

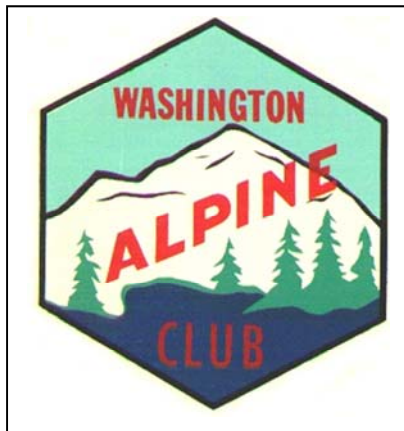
Sahalie Historical Note #16: Ski Clubs in Washington Over the Last 100 Years

The State of Washington has a rich history of skiing, including the organization of ski clubs throughout the region. In celebration of these clubs, I have attempted to document the history as I have found it in local archives.

To start with some perspective, an article in the *Seattle Times* in 1934 noted that the Ishpeming, Michigan, ski tournament was the **47th annual ski tournament** there in the Upper Peninsula! That would put the original around **1887!** A very good reason to justify why the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame is located in Ishpeming, somewhat far from today's skiing centers. Even earlier ski competitions have been documented from mining camps in the high Sierras in California in the **1860s**. Stay tuned for a further focus on these first ski events in America.

I start off by recognizing three of the most venerable outdoor clubs in the Northwest, none of which are purely ski clubs but all three of which were prime movers in the early days of skiing in the region and continue to promote ski mountaineering to this day.

The **Mountaineers**, founded in **1906**, included many of the pioneer skiers in the region, such as Wolf Bauer, Don Fraser, Otto Strizek, Ben Thompson and others. Its lodge at Snoqualmie, built in 1914 above the Rockdale train depot on the west side of the summit, promoted skiing and exploration throughout the area in the teens and twenties – ski tournaments were begun in 1922. A second lodge, at Martin on the east end of the Stampede railroad tunnel, was built in 1928, known as Meany Ski Hut. A note in 1934 mentions that both downhill and slalom competitions at Meany Lodge in Martin awarded their fifth annual trophies, pegging both events to a 1930 launch, one of the earliest for alpine competitions anywhere in North America. Wolf Bauer was reported to have won the first slalom competition at Meany in 1930 using telemark technique. The Mountaineers continue strong today, promoting backcountry skiing as well as a wealth of other outdoor activities in the Northwest and throughout the world.¹



Washington Alpine Club, founded in **1916**, promoted skiing among its many outdoor activities. Local newspapers reported a number of ski trips in the Snoqualmie Pass area sponsored by WAC throughout the 1920s and beyond. WAC built its Guye Cabin lodge across the railroad grade (now Alpentel Road) from Commonwealth/Sahalie Ski Club in 1932. The two clubs shared many ski trips and friendly competitions through the 1930s. WAC continues today as a strong outdoor club, with skiing only one of many facets of its mission. See

Sahalie Historical Note #9 for more information about our neighbors.



The **Mount Baker Club**, which formed in **1911** (although not officially incorporated until 1928), encompassed hiking and other outdoor activities, and was an early

proponent of skiing in the northwest corner of Washington State around Mt. Baker. It sponsored early marathons from Mount Baker to Bellingham, precursors to its famous “Ski to Sea” races held to this day.² An affiliated **Mount Baker Ski Club** was formed in **1927** and held its first tournament, consisting of ski jumping, at Heather Meadows in April 1930.^{3 4} The MBSC’s tournament in February 1934 included both cross-country and slalom races, in which members of Commonwealth Ski Club participated.⁵ The first Mount Baker Winter Sports Carnival in 1935 included efforts by both the “hiking” club and the ski club.⁶ Racers from MBSC show up through the late 1930s and early 1940s in meets at Paradise, but after that disappear into history.

The first Washington-based ski club that appears in local newspapers is the **Northwest Ski Club**, started in Tacoma and focused on skiing at Mount Rainier, especially the Paradise Valley. The club’s first ski tournament was held on July 29, **1917**.^{7 8} The third annual tournament that the club sponsored on Mt. Rainier in 1920 (maybe it missed 1918 due to WWI?) was noted as having “... become one of the big affairs of the Northwest.”⁹ It included not only ski jumping witnessed by up to a thousand spectators but also an annual gala ski ball at the Paradise Inn. These folks, essentially all Norwegian immigrants, really knew how to party as well as jump. References to this Tacoma-based club end as of 1921.

