced that their kid was never going to get anywhere near a ski jump after seeing that."[102] Ski jumper and coach in Andover, New Hampshire Chris Jones, born in 1986 and a Sutton, New Hampshire native noted that "ABC's 'Wide World of Sports' 'The Agony of Defeat' was on people's TV every single weekend, so they opened the TV program and got to watch the ski jumper absolutely eat shit on the beginning of the program...So nobody wants to go and try that and be like, 'oh yeah, that's a safe thing…'"[103]

When the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) dropped ski jumping as a sanctioned college sport in 1981, ski jumping in the United States further deteriorated. That year, the NCAA Skiing Committee, which was made up of five people--an athletic director and

[100] Dave Miller, https://bleacherreport.com/articles/29612-jim-mckay-the-thrill- of-victorythe-agony-of-defeat.
[101] Walter Malmquist, February 4, 2020.
[102] Erling Heistad, February 17, 2020.
[103] Chris Jones, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, Lake Placid, January 31, 2020.

four ski coaches, voted unanimously to drop ski jumping from their list of sanctioned college sports.[104] Many people interviewed for this paper agreed that this decision alone did more damage to ski jumping across the country than any other event. Stone said:

> When the college thing happened, that put everything back four very important years, so that if you hadn't showed that you could make it to a pretty high level and start skiing internationally by the time you were out of high school, you were shit out of luck, or else you had to self finance, or put off college, or all these other factors… so that just cut the whole backbone out of it… It cut back on officials and coaches, on numbers of people jumping at a high level until later in life, and that really was just a huge factor."[105]

Ski jumping had been a flourishing college sport since 1910 when Dartmouth College and McGill University held their first ski jumping meet. In New England, Tokle recalls, "almost every major college had a ski jumping team. Even Ted Kennedy jumped at Harvard University."[106] Heistad recalls the prevalence of college jumping in the 1950s at Lebanon Outing Club:

> I remember coming back one day and my father was going down this list, and he counted them up and he says, "21!" and I said, "of what?" he said, "21 colleges and schools have been training here this weekend."... Yeah, try to find 21 schools in New England that have ski jumpers now. You know, they're just not there. But it used to be very busy. That was the early 50s. College jumping was a big deal.[107]

Harvard, Yale, Bowdoin, Middlebury, Dartmouth, Colgate, Cornell and Bates Colleges, to name a few, all had ski jumping teams.[108] [109] Levasseur remembers,

> In the early 70s at Salisbury, Connecticut, there were close to 100 jumpers, and you had to make the top 60 to jump on Sunday. That was because there was college jumping...so if you had 10 schools and they each sent 4 or 5 jumpers, there were 40 or 50 college kids.

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[104] Dennis Gildea, "Dartmouth and the Debate Over Ski Jumping in NCAA Competition," *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport,* 2 (2009): 286-298, accessed February 18, 2020, file:///Users/ariel/Downloads/10119-Article%20Text-21115-1-6-20190513.pdf.
[105] Larry Stone, March 3, 2020.
[106] Art Tokle, February 25, 2020.
[107] Erling Heistad, February 17, 2020.
[108] "Summaries of Lake Placid Events," *New York Times,* January 2, 1938, accessed March 1, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/102460336/DD95B5AB039549DEPQ/1?accountid=14171.
[109] Jay Burns, "Video: Watch Ski Jumping off Mount David in 1936," Bates, February 21, 2018, accessed February 28, 2020, https://www.bates.edu/news/2018/02/21/video-ski-jumping-off-mount-david-in-the-1930s/.

> When they ended college jumping, it did quite a lot of damage to ski jumping in the east, because there was no reason for a kid to continue.[110]

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When colleges stopped offering ski jumping, it resulted in a chain of events that had negative effects on the sport. High school jumping programs in all states except for New

[110] Mark Levasseur, December 21, 2019.
[111] Dartmouth Alumni, "Winter Carnival Posters," Pinterest, accessed April 30, 2020, https://www.pinterest.com/dartmouthalumni/winter-carnival-posters/.

Hampshire ceased to exist;[112] a 2012 *New York Times* article commented on the issue: "A frustration for (high school) participants is that there is no next logical step from this level of competition."[113] Where once there was an incentive for towns to support their local ski jump because it meant supporting local kids in a sport they could continue through college and beyond, now there was no realistic future for young aspiring jumpers. Malmquist recalls, "Thinking about Barre, Vermont, a community of granite workers and wood workers, it was a blue collar community...many local programs, which included high school populations as well as elementary school populations didn't see where opportunities to ski jump would take their young people."[114]

Considering the effect the NCAA's decision had on ski jumping, Malmquist noted that "I think what that should say to people is that not only was it important for NCAA to maintain its programs so that clubs had a reason to support ski jumping in their local communities, but it also provided athletes with an arena that they could advance themselves without skiing at an international level."[115] Without this opportunity to ski jump at a college level, an entire section of the developmental opportunities for ski jumpers in the United States disappeared. Jones noted that eliminating college jumping "kind of wiped out your mid tier. You've got your kids that are coming through high school… and then from there they could go and compete in the college circuit… When you pull the rug out from underneath that, now you're trying to get kids from

[112] Josh Fischel, "In Winter, Only in New Hampshire," *New York Times,* February 16, 2012, accessed March 1, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/17/sports/in-new-hampshire-high-school-ski-jumping-still-flies.html.
[113] Fischel, "In Winter, Only in New Hampshire."
[114] Walter Malmquist, February 4, 2020.
[115] Walter Malmquist, February 4, 2020.

high school to the national team. Those four years make a huge difference."[116] In Malmquist's words,

> Colleges can and did provide programs that coached developing athletes as well as elite athletes, and that doesn't exist in the United States anymore. The colleges used to have great coaches. They used to prepare their facilities, and now it's done on a volunteer basis rather than having professionals or clubs at colleges helping to put the hills in shape. Local programs have a much greater burden now, so bless all the volunteers who are working to help ski jumping survive, in advance.[117]

Colleges were increasingly recruiting Norwegian ski jumpers to stay competitive, and the Norwegians usually dominated college events, often bumping Americans out of the running. A 1968 *New York Times* article alluded to this phenomenon: "Hanover, Nh., Feb 10--Per Edward Coucheran, a blond blue-eyed ski jumper from Norway, performed his specialty in the face of a gusty snow storm today and helped his college, Dartmouth, win its own winter carnival."[118] Malmquist laughed, recalling that "One of the reasons I didn't go to UVM was because they were stocked with Norwegians,"[119] and 1984 ski jumping Olympian Jeff Hastings noted, "Most of the coaches were sick of problems with facilities and of trying to get Norwegian recruits so they could be competitive."[120] There were other issues that made college jumping less tenable: the maintenance of ski jumps was labor intensive and expensive, making ski jumping programs at all levels vulnerable to collapse, and the cost of insurance to sanction skiing sports was rising. The NCAA also planned to start sanctioning women's events, and at the time, there were very few female ski jumpers in the United States.[121]

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[116] Chris Jones, January 31, 2020.
[117] Walter Malmquist, February 4, 2020.
[118] William N. Wallace, "Coucheron Gains Ski-Jumping Title," *New York Times,* February 11, 1968, accessed February 25, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/118358952/9FF7B7562E2464BPQ/2?accountid=14171.
[119] Walter Malmquist, February 4, 2020.
[120] Gildea, 288.
[121] Gildea, 288.