Formation of a **Rainier National Park Ski Club** was announced on June 17, **1922** in Seattle, at the time of celebration of the 118th Norwegian Independence Day.¹⁰ This group took over sponsorship of the annual ski tournament at Paradise on the Fourth of July weekend.¹¹ O.A. Kjos of Seattle was elected the first president. This club ran one other tournament a year later,¹² but seems to have disappeared, at least from mention in the newspapers, thereafter.

In January, **1924**, ski jumpers in the Everett area met to organize the **Cascade Ski Club**. C.H. Langland was the first president. The club’s first tournament was held on January 20, 1924, at Scenic Hot Springs,¹³ where references to jumping competitions go back to 1917.¹⁴ The tournament in 1925 was called off because it was too cold! “Continued freezing weather in the hills has made it impossible to open the hotel there [in Scenic], which would interfere seriously with the day’s program. All water pipes serving the hotel are frozen solidly...”¹⁵ This club seems to have quickly faded, and the name, Cascade Ski Club, was picked up by a Portland organization soon thereafter (1928) and continues strong to this day.



The **Cle Elum Ski Club** appeared in the Seattle newspaper in 1926 with its third tournament (x-c plus jumping),¹⁶ putting the club’s beginnings at **1924**. The third annual event, on Valentine’s Day, 1926, drew 600 spectators.¹⁷ The club was also known as the **Summit Ski Club, Cle Elum**.^{18 19} Tournaments

were held annually, with increasing spectator interest driven by Northern Pacific special trains, until 1932, when the last big jumping event was held and the club passed into history.²⁰ Hopes were mentioned of it “coming back” with a focus on new slalom competitions in late 1934.²¹ Cle Elum hosted a competition on January 13, 1935, sanctioned by the PNSA, and on March 15, 1936,²² but no further mention is found in the local press thereafter.

The **Seattle Ski Club** started skiing at Snoqualmie Pass in **1928** and was incorporated with the state on February 4, 1930.²³ SSC was the premier Norwegian ski club in the area. It sponsored its first annual ski tournament at Snoqualmie Pass on February 9, 1930.^{24 25} This opening event was announced by Reidar Gjølme, club president. Erling Thomson of the Seattle Ski Club won the trophy at the first tournament. The March 1, 1931, tournament was used as one of the tryout sites for the U.S. jumping team at the 1932 Lake Placid Olympics.²⁶ The Milwaukee Road offered its first special ski train for the event.²⁷ Seattle Ski Club president in 1931 was Ragnvald Flakstad. The Seattle Ski Club started out using an abandoned construction camp as its base at Snoqualmie Pass, and proceeded to build a beautiful, four-story lodge at Snoqualmie Summit, dedicated on October 18, 1931.²⁸ Charles Hageman, Steve Boyle’s grandfather, was president of SSC in 1934 and 1935. Seattle Ski Club was THE major ski club in Washington State all through the 1930s, both in hosting championship events and in sponsoring Class A skiers in races, and especially jumping, throughout the region. SSC was the owner of the major “Big Hill” ski jump at Snoqualmie Pass, and helped to develop the major ski jumps at Hyak (Snoqualmie Ski Bowl, Milwaukee Ski Bowl) which attracted international attention until the early 1950s. Bob Gue recalls spending a lot of time at the SSC lodge over at Snoqualmie Summit as a kid in the 1950s, while his parents, Bill and Jean Gue, hobnobbed with the other ski race leaders and ski instructors who congregated there.

The **Leavenworth Ski Club** is first mentioned in the Seattle newspapers in 1930, about to sponsor a meet on February 23, 1930; a special Great Northern train was scheduled to bring spectators to the event.²⁹ The



January 25, 1931, event, sponsored by the renamed **Leavenworth Winter Sports Club**, was referred to as the “third annual ski tournament,”³⁰ which would place the first in **1929**. A note in 1933 referred to the “fifth annual Leavenworth ski tournament,” which confirms that the first tournament sponsored by this club was in 1929.³¹ This tradition of major regional and even national competitions continued for 43 years until the last special ski train in 1971. The Leavenworth Winter Sports Club



Erling Thompson of the Seattle Ski Club, winner of the 1930 Snoqualmie Pass ski tournament, was to get in trim today at the Cle Elum ski tournament for defense of his honors at Snoqualmie, March 1.