Stone and Heistad think that beyond these factors, there was a group of coaches who did not want to deal with the challenge of keeping their own teams competitive, and they pushed to have college jumping discontinued.[122] In Stone's opinion,

> It was the UVM coach Chip LaCasse, the Middlebury coach, Terry Aldrich, and the Colorado coach… They kinda all got together and said, you know, 'we feel at a big disadvantage without a facility, and we don't want to build a facility… Basically it was just a political hatchet job… a few of the major college coaches got together and said, let's just get rid of jumping, and one of the arguments they used was, 'well, we basically all bring Euros over, anyway, so it really isn't much of a help to us, and we'll just get rid of that… A lot of the coaches didn't want to do that, it was just sort of pushed through by a little nucleus of guys. I mean guys my age, we still hold it against those guys. If you ever see them, you just have to bite your tongues and not go over and yell at them.'[123]

From 1981 through 1993, Dartmouth College alone resisted closing its ski jump. In the 1990s, however, the jump was finally shut down for good and demolished, as sportswriter Dennis Gildea lamented:

> Shortly after the last of the snow from the March blizzard of 1993 melted in northern New England, the wrecking crew moved onto the Dartmouth College golf course in Hanover, New Hampshire, and began dismantling the ski jumping tower. Within the small subculture of North American ski jumpers, the demise of the Dartmouth jump was big and sad news… Erected in 1921 and the oldest campus jump in the United States, (it) was… a historical landmark, a symbol of a time when college athletics were becoming organized, formalized, and popularized.[124]

An additional consequence of the NCAA's decision was the loss of the "skimeister" discipline and the ensuing separation of ski jumping from cross country and alpine skiing. Until the 1980s, NCAA ski jumping events were often organized as "skimeister" competitions, in which a ski jumper competed in four skiing events: ski jumping, cross country, slalom and giant slalom. The winner of a skimeister meet was the one skier who performed the best in all four

[122] Erling Heistad, February 17, 2020.
[123] Larry Stone, March 3, 2020.
[124] Gildea, 286.

events,[125] earning "skimeister honor" for their college or university.[126] This combined event was likely a hold-over from an older tradition that was in practice until the 1930s: that *all* ski jumpers were required to compete in both cross country skiing and jumping any time they entered a competition.[127]

Skimeister, however, was not just for college jumpers; many local clubs organized skimeister meets as well. Lebanon Outing Club in New Hampshire has hosted a yearly skimeister competition for decades. In *The Lebanon Times,* "The annual Mud Meet crowns the 'Skimeister of Lebanon and the World' with awards in ski jumping, Nordic skiing, and downhill racing."[128] Heistad remembers the four event discipline as the standard: "If you were a skier, you skied everything, and that meant when we finished cross country practice, we'd go over and jump the 20. There wasn't as much specialization, so I got started back in the 40s as a wee tyke, and coming up through the 50s, all of our meets were four events; we never went to a meet without skiing four events."[129] Malmquist recalls learning to ski in the 1950s and 60s: "back then, you learned to walk on skis before you learned to slide on skis, and when you could turn, then you went to jumping. So you learned left and right skills and powerful skills from alpine skiing. You acquired endurance from cross country, and it all culminated in jumping."[130]

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[125] "Skimeister," Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed February 18, 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/skimeister.
[126] "Dartmouth Takes Eastern Ski Title," *New York Times,* February 25, 1968, accessed February 28, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/118327640/1126E941FEF943D3PQ/8?accountid=14171.
[127] E. John B. Allen. *Historical Dictionary of Skiing.* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2011), 178, https://books.google.com/books?id=YTW-Cpm2e1oC&pg=PA177&lpg=PA177&dq=ski+jumping+ski+meister+john+b+allen&source=bl&ots=SEIl6LjO7u&sig=ACfU3U3Szm11nEmrT2VESqYj2s3FsVlzZg&hl=en&ppis=_e&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjgzYr_g_DnAhVom-AKHVe4As4Q6AEwAHoECAoQAQ#v=onepage&q=ski%20jumping%20ski%20meister%20john%20b%20allen&f=false.
[128] Cindy Heath, "A Winter Sports Legacy," *The Lebanon Times,* accessed February 27, 2020, http://thelebanontimes.com/a-winter-sports-legacy/.
[129] Erling Heistad, February 17, 2020.
[130] Walter Malmquist, February 4, 2020.

When asked why there were so many more ski jumpers in the 1950s and 60s, Malmquist responded, "I attribute that to the fact that the skimeister discipline was a very popular event back in the 50s and 60s."[131] The fall of the skimeister hurt the sport. As skiers were forced to choose between skiing disciplines, many chose alpine and cross country skiing over jumping, both of which were growing in popularity at the time: a 1976 article in the *Chicago Tribune* announced cross country skiing as the "fastest growing sport in North America, according to the Ski Touring Council of Troy, Vt... Suddenly this outdoor diversion ranks in rising popularity right up there with tennis."[132]

As cross country and alpine skiing grew, Malmquist recalled, "Ski jumping was on its own. Cross country grew as ski jumping unfortunately was going through a slump, a major slump."[133] After the NCAA dropped ski jumping as a college sport, local and high school jumping programs suffered. Malmquist noted that,

> The cascading effects (of the NCAA's decision) soon significantly reduced the number of facilities with ski jump programs as well as the number of junior ski jumpers in the United States… which in turn led the USSA and US Ski Team dropping ski jumping from their programs, while local and regional cross country programs, in their own best interests, grew more and more independent from ski jumping.[134]

With less visibility due to the separation of these sports from each other, ski jumping suffered from lower attendance and less access to resources and volunteers. Because of a narrowing pool of volunteers, communities that were too distanced from their Norwegian roots, local programs' limited financial resources and the growing competition with other sports, some ski jumping facilities suffered. By 1977, the wooden tower of the K65 ski jump in Salisbury,

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[131] Walter Malmquist, February 4, 2020.
[132] H.P. Koenig, "Cross-Country Ski Craze," *Chicago Tribune,* January 11, 1976, accessed February 26, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/171270488/D08F5B5D191F4EC6PQ/8?accountid=14171.
[133] Walter Malmquist, February 4, 2020.
[134] Walter Malmquist, email message to Ariel Picton Kobayashi, February 3, 2020.