Erling Thompson of the Seattle Ski Club in 1931
(*Seattle Daily Times*, February 25, 1931).

continues to this day, with its ski hill as well as nearby groomed cross-country ski routes; it also sponsors an annual 30 km (20 mile) cross-country event known as “Hog Loppet,” which runs from the top of the Mission Ridge ski area to Blewett Pass.³² It notes on its website first activity in promoting skiing as **1928**.

The **Pacific Northwest Ski Association** was formed in early **1930** as the official regional branch of the National Ski Association (first formed in 1905; later renamed the U.S. Ski Association), overseeing rules following the International Ski Federation (FIS). Ski clubs in Washington as well as Oregon, including the Seattle Ski Club at Snoqualmie Pass, decided to band together to coordinate regional jumping and cross-country competitions and to ensure that the meets were of high caliber.³³ PNSA’s mission was to promote skiing and ski competitions in the Northwest: for “each club ...to assist each other – to the very vital end that skiing be encouraged for the youth of the Northwest, and that it be developed as part of the winter sports program designed to bring folk here from all the world.”³⁴ The PNSA set the rules and schedules for hosting competition throughout the region.



At first, these competitions were for cross-country “running” and for ski jumping, the two original forms of ski competitions brought over from northern Europe by early immigrants, primarily the Norwegians. In 1934, the PNSA officially adopted slalom and downhill racing as equal to jumping and cross-country, and promoted combined tournaments for slalom-and-downhill and for cross-country-and-jumping, as well as “four-way” competitions combining all four events into a single championship.³⁵



The **Far West Ski Association**, a regional ski association that represents ski clubs and ski councils throughout the western 13 states, was also organized in **1930**. It promotes skiing safety, travel, ski area development and communications among ski clubs in the West. It is an official member of the National Ski Council Federation.³⁶

Bert Huntoon of the Mount Baker Development Company hosted the first ski tournament at Mt. Baker on April 27, **1930**, co-sponsored by the Mt. Baker Club and the Mt. Baker

Ski Club, as noted earlier.³⁷ The first informal “Huntoon Handicap” (paired couples) race was held at Mt. Baker in April, 1938.³⁸ Soon thereafter, the **Huntoon Ski Club** and the **Huntoon Sliding and Social Club** were active fielding racers (and golfers) in the early 1940s.

The **Torvig Ski Club** appears to have been an informal group comprised of John Woodward and his buddies, who came to Snoqualmie Pass as teenagers wanting to learn how to ski. In **1931** they built a make-shift hut at the Pass to use as a winter base, and followed Seattle Ski Club skiers to learn the telemark technique. In 1932 they happened upon **Hans Grafe** from Commonwealth Ski Club, who taught them the Arlberg stem-christie method, which allowed for much faster downhill turns. These Torvig Ski Club guys formed the basis for the original University of Washington ski team starting in 1934. John Woodward went on to fame as a leader of the U.S. Army’s 10th Mountain Division ski troops and as

co-owner of A&T Ski Company, based in Seattle, from 1953 through 1980. He is still alive and skiing as I write this in 2012!³⁹

Commonwealth Ski Club entered the scene on December 27, 1931.⁴⁰

The new club's lodge at Snoqualmie Pass was only partially built at the time, yet the skiers came and started what is now an 81-year tradition. Commonwealth changed its name to **Sahalie Ski Club** in 1936. It continues to promote family skiing and good fellowship as one of the oldest continuously operating ski clubs in the Northwest with its own lodge at Snoqualmie Pass. (See my early documentation in Historical Notes #1 through #15, an ongoing series, at: <http://www.sahalie.org/chair2/History.aspx> .)



The seeds of a new, competitive-racing ski club were planted as slalom skiing first took off in 1933. "It is the plan," announced the *Seattle Times* cryptically, "to organize a ski club composed of the slalom race winners – which will be strictly a 'ski' club. By limiting the membership of the club to winners of the Rainier races it will assure the formation of a club of first-class ski-riders."⁴¹ This whisper against the more social ski clubs of the day turned into fact, called the **Washington Ski Club**, in late 1934 (see below).