which rose 50 feet above the ground, was starting to rot. Walter Malmquist remembered a Dartmouth College teammate from Norway falling through the floor at the top of the tower while practicing "imitation" takeoffs before his turn to jump: "I mentioned to Christian--'this wood is pretty tender. I don't think we want to be jumping around up here.'" Luckily, when Christian fell through the planking, he caught himself by his elbows, and after dangling above the 50 foot drop to the ground, Malmquist was able to hoist him back up to safety:

> He had old Splitken skis. As I was grabbing him, I could see his skis floating down in the air like a feather, we were so high up, they floated back and forth, going down in the air until they hit the ground...If he had not caught those 2x4s with his elbows sticking out, he wouldn't be with us anymore. I kind of think that that was probably the most exciting thing that happened that day.[135]

The rest of the day was business as usual; Malmquist remembers: Christian collected his skis and hiked back up to take his jump, and Malmquist set a new hill record that day. Carey Fiertz, a director at Salisbury Winter Sports Association had another story about the old ski jump tower: he once "met some guys who said that they had been involved when the poles (for the tower) were put in--they actually operated the pole digging device, and they said they were sure they didn't put them in deep enough… I still shudder when I look at pictures of the old tower."[136]

I interviewed my father, Mark Picton, who recalled the ski jumping program in Salisbury, Connecticut when I first started jumping in 1999: "There was a real mix of equipment"[137] he recalled, which, he said, included wooden antique jumping skis from the 1930s and 40s that no one used, skis from the 60s and 70s that jumpers who were just starting out used, and a smaller collection of newer jumping skis, used by more advanced jumpers, all of which were

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[135] Walter Malmquist, February 4, 2020.
[136] Carey Fiertz, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 1, 2020.
[137] Mark Picton, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 3, 2020.

hand-me-downs from other clubs or past jumpers.[138] My father described finding equipment for me and other jumpers in the ski shed:

> It was--you go into the ski shed and find something that's the right length for you, and you see if the bindings are working. If they're not, someone will take out a screw driver and switch something around, and, you know, borrow a binding part from some other ski, and pretty soon this kid is equipped and ready to fly down the hill...It was cobbled together, but there was nothing wrong with that.[139]

Despite all the difficulties the ski jumping community has faced, ski jumping persists, and it continues to be a viable sport to this day. Even though college jumping is no longer an option in the U.S., American ski jumpers still find their way to the highest levels of the sport. Those committed to ski jumping in the 21st century continue to seek out ways to reestablish bonds between jumping clubs and their communities, while enabling young jumpers to achieve their goals in the sport. Perhaps it is the small scale aspect of ski jumping programs that motivate volunteers to continue, or perhaps it is the sense of togetherness and solidarity that comes from being involved in a neighborhood-fed sport that keeps ski jumping programs alive, but one thing is certain: the ski jumping community is resilient.

[138] Mark Picton, February 3, 2020.
[139] Mark Picton, February 3, 2020.

Chapter 4: Ski Jumping's Success in the Northeast

Despite its decline in the second half of the 20th century, ski jumping continues to have a small but strong community and following in the 21st century. There are several factors contributing to this. First, ski jumping is an Olympic event and has been since the Winter Olympics began; this provides a consistent goal for aspiring young ski jumpers. Second, women's ski jumping has gained a great deal of traction in recent decades; after a long and ongoing battle for women's inclusion at the highest levels of the sport, women were finally allowed to compete in the Olympics in 2014, marking a huge step towards gender equality in ski jumping. Third, there is a unique sense of tradition in the Northeastern United States that surrounds the sport, and local communities push for its continuing. Fourth, there is a strong community of volunteers still working various ski jumping clubs around the East; many jumping events and programs simply could not stay alive without these loyal volunteers.

The Winter Olympics every four years contributes to a sense of stability in the sport and is a goal for many ski jumpers. Ski jumping was one of the few original Winter Olympic sports, included in 1924 in the first Winter Olympic Games in Chamonix, France.[140] Eight years later, Lake Placid, New York hosted the 1932 Winter Games, and again in 1980, making it the only site that has hosted the Winter Games in the Eastern United States.[141] A February 1932 *Chicago Daily Tribune* article announced: "The 1932 Olympic Games… will begin at 10 a.m. tomorrow in the snowy village of Lake Placid, in the Adirondack Mountains of New York… the climax, of course, will be the ski jumps and the bob races next week."[142] The "snowy village of Lake

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[140] "Ski Jumping," Olympic Games, accessed March 3, 2020, https://www.olympic.org/ski-jumping.
[141] "Winter Games," Olympic Games, accessed March 3, 2020, https://www.olympic.org/winter-games.
[142] Westbrook Pegler, "Olympic Winter Games Open Today at Lake Placid," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* February 4, 1932, accessed March 4, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/181210387/EA51E767F4E5480CPQ/5?accountid=14171.

Placid" had actually been suffering through unseasonably mild weather leading up to the Games, as *The Washington Post* observed that January:

> All day long rain fell on a rugged countryside that has been stripped clean of snow and ice. Anywhere else the mildness of spring and temperatures above 50 degrees might be welcomed but here it strikes straight at the heart of a community that for a solid year has bent every activity toward preparation for the international competitions starting February 4 and continuing through February 13. Skiers of Norway, Japan and Sweden, eager for practice, can't find enough snow to make a snowball. In the hotels today faces brightened at the posting of the official report: "Rain, changing to light snow. Much colder tonight. Saturday snow. Clearing by night. Drop in temperature. Fair. Near zero Sunday."[143]

Snow fell just in time for the Games to be held, but the United States won no ski jumping medals that year. In fact, Americans have won very few Olympic medals in ski jumping or Nordic combined since the first Olympic Games, but a few victories stand out.

In the very first Olympics in Chamonix, Norwegian born American Anders Haugen won the Bronze Medal. To date, Haugen is the only American to win an Olympic medal in "Special Jumping"--the sport of ski jumping without the inclusion of a cross country skiing race.[144] The next medals won by Americans were more than eight decades later in the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games when the United States won a staggering four medals in Nordic combined--an event that combines points from ski jumping and cross country skiing. These were the first medals ever won by Americans in Nordic combined. Johnny Spillane won the Silver Medal on the K90 meter hill; on the K120 meter hill, Bill Demong won Gold and Johnny Spillane won Silver, and in the team event, the United States won Silver.[145] For the United States, winning in

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[143] "Lake Placid Awaits Rain, Cold Needed for Winter Olympics," *The Washington Post,* January 16, 1932, accessed March 5, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/150345570/1BDD633CAA2D4B93PQ/4?accountid=14171.