The **Paradise Ski Club** was organized in December, 1933, by the growing contingent of skiers who focused on Paradise Valley, to organize races there as well as other events.⁴² As far as I can read between the lines, Paradise was the third in succession, following the Northwest Ski Club and the Mount Rainier National Park Ski Club from the previous decades. Ken Syverson, one of Paradise Ski Club's founders, was listed as its president in 1934. (He later formed the major ski school at the Ski Bowl at Hyak, Snoqualmie Pass.) The Paradise club sponsored all the major races, every weekend that weather conditions allowed, all winter long, at Mount Rainier through the '33/'34 season. It then merged into the new Washington Ski Club that was formed in late 1934 (see below).

The **Seattle Ski Council** also formed in December, 1933, as a coalition of clubs. Founding members included the Mountaineers, Seattle Ski Club, Commonwealth Ski Club, Washington Alpine Club, Paradise Ski Club, Rainier National Park Company, University of Washington, Torvig Ski Club, Kendall Ski Lodge, Bush School for Girls, YMCA, Boy Scouts and Seattle Park Board. Hans Otto Giese was named chairman.⁴³ In addition to coordinating events and issues between clubs, the Council also helped to promote high school skiing and competitions, a particular interest of Giese.

The **Ellensburg Ski Club** was noted in early 1934 as hosting its third annual ski tournament, which would place the first in 1932. It appears to have been exclusively focused on ski jumping at the time.⁴⁴ "The Ellensburg club lengthened its hill this summer," reported the *Seattle Times* in 1934, "pitched the landing – without which ski jumpers might get hurt – and now await the jumpers."⁴⁵ The jump was located seven miles from town in Robinson Canyon. Racers skiing for Ellensburg Ski Club were noted in 1936 in slalom and downhill events at Stampede Pass⁴⁶ and in 1941 in slalom competitions at Snoqualmie Ski Bowl⁴⁷ and Paradise;⁴⁸ after that, no further mention is found for this club.

Such was the burgeoning interest in skiing that the **Seattle Chamber of Commerce** created a special **Winter Sports Committee** in January, **1934**, “to study the effect of winter sports on lengthening of the tourist season and to recommend the proper steps toward that desired result.” Hans Otto Giese was named a member.⁴⁹ The committee immediately conceived of “Winter Sports Week” to combine promotions at Paradise and at Snoqualmie Pass. This Chamber group proved pivotal to the successful bids to launch the Silver Skis downhill race later that spring and to host the U.S. downhill championships at Paradise in 1935. It morphed into the **Winter Sports Association**, formed in late 1934, “to advance the cause of Washington winter recreation, and see that the tremendously thriving sport of skiing is given the major attention it deserves.”⁵⁰

Spokane Ski Club held its second annual ski jumping tournament on January 21, **1934**, assisted with a shipment of snow from the Leavenworth Winter Sports Club.⁵¹ The jump was located at the Wandermere Golf Club hill. The event was witnessed by 7,500 spectators! In February, 1937, Spokane Ski Club hosted PNSA-sanctioned slalom and downhill races on Mt. Spokane, set by Ben Thompson from Baldy Knob to the valley floor at the SSC’s clubhouse.⁵² Spokane SC again hosted PNSA races in February, 1938.⁵³ A separate **Wandermere Ski Club - Spokane** petitioned for PNSA membership in late 1937, but nothing more is known about them.⁵⁴

The **University of Washington Ski Club** was organized in January, **1934**. The inaugural faculty committee included Charles Frankland, Victor Sivertz, Cotton Wilcox, Victor Sheffer and Sidney Spear. First president was Fred Thieme; other student leaders of the day included John Cary, Peggy Sheldon, Rena Cox, Woody McFarland, Jim Wilson and Jack Hillyer.⁵⁵ The club immediately focused on slalom racing, with Ben Thompson and Darroch Crookes as coaches. John Woodward, who started as a freshman in the fall of 1934 and graduated in 1938, was one of the club’s early notable skiers.