[144] "Normal Hill Individual Men," Olympic Games, accessed March 2, 2020, https://www.olympic.org/chamonix-1924/ski-jumping/normal-hill-individual-men.

[145] "Nordic Combined," Olympic Games, accessed March 2, 2020, https://www.olympic.org/vancouver-2010/nordic-combined.

Nordic events has been an uphill battle. *The New York Times* notes that "Nordic combined has been dominated by countries — like Norway, Finland and Germany — where cross-country skiing and ski jumping are popular."[146] While the list of medals won by Americans in ski jumping and Nordic combined is short, these ski jumpers provided young American jumpers with role models. Until 2014, however, ski jumping at an elite level excluded women from participation.

In 2011, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced that ski jumping, the only sport in the Winter or Summer Olympics that did not include both men and women, would finally include women in the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia. This followed a years-long struggle for women's inclusion, organized by a group of female ski jumpers from around the world.[147] One of the main leaders of the group was American Lindsey Van, the winner of the first ever women's ski jumping World Championships, held in 2009 in Liberec, Czech Republic.[148] Van commented that "I guess since you're the first and only World Champion in your sport, then you're the go-to person all of a sudden. That's a whole new role; it's not something you ever pick, but you're the spokesperson for the sport. That's *your* job."[149]

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[146] Ken Belson, "US In Nordic Combined: It's About Now," *New York Times,* February 16, 2014, accessed March10, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/17/sports/olympics/us-in-nordic-combined-its- about-now.html.
[147] Katie Thomas, "After Long Fight for Inclusion, Women's Ski Jumping Gains Olympic Status," *New York Times,* April 7, 2011, accessed March 2, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/1620477 425/A0B5822EA695426APQ/2?accountid=14171.
[148] Lynn Zinser, "American Wins Women's World Title," *New York Times,* February 21, 2009, accessed March 8, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/1030617004/32BD3F1B191C4B42PQ/5?acc ountid=14171.
[149] *Ready to Fly.* Directed by William Kerig. (Scott A. Zeller, Whitney Childers, 2012) Amazon Prime.

Lindsey Van[150]

Prior to the 2011 decision, ski jumping had very little visibility aside from the Olympics.[151] In 2004, several years before women were allowed in the Olympics, four women participated in "ski flying" for the first time: ski jumping that occurs on much larger hills than those in the Olympics.[152] Despite members of the International Ski Federation (FIS) attempting to block the opportunity for the women supposedly due to safety concerns, Van was one of four women who went ski flying that day in front of a huge crowd. The women were only allowed to jump in the practice before the men's meet,[153] but Van's coach, Larry Stone remembered, "I think half of that crowd was there to see the women ski fly...At the end of the (men's) meet, this old guy who was

[150] Jacki Zehner, "Sochi 2014 - Women Ski Jumpers Are Ready To Fly," Linkedin, February 7, 2014, accessed April 27, 2020, https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20140207195238-25295057-sochi-2014-women-ski-jumpers-are-ready-to-fly.
[151] Skip Rosin, "Their Rejection, Our Loss," WSJ Opinion, February 10, 2010, accessed March 5, 2020, https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704533204575047482012978218.
[152] Paul J. Macarthur, "Taking Flight: The Evolution of Ski Flying, From the First Recorded Jump to the Latest World Record," *Skiing Heritage Journal* Vol. 23, No. 2 (Mar-Apr 2011) 20-25, accessed March 20, 2020, https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=OijwKxr1ER0C&pg=PA20#v=onepage&q&f =false.
[153] Larry Stone, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, March 3, 2020.

the head of the FIS jumping committee at that point, he comes over to me and says 'Well, you did it today, but the girls will never ski fly again.' And that was true--that was 2004, and I don't think the girls have flown since."[154]

The policy of excluding women continued in 2002 and in the 2006 Torino Winter Games when the IOC only added one sport to the events, which was ski cross.[155] In 2008, Van along with teammates Jessica Jerome and Karla Keck and twelve other female jumpers from five countries sued the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the right to take part in the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games.[156] As a result, the British Columbia Supreme Court ruled that the IOC was guilty of gender discrimination in barring women ski jumpers from competing in the Olympics, but did not take the next step to force the IOC or the Vancouver Organizing Committee to change its plans for the 2010 Games, so female ski jumpers were again stuck watching from the sidelines.[157] After that court session, a distraught Van spoke to the reporters:

> I thought that they would go the other way...it just makes it seem like discrimination is okay in Canada. Kind of like, the Canadian court system is a little bit weak, if they can't even stand up to the IOC and hold by Canadian law. It's like (the IOC) can just come in here and do whatever they want, because they're a private entity, ruled by nobody. So they can go wherever, do whatever...that's scary![158]

The IOC contended that there were not enough women at an elite level of the sport to make it a viable event.[159] The numbers, however, indicated the opposite. In 2006, there were 83 female ski jumpers from 14 countries jumping at an elite level, which was more than luge,

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[154] Larry Stone, March 3, 2020.
[155] Rosin, "Their Rejection, Our Loss."
[156] "Our Olympic Story," Women's Ski Jumping USA, accessed February 25, 2020, http://www.wsjusa.com /olympic-inclusion.
[157] "Our Olympic Story," Women's Ski Jumping USA.
[158] *Ready to Fly.*
[159] Thomas, "After Long Fight for Inclusion, Women's Ski Jumping Gains Olympic Status."

skeleton, bobsled, snowboard cross or ski cross could boast of their female elite competitors,[160] and by 2009, American ski jumper Katie Willis said that there were "more than 160 elite women ski jumpers from 18 nations who compete internationally."[161] Furthermore, according to a *New York Times* article, critics of the IOC's decision "charged that the exclusion was based on outdated ideas about the abilities of female athletes, made all the more puzzling by the fact that traditionally male Olympic sports like wrestling and boxing had recently welcomed women."[162] In particular, Gian-Franco Kasper, president of the International Ski Federation (FIS) was quoted on National Public Radio in 2005 as saying, "Don't forget, it's like jumping down from, let's say, about two meters on the ground about a thousand times a year, which seems not to be appropriate for ladies from a medical point of view."[163] Larry Stone adds:

> There's nothing as daring as a young guy or girl on a ski jump. But there's nothing as stodgy and old fashioned and conservative as the old ski jumpers. So the old guys that were running FIS, basically they were just digging their heels in because the unspoken fear that I think was fueling the resistance of FIS to the women's ski jumping movement, was that they were scared to death that a woman would set the world record in ski flying, and they couldn't handle it.[164]

The women kept pushing for inclusion, however, and finally triumphed, gaining a spot in the 2014 Olympic Games. Critics of female inclusion in the sport continued even as the Sochi Games began: the men's ski jumping coach for Russia, Alexander Arefyev commented, "It's a pretty difficult sport with a high risk of injury. If a man gets a serious injury it's still not fatal,