The **Ski Club at the College of Puget Sound** formed in March, **1934**, after student skiers had competed against teams from U.W. and U.B.C. earlier in the season.⁵⁶

The **Washington Ski Club** was formed on September 7, **1934**, to focus on “serious” or “competitive” ski racing. It drew members away from other local ski clubs, including its founding president, **Otto Sanford**, its membership chair, **Carl Mahnken**, and its instruction committee chair, **Hans Grage**, all from Commonwealth. In the only documented racial note regarding Northwest ski clubs that this historian has found in print, the Washington Ski Club was promoted as accepting members who were “18 years of age, white and citizens of the United States of America.”⁵⁷ The WSC petitioned right away for membership in the Pacific Northwest Ski Association.⁵⁸ Soon thereafter, the Paradise Ski Club, which had run all the weekend slalom and downhill competitions at Mt. Rainier the previous winter, folded into the Washington Ski Club.⁵⁹ In an audacious move as a novice club, WSC won rights to host the national downhill and slalom championships as well as the Olympic trials at Paradise in the spring of 1935. WSC went on to sponsor the major competitive ski races and field the most competitive racers through the rest of the 1930s up to the war (1941).

Penguin Ski Club started at Chinook Pass on the east side of Mount Rainier in **1935**⁶⁰ and was reported to have a lodge there by the fall of 1936.⁶¹ It relocated to Stevens Pass in 1939,⁶² where the club built a lodge in 1941.⁶³ **Hans Grae**, an early Commonwealth/Sahalie Ski Club member in the 1930s, eventually settled in with the Penguins and helped them to build their Stevens Pass lodge. His life was cut short at age 46 by a tragic accident when he fell from the lodge's roof while shoveling snow in 1956. The Penguin Ski Club sponsored some



of the top ski racers in the late 1930s and helped to keep the rope tow and local races running through WWII. The Penguins continue to promote ski racing through their affiliate organization, **Stevens Pass Alpine Club**, which dates to Jack Nagel in the 1950s. When he and the original group known as the Stevens Pass Athletic Club (the “yellow jackets”) moved to Crystal Ski Area when it opened in 1962, the Alpine Club (the “green hornets”) continued at Stevens Pass in association with the Penguin Ski Club.⁶⁴



The **Longview Ski Club** was founded in **1935**, based in Longview, WA. A few references are noted in local newspapers to racers skiing for Longview in meets at Paradise in 1940 and 1941.⁶⁵ The club had a cabin and rope tow on Mt. St. Helens, both of which were lost in the 1980 eruption. Today it is a small social organization that provides trips and events for skiers in the Longview/Kelso area of WA.

Yakima Ski Club was formed in **1936** with announcement of its new skiing grounds on U.S. Forest Service land up the American River forty miles west of Yakima near Chinook Pass – precursor to the White Pass Ski Area.⁶⁶ It was called the **Yakima Winter Sports Club** when it petitioned to join the Pacific Northwest(ern) Ski Association in early 1937⁶⁷ and at a race in January, 1940.⁶⁸ Yakima WSC also hosted PNSA championship races in February, 1940.⁶⁹ The **Yakima Valley Ski Club** has a lodge today at the White Pass Ski Area.⁷⁰ I’m not sure if it originated from the club active in the 1930s.

The **Wenatchee Ski Club** first showed up in 1936,⁷¹ helping to develop a ski area at Stevens Pass (which was only accessible from the east at that time). A U.S. Forest Service ski hut was built at Stevens Pass in 1938 by CCC crews,⁷² and the ski area officially opened in March, 1938, with a ski carnival hosted by both the Wenatchee Ski Club and the **Everett Ski Club**.⁷³ Skiers and spectators came from the west by Great Northern trains through the Cascade Tunnel to Berne, from which they were shuttled back west to the pass. The Everett Ski Club built a lodge at Stevens in 1940. The Wenatchee Ski Club fielded racers in January, 1941, at the Snoqualmie Ski Bowl.⁷⁴ In 1952, the Wenatchee Ski Club opened a ski jump on Mt. Squilchuck in Wenatchee.⁷⁵ Occasional references to skiers from Everett SC are found through 1956, and for Wenatchee SC through 1968.