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[160] Rosin, "Their Rejection, Our Loss."
[161] *Ready to Fly.*
[162] Thomas, "After Long Fight for Inclusion, Women's Ski Jumping Gains Olympic Status."
[163] *Ready to Fly.*
[164] Larry Stone, March 3, 2020.

but for women it could end much more seriously. Women have another purpose – to have children, to do housework, to create hearth and home."[165]

The joint collaboration of women around the world to promote women's ski jumping was part of its reason for success: Jessica Jerome commented on this sense of camaraderie: "When a new girl wins, even if she's not American, we think that's awesome. If she's getting better, then her teammates are getting better. Then we're all going to get more competitive, and the whole level of the sport gets better."[166] After Van won the first women's World Championship, ski jumper Daniela Iraschko from Austria commented that "I think it was good for women's ski jumping, and I congratulate Lindsey for her gold medal."[167] During the Sochi Games, Van commented that "Being here is history. I want more people to see that women can ski jump. It's taken 90 years for us to get here."[168] This achievement of gaining Olympic status for the sport for women has since gone a long way to encourage young girls to try the sport. Today, there are many more girls and women who ski jump in the world.

Another factor that keeps ski jumping viable is the strong sense of tradition surrounding the sport and ski jumping events, and the wish to preserve and continue that tradition. Some ski jumping clubs rely on their once a year jumping event to raise money to keep their club going another year. Tickets are sold, along with food, beer, cowbells, hats and t-shirts. The atmosphere at larger ski jumping events can be carnival-like; there are often bonfires, food and

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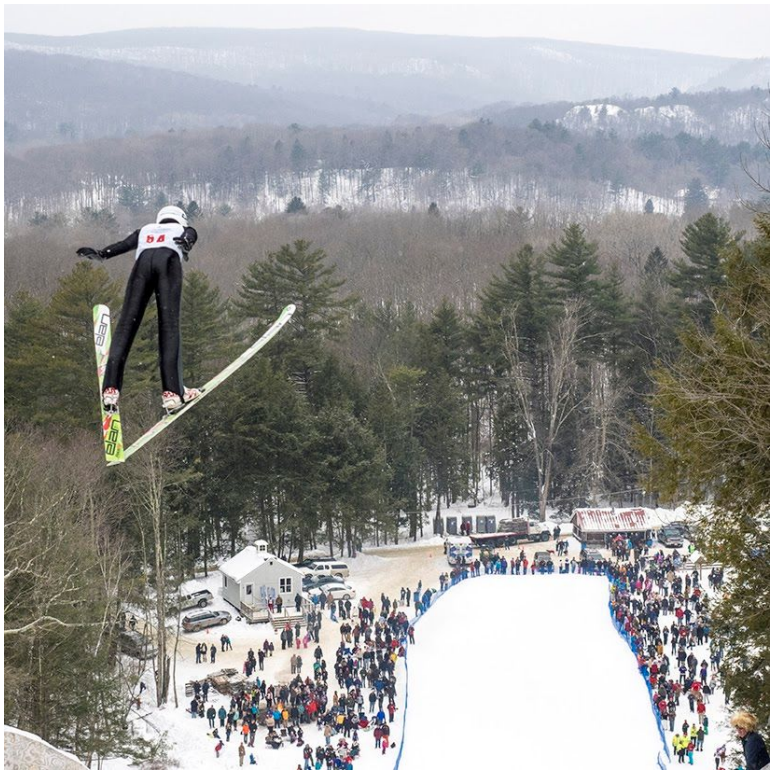
[165] Owen Gibson, "Sochi 2014: Women Ski Jumpers Have Point to Prove After 90-Year Wait," *The Guardian,* February 10, 2014, accessed February 25, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/sport/blog/2014/feb/10/ski-jumping-women-winter-olympics-2014-sochi.
[166] Rosin, "Their Rejection, Our Loss."
[167] *Ready to Fly.*
[168] Gibson, "Sochi 2014: Women Ski Jumpers Have Point to Prove After 90-Year Wait."

beer tents, children and dogs running around, and snowball fights. Onlookers ring cowbells instead of clapping their gloved hands when a jumper comes down the hill.[169]

The special atmosphere found at ski jumping events has a way of cultivating fans that choose to make standing out in the cold and watching ski jumping a yearly tradition. A 2010 *New York Times* article noted that the scene surrounding a jumping event almost won out over the actual jumping spectacle itself: "There were certainly no 'agony of defeat' moments of someone cart-wheeling off the ramp… children nap and fans clang cowbells as daredevils fly... Still, in some ways, ski jumping is comfortably delightful. People jump. Fans cheer… Some things never change."[170]


Salisbury, Connecticut[171]

[169] "Salisbury Invitational Ski Jumping," Jumpfest, accessed March 10, 2020, http://www.jumpfest.org/.
[170] John Branch, "It Seems Ski Jumping Has Become a Picnic," *New York Times,* February 23, 2010, accessed March 15, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/1461190600/CB857B88313F4A3BPQ/6?accountid=14171.
[171] Heather Marcus, "Salisbury, Connecticut Photographs," New England Today Travel, October 16, 2015, accessed April 28, 2020, https://newengland.com/today/travel/connecticut/salisbury-connecticut-photographs/.

It is precisely this element of tradition, an event in which little changes from year to year, that brings crowds each year, like the crowds the ski jump in Brattleboro, Vermont attracts. Continuing a long held tradition, thousands of spectators gather at the Harris Hill ski jump in Brattleboro at their annual competition.[172] For a sport that takes place in the dead of winter, it is remarkable that Harris Hill frequently draws thousands of spectators; in 1972, the *New York Times* noted the "frostbitten crowd of 4,000."[173] Since 1922, Brattleboro has held onto a ski jumping tradition that not only attracts large crowds, but forms a festival-like scene that has made it a tradition worth continuing. As the *Brattleboro Reformer* recalls, "On February 4, 1922 the first Vermont State Championship Ski Jump was held at the Cedar Street jump. About 3,000 spectators saw John Carleton of Dartmouth Outing Club leap 150 feet on his first try...The hill featured a 340-foot toboggan slide, as well as a 60-meter ski jump, a junior ski jump, and an outdoor fireplace."[174]

The atmosphere is similar in Salisbury, Connecticut. Tradition brings crowds back to Salisbury each year, two weekends prior to Brattleboro's event. Spectators drive from hours away to watch the ski jumping in Salisbury, where "onlookers drink beer, hot cocoa and warm themselves by dueling bonfires,"[175] outdoor writer Katharine Erwin notes. Tucked away in the woods on the outskirts of town, the ski jumps have formed a following because of the tradition that was started years ago. Larry Stone agrees: "'I grew up here. It's a homegrown club with a