The **Olympic Ski Club** on the peninsula ran major ski races for three years starting in 1938 and extending through 1940 (the “third annual meet”) at Deer Park in the Olympic Mountains south of Port Angeles.⁷⁶ Olympic SC racers were also noted in events at Snoqualmie Pass in 1941.⁷⁷ No news of this club follows the war.

Ski jumpers from a **Darrington Ski Club** are noted in early 1938.⁷⁸ **Renton Winter Sports Club** and **Enumclaw Ski Club** competed against Sahalie members in 1939.⁷⁹ Enumclaw racers showed up in a few other competitions until 1940.⁸⁰ No further mention of these clubs has been found. Racers from **Fjeld Ski Club** in Stanwood first showed up in 1938⁸¹ and continued to appear in events through the early 1940s, including sponsoring jumping competitions at Mt. Baker.



The **Rokka Ski Club**, a Japanese-American ski group, first appeared in local news accounts on March 24, 1940, hosting a race at Paradise against the Fuji Ski Club from Vancouver, B.C.; this event was described as the second meet between the two clubs, putting Rokka’s origins in 1939. Rokka was noted at that time as already having associate member status with the PNSA.⁸² In June 1941,

Rokka members competed head-to-head with seven other local ski clubs (including Sahalie) in a major golf tournament at Mt. Si.⁸³ This is amazing (and heartening) to see that these Japanese-American skiers were accepted in with all the other ski clubs at a time of heightened tension over war in the Pacific, in advance of America’s entry into the war and Executive Order 9066, which sent many of these U.S. citizens to internment camps away from the coast. One Rokka member, Nobu Kano, was such an exceptional PNSA Class A racer at the time that he became a ski instructor to the 10th Mountain troops at Camp Hale before joining Army Intelligence through the remainder of the war.⁸⁴ The **Rokka Ski and Snowboarding School** at Snoqualmie Summit, with a separate Lodge at Crystal Mountain Ski Area, is still quite active today.⁸⁵

The **Komo Kulshan Ski Club**, which originated in 1940,⁸⁶ is still active today promoting ski competitions, ski schools and family activities, based at Mount Baker Ski Area. KKSC runs the ski racer development program for the **Mt. Baker Race Team**, with coaching, training and participation in regional and national competitions.⁸⁷

A ski club known as the **Friars** (later called the **Swiss Ski Club**), appeared in 1937 racing at Paradise,⁸⁸ and built a lodge at Stevens Pass in 1940.^{89 90} A **Chehalis Ski Club** is mentioned scheduling a meet with the Longview Ski Club in early 1940.⁹¹ A **Tacoma Ski Club** fielded racers at an event in early 1941 as well as others at Paradise that season. Skiers affiliated with a **Bremerton Ski Club** (also known as the **Bremerton Ski Cruisers**) and a **Chewelah Ski Club** (from north of Spokane) also appear at that time, into 1942.^{92 93 94} Nothing further is known about these clubs.

References to a **Boeing Ski Club** appear as early as 1941.

SKIBACS, the Boeing Employees' Ski and Snowboard Club, was founded in 1951. It maintains a lodge at Crystal Mountain and sponsors its own ski school, ski trips and racing teams.⁹⁵



The **Desert Ski Club**, started in 1953, is the ski and snowboard club of the Tri-Cities of WA. It is a "year- round sports and social activities club" with a primary focus on "promotion of snow skiing, snowboarding and other winter recreational outdoor sports."⁹⁶

Kongsberger Ski Club formed in 1954 as an offshoot of the Seattle



Ski Club by Olav Ulland and "a hearty group of Norwegian ski jumpers."

After its last jumping meet was held in 1974, the club concentrated on promotion of cross-country skiing at Snoqualmie Pass. The club maintains the Cabin Creek Nordic ski trails at the Pass and hosts major cross-country ski races in the area.⁹⁷

The **White Pass Ski and Snowboard Club** hosts racing at the White Pass Ski Area, as the area organization dedicated to development of ski racers from beginners through Buddy Werner to Junior to U.S. Ski Team. No start date is evident, but this group probably post-dates opening of the White Pass ski area in 1955.⁹⁸ Famous alumni include Phil and Steve Mahre.

The Lake Chelan Ski Club formed in 1955 in an old orchard at Echo Valley.⁹⁹ The small ski area continues today... don't know about the ski club.