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[172] "Photos: The Hill Came Alive," *Bennington Banner,* February 17, 2020, accessed March 18, 2020, https://www.benningtonbanner.com/stories/the-hill-came-alive,597559?.
[173] Michael Strauss, "Ski Jump Honors Taken By Barber," *New York Times,* February 21, 1972, accessed March 3, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/119346750/ABBA6CCD661044EAPQ/1?accountid=14171.
[174] The Brattleboro Reformer Historical Society, "Toboggan Slide Was Part of Winter Attraction," *Brattleboro Reformer,* February 7, 2020, accessed March 3, 2020, https://www.reformer.com/stories/toboggan-slide-was-part-of-winter-attraction,596702.
[175] Katharine Erwin, "Salisbury, Connecticut's Jumpfest 2015," Cool Hunting, February 10, 2015, accessed March 3, 2020, https://coolhunting.com/culture/jumpfest-connecticut-2015/.

huge tradition that goes way way back into the '30s.'"[176] This ski jumping event continues to draw in crowds simply because people love the tradition of it. The *Hartford Courant* relates that "Jacqui Rice, a math teacher at Housatonic Valley Regional High School… has been coming to watch the ski jumping since she was a kid. 'When I was young, my dad was the starter at the top of the hill,' Rice said. 'As a youngster, I came and collected bibs, that kind of stuff. My mother worked in the snack shack.'"[177] The excitement around Salisbury's big "Jumpfest" weekend revolves around tradition: Mark Picton noted that "In Salisbury, people feel strongly about the jumps because it's a whole community tradition. That's why people come back to coach and help on the hill, because it's a tradition in their lives...not only in the history of the town, but in the history of individual lives."[178] Mat Kiefer, a long time member of the Salisbury Winter Sports Association Board of Directors, thinks the reason volunteers keep showing up year after year is simply that "everybody is just working so hard to keep a tradition going."[179]

It was also thanks to tradition that Salisbury was able to build a new 65 meter ski jump in 2009. When members of Salisbury Winter Sports Association held a town meeting in Salisbury to discuss whether the club should try to raise $700,000 to replace the rotting and rickety ski jump that was no longer safe to use, Kiefer remembers that

> Three hundred people showed up. 297 voted for it, felt it was a good idea...they weren't members of the club, they were just people that lived in town. People got up and spoke about it… "it's part of our town heritage, it's such a happy thing, this is something that we think is important to continue on as a tradition"... There was a guy that got up and said, "You guys gotta do this!" Jon and I, when we left, we had tears in our eyes.[180]

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[176] Erwin, "Salisbury, Connecticut's Jumpfest 2015."
[177] Lori Riley, "Salisbury's Ski Jumping Tradition Continues," *Hartford Courant,* February 20, 2011, accessed March 4, 2020, https://www.courant.com/sports/hc-xpm-2011-02-20-hc-salisbury-ski-jump-0221-20110220-story.html.
[178] Mark Picton, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 3, 2020.
[179] Mat Kiefer, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, Salisbury, CT, February 12, 2020.
[180] Mat Kiefer, February 12, 2020.

Tied into the element of tradition is yet another important factor keeping ski jumping going, and that is the importance of volunteers to keep each ski jump in the East alive.

In Salisbury, "Every Sunday morning, year-round, a group of volunteers (who refer to themselves as Swamp Yankees) drive down the back road in a picturesque New England setting to meet up and to maintain the jumps. There is no monetary return, just the hope that they will have a great Jumpfest,"[181] Erwin explains. Ski jumps across the East have always been largely volunteer run. There is a strong tradition of volunteers who count on helping out at their local ski jump each winter. In Brattleboro, volunteer coordinator Kathryn Einig noted that "'many of the volunteers have been volunteering for longer than I've been recruiting for volunteers. It's true. So when I call them or email them, they write back and say, 'I'm in, I can't wait.'"[182]

Members of the Kiefer family have volunteered at the Salisbury jumps for seventy years. Mat Kiefer's father George joined Salisbury Winter Sports Association in 1949: "He got involved in the ski jump as a laborer, as a volunteer… He was the guy that organized the tractors. He would always have a truck full of shovels and rakes and a chainsaw...because you never knew what had to be done. So that's how he started, it was just because it was a local event."[183] Because ski jumping in the East has remained such a small sport over the decades, ski jumping clubs often cannot hire people to work; it's a volunteer effort. Picton recalls that "Our club seemed like a local club of dedicated volunteers, and it turned out that most of them go way back with it, and they just continue not out of any obligation, but just because they like the skiing and the associations."[184]

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[181] Erwin, "Salisbury, Connecticut's Jumpfest 2015."
[182] Chris Mays, "Ski Jump Event A Family Effort," *Brattleboro Reformer,* February 12, 2020, accessed March 15, 2020, https://www.reformer.com/stories/ski-jump-event-a-family-effort,597100.
[183] Mat Kiefer, February 12, 2020.
[184] Mark Picton, February 3, 2020.

Volunteers working on the jump in Salisbury, Connecticut, ca. 1950[185]

In Salisbury and throughout the East, the weather is also often a huge challenge. Volunteers go to great lengths to make jumping events possible, even in the face of foul weather or a snow-less season. It can be a daunting feat to get snow onto a ski jump and to keep it there long enough for a competition to happen. Picton wonders at the immense effort volunteers put in at the ski jumps in Salisbury: "No matter what the conditions they faced, this group of volunteers in Salisbury will put a groomed surface on the jumps and make them ready for safe competition in the face of all kinds of odds, as far as weather goes. I don't know where they get the drive and determination to do that, but they're not going to be deterred by weather or strategic difficulties."[186] Many of the volunteers in Salisbury, at least, came out of a Yankee culture of innovation, in which you made do with what you had. Kiefer describes the process of getting snow to and on

[185] Bill Pennington, "A Small Town's Leap of Faith," *New York Times,* February 8, 2011, accessed April 27, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/09/sports/skiing/09skijump.html.
[186] Mark Picton, February 3, 2020.

the ski jumps throughout the years: "Because there was no snowmaking, you had to go find snow in snow drifts on different farms and from snow fences along highways."[187] Once snow was collected from parking lots, farms and highways and trucked to the jump, the snow was blown up a pipe onto the ski jump. This method was used in the 1950s, and is still used in Salisbury today: at the base of the pipe, a group of volunteers shovels snow and ice chunks into a corn blower, which is a piece of farm equipment run by a tractor. The corn blower is attached to the vertical pipe that goes 50 feet up to the top of the tower, and the snow is shot straight up the pipe and out onto the inrun of the ski jump. At the top, another group of volunteers are stationed on the inrun, raking and shoveling the blown snow into place to make a smooth inrun for the jumpers.

With the modern snow making abilities, the Salisbury jump happens every year now, but Kiefer remembers when the decision to hold the competition had to be left to the last week:

> You wouldn't know whether to hold a jump until you make a decision the week before, and most particularly, the Monday before. So you would meet on Monday at the drugstore coffee shop. The man in charge of advertising would come, and everybody in charge of hill preparation would come, and you'd all sit down--because the day before, you went to do an inventory on snow banks. Whether it was at Sharon Hospital parking lot, or if it was at some grocery market over in Millerton, or at Berkshire School... then you had to listen to the weatherman and make the decision of whether to hold it or not.[188]

One July, to raise funds, volunteers in Salisbury put on a summer ski jumping event, again, using the tractor and corn blower to crush lake ice that had been stored in an icehouse through the winter. Kiefer recalls that his father George was involved in the 1955 summer jumping event in Salisbury, where the inrun and landing hill was covered with ice and the outrun was hay: "They worked all night with crushed ice, from an icehouse in Torrington with 3 or 4 flatbed trucks. So the big thing was to get the thing going, get it ready… they had a good

[187] Mat Kiefer, February 12, 2020.
[188] Mat Kiefer, February 12, 2020.

crowd… so dad said that they worked all night to crush the ice, they had the competition at 9, and the ice was gone by 11."[189]

Lake Placid also went to great effort to pull off summer ski jumping events. On July 2, 1956, Lake Placid held a summer jump, also largely a volunteer effort. A 1956 *New York Times* reported that:

> Preparing the course will be quite an operation. Fifty tons of ice will arrive by train from Utica tomorrow night and will be trucked to the jumping hill. In past years, the ice has been cut in the winter from nearby lakes, but last winter the snow was too heavy for ice cutting… At 6 A.M. Wednesday a crew of volunteers will be readying the course…(they) expect about 50 to help on the course and more than 100 on the whole project… Slush would be the expected result of snow in July, but it's no problem here. After the "snow" is laid down on the jump and landing, it is coated with ammonium chloride, which keeps it from melting for twelve to fourteen hours.[190]

As Heistad notes, "Volunteers, and how you treat your volunteers, will make or break (your ski jumping club). The first thing a volunteer needs to know is that they're wanted, that they're needed, that they're appreciated. Don't ever let a volunteer leave without being thanked."[191]

There is a strong sense of camaraderie present within the ski jumping community, creating an atmosphere that attracts volunteers and spectators that make watching this sport their annual tradition. Ski jumpers cheer each other on. Parents of ski jumpers become close friends with each other. At different meets around the Northeast, jumpers stay with other jumping families. Each weekend, you see the same people over and over again, and this forms a strong bond. This is something that sets the sport apart from others. Women's ski jumping gained traction and made it to the Olympics because women from around the world joined forces to

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[189] Mat Kiefer, February 12, 2020.
[190] "Snow, Ice and Skis at Lake Placid Tomorrow: Hill Will Be "Frozen" For Tomorrow's Holiday Jumping Meet," *New York Times,* July 3, 1956, accessed March 20, 2020, https://ezproxy.purchase.edu:4131/docview/113796065/8466736B9E134A34PQ/1?accountid=14171.
[191] Erling Heistad, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 17, 2020.

overcome discrimination. Volunteers continue to help out at ski jumps because of this camaraderie. There is a sense of togetherness that sets ski jumping apart from other sports. When my ski jumping coach quit in the middle of my jumping career, there was no coach to replace him, and my father recalled that "you were taken on by other clubs and coaches… which is a pretty interesting aspect of ski jumping in New England… that you could still pursue the sport by the grace of six other clubs in New England. The other coaches were always willing to coach whoever was on the hill, practicing or competing."[192] Heistad also commented on this unique aspect of the sport. He compared it to the downhill/alpine racing scene. He recounted how his son's downhill racing skis were once tampered with by another racer, so that he fell during a race…

> Now, can you picture that happening to a jumping ski? No. Very, very different. What makes that difference? Probably all sorts of things, but the difference is there, and something that parents should appreciate: that their kids are going to be taken care of… I think that our working together and seeing kids supported by other coaches sends a very strong message. You go to Lake Placid, you know Larry's going to be there with a positive thing to (say to) your kid, and you wouldn't have any doubt about it. But *that* being seen by others sends a very strong message, that these kids are gonna be okay. And you don't see that in alpine. You won't find a kid from Pats Peak being coached by anyone from Franconia or anywhere else.[193]

This idea of everyone supporting each other and helping one another out is why many stay involved, as Picton notes, "it was a good community, and everyone involved was always encouraging each person's effort every time. Everyone's effort was always considered worthy, and people expressed that. So it was a very constructive, worthwhile experience, whether you excelled in the sport or not."

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[192] Mark Picton, February 3, 2020.
[193] Erling Heistad, February 17, 2020.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Ski jumping in the Northeast has faced numerous challenges in the way of its survival, but it continues to be a viable sport. In the 1970s and 80s the pool of jumpers, coaches, officials and volunteers began to narrow. The Scandinavian influence that once powered ski jumping in the Northeast was diminishing with each passing generation. In addition, Bogataj's terrible crash in ABC's famous "Agony of Defeat" video caused many Americans to see ski jumping as a dangerous sport, and when the NCAA dropped ski jumping from the list of college sports, it had a big negative impact on ski jumping across the country. However, the Olympics serve as a constant inspiration to ski jumpers, and the success of influencing the IOC to incorporate women's ski jumping in the Olympics has gone a long way to broaden its appeal and beat inequality in the sport. Furthermore, the importance of tradition in the ski jumping community and the dedication of volunteers each winter keeps ski jumping at the local and regional levels afloat.

There is something intangible about ski jumping that captivates people. Mark Picton described the 30 and 65 meter jumps in Salisbury:

> It takes place in a clearing in the woods on rickety looking thrown together trestles made out of old telephone poles and weathered boards, and same thing for the 60--it was a homemade tower just sticking up into the sky, and when you look at it when there isn't snow on it it looks sort of derelict, but then when they have it all snowed and groomed and a track cut, it's this gleaming parabolic curve that somehow looks perfect, and it's the contradiction between the rough means and the surreally beautiful finish to it which is really kind of inspiring.[194]

This ability to captivate draws entire communities together around ski jumping and events, and cultivates returning volunteers, spectators and fans to the sport year after year.

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[194] Mark Picton, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 3, 2020.

The strong community support from the whole town of Salisbury supported ski jumping's continuation in Connecticut. Kenny Barker, president of Salisbury Winter Sports Association, remembers raising the money for the new tower: "A lot of people doubted we could pull this off, and I don't blame them...In the end, it got done because the ski jump means so much to the town. People wanted to get it done."[195]

With the town's support, the jump is now sturdy and safe for the next generation of jumpers. Previously, a hike to the top would have revealed thin strips of wood nailed into the planking for footing on the side of the inrun, where ice clung to the upside of the strips. The tall tower swayed as jumpers walked up with one hand on the wobbly railing and one hand on their shouldered skis. On the starting platform, they strapped on their skis and pushed off, skiing down a hard snow surface without cut tracks at about 50 miles per hour, leaping forward into the air at the takeoff, soaring sixty meters over a steep, narrow, snow covered hill in the air. Meeting the ground again in what they hoped would be a beautiful telemark landing with one foot in front of the other, they skied onto the flat outrun and were met by a roaring crowd of spectators who had come from all over the Northeast to see the ski jumpers in Salisbury. Carey Fiertz of SWSA, who helps at the top of the tower during Jumpfest weekend wrote,

> It is humbling to contemplate the legion of volunteers and community supporters who have made this possible over the past 91 years. As I look from the tower over the town of Salisbury and across the valley to the distant hills, occasionally catching a whiff of the bonfires and hearing the ringing of cowbells, I feel like I am standing on the shoulders of giants. Some of the work we volunteers do is physically demanding, but nothing compared to the labor provided by our predecessors. We have snow guns and Sno-Cats and iPhones; they mostly had pails and shovels. The new steel tower is probably one of the most solid structures in town--the previous one, well, I still shudder thinking about that rickety old thing swaying with the most gentle breeze and seemingly held together with little more than rusty nails and baling wire.[196]

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[195] Bill Pennington, "A Small Town's Leap of Faith," *New York Times,* February 8, 2011, accessed March 27, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/09/sports/skiing/09skijump.html.
[196] Carey Fiertz, "View From the Top," *2018 Salisbury Ski Jumps 92nd Annual Jumpfest Program,* February, 2018.

The old ski jump in Berlin, New Hampshire, "Nansen," is also experiencing a renewal of interest in its proposed comeback after decades of disuse. Bolstered by town support as well as enthusiasm from the whole Eastern jumping community, the Nansen jump was patched up just enough to make it safe for Sarah Hendrickson, Olympian and New Hampshire native, to jump it in 2017. The *Concord Monitor* read: "A towering piece of New Hampshire's history will be temporarily restored to active duty this month, when the 80-year-old Nansen Ski Jump launches one last skier. A team of Bow-based contractors spent six weeks this winter putting a new deck on the rotted, 171-foot-tall steel-framed structure, which was once the epicenter of American ski jumping."[197] The town of Berlin hopes to raise enough money to replace the tower and bring Nansen back to its prominent place on the Eastern ski jumping circuit.

Sarah Hendrickson, Nansen Ski Jump, Berlin, NH, 2017[198]

[197] Nick Reid, "Rebuilt by Bow contractor, N.H.'s famed Nansen Ski Jump to host a daring last hurrah," *Concord Monitor,* February 1, 2017, accessed March 27, 2020, https://www.concordmonitor.com/sarah-hendrickson-nansen-ski-jump-berlin-nh-knollstone-contracting-red-bull-7507935.

[198] "Nansen Ski Jump Restoration Project," New Hampshire State Parks, accessed March 25, 2020, https://www.nhstateparks.org/news-events/improving-state-parks/nansen-ski-jump-restoration-project.

Along with the strong community support, volunteers throughout the Northeast help keep ski jumping viable. Heistad, who is now in his 80s, volunteers as a coach at the ski jumps in Lebanon. When asked why he stays involved, he said, "I think it's getting people to know that they can do things, beyond what they've done...We do things because we can share in some other way the joy that somebody has in doing something for the first time, or the hundreth."[199] Heistad noted the importance of cultivating and keeping volunteers involved as vital to clubs' survival. Once, he met a couple who said they were interested in helping out in Lebanon. He recalls:

> I said, 'you want to volunteer? Go on and tell them in the kitchen that you want to volunteer.' I saw them at a meet later, and they said "a woman in there told us that they're all set and they didn't need any help." And you know? I don't know as they ever came back again. They certainly didn't come back and volunteer. But that isn't the way you're gonna build the club. It isn't the way you're gonna build volunteers; it isn't the way people are gonna say, "yeah, I know a really neat place, you oughta go there!" It's our own attitude we present to others, and if we don't give them that "wow, thank you for being here" feeling, they don't feel it. It doesn't just come. You have to tell them. You have to let them know that they are important. And if you feel important some place, pretty soon you'll go back.[200]

In addition to the volunteer support that is crucial to ski jumping in the Northeast, the sense of camaraderie keeps the ski jumping community in place; everyone supporting each other creates an atmosphere that keeps people around. Larry Stone has coached for decades and will always encourage any jumper that walks his way. When asked what it is about ski jumping that makes him stay with it, he said, "Whether it's winning an event or the actual feeling of flying, it's such a physical and psychological rush... If you've had some success and you've had that feeling of flying, it lasts the rest of your life. I get it through my kids. I take every jump my kids take, and you do too, I'm sure."[201] Caroline Gilbert of SWSA writes:

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[199] Erling Heistad, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, February 17, 2020.
[200] Erling Heistad, February 17, 2020
[201] Larry Stone, interview by Ariel Picton Kobayashi, telephone, March 3, 2020.

> The community of ski jumping is a model of commitment and volunteerism...Everyone pitches in to shovel, judge, pick up skis and support the jumpers. Giving back is part of the culture. The small, close-knit community supports all its members, no matter the competency or age...If your equipment needs adjustment, breaks or is faulty, team members and even competitors go out of their way to help find a new set of skis for you to be able to participate. Coaches share their knowledge with every jumper. It does not matter what club or team you are on, each jumper will have a coach at every hill who cares about everyone having fun and improving. Sometimes your child's coach is an Olympian.[202]

Perhaps the tight knit atmosphere that promotes the volunteers, community support and camaraderie is due to the fact that the Eastern ski jumping community is so small. Where there were once dozens of ski jumps marking the landscape throughout the Northeast, there are now just a few. Numerous ski jumping clubs that once existed in the Metropolitan area are gone. Ski jumps once dotted every other town in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and now, Salisbury is the single remaining active jump in Southern New England: Massachusetts has no ski jumps at all. In Lebanon, New Hampshire, the eight neighborhood jumps Heistad remembers has shrunk to just two.

These surviving jumps, however, carry a great responsibility to continue the tradition of ski jumping in the Northeast. Each club must do what it can to keep its volunteers motivated and its jumpers having fun, as Heistad notes: "I think the fun factor is what we really need to concentrate on. We don't have to worry about the official factor nearly as much as the fun factor. And we can strive for perfection in a wide variety of ways, but it's seldom that we ever really need it or have to have it. We can do a lot of things with something less than perfect."[203]

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[202] Caroline Gilbert, "Lessons From My Son, a Ski Jumper," *2018 Salisbury Ski Jumps 92nd Annual Jumpfest Program,* February, 2018.
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