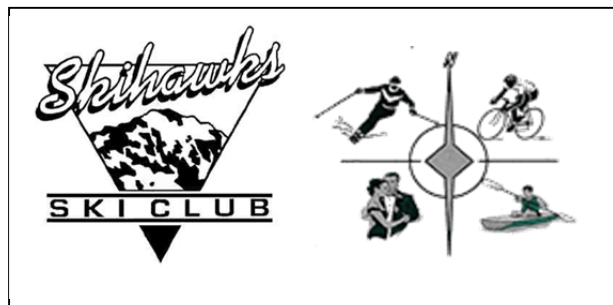
The **Mission Ridge Ski Club** formed in 1967 to promote ski racing at the new area which opened in 1966 above Wenatchee. Now known as the **Mission Ridge Ski Team ("MRST")**, the organization was incorporated in 2006 as the Mission Ridge Ski Education Foundation.¹⁰⁰ It is one of the key ski racing groups in the state, "developing athletes from the beginning level racer to the U.S. Ski Team."

WIHSKI Ski Club was formed in 1968 as the Western International Hotel Ski Club. (While members might be known to imbibe, the club's name is



not related to the drink.) It is a social club based in Seattle that promotes downhill and cross-country ski trips as well as cycling, hiking, golf, tennis, volleyball and an annual picnic.¹⁰¹ This is Carol Murrin's ski club and the one she and Greg Gilson are active in; Greg was president of WIHSKI for two years and is probably the only person who has been president of two different Washington ski clubs, both for two years! Carol notes that WIHSKI tends to have older members, average age in the 60s as of 2012.

In **1971** the **Alpental Ski Club** and **Ski Foundation** were formed to promote junior racing; racers called themselves "Team Alpental." In 1984 the junior racing group from Snoqualmie merged with Alpental's group into what is now called the **Alpental-Snoqualmie Ski Foundation**, which supports **Team Alpental Snoqualmie**, or "**TAS**."¹⁰² This is the group that many local Sahalie racers have grown up in, from Bobby Gue and Tommy Atwood to the Machmiller sisters.



Skihawks Ski Club, based in Tacoma and drawing members from south Puget Sound, was formed in the **1970s**. It is primarily a downhill ski club, but also sponsors activities in all seasons: hiking, cycling, kayaking, river rafting, picnics and social gatherings, "and anything else that sounds like fun."¹⁰³ Rich Poelker, Sahalie member from Olympia, has been active with this group as a

counterpoint to the long drive to Snoqualmie Pass.

Washington Ski Touring Club, formed in **1974** by a group of cross-country aficionados, promotes cross-country, telemark and back-country skiing in the Cascades. The early group was closely associated with staff at REI in Seattle. While still based in Seattle, WSTC runs trips throughout the central Cascades and into B.C.¹⁰⁴

The **Northwest Ski Club Council** formed in **1979** to represent over 30 snow sport clubs throughout the Northwest. It sponsors ski trips, the PACRAT (PacificNorthwest Area Clubs Recreational Alpine Teams) racing league, and an end-of-season carnival called Bachelor Blast. While based in Portland and primarily made up of Oregon clubs, NWSCC represents clubs in Washington and Alaska and participates in the Far West Ski Association and the National Ski Council Federation.¹⁰⁵



The **Outdoors-For-All Foundation**, which began as "Ski For All" in **1979**, runs adaptive ski programs for people with disabilities at Snoqualmie, Stevens and Crystal. It also runs other adaptive recreation activities beyond ski season, including cycling, hiking, water skiing and paddling.¹⁰⁶



S'no Joke Ski Club, based in Seattle, calls itself a "ski, sports and year-round activities club." It was founded **1985** and hosts social



gatherings and outdoor trips year-round. It focuses primarily on skiing, snowboarding, Nordic skiing and snowshoeing, but has evolved to support cycling, golf, hiking, tennis and other year-around social activities.¹⁰⁷ It tends to have a younger demographic than the other major non-lodge-owning club in Seattle, WIHSKI.

The **Nooksack Nordic Ski Club** was founded in Bellingham in **1992** to foster cross-country skiing opportunities in the Whatcom County area. The club maintains the Salmon Ridge ski trail system east of Glacier in the Mt. Baker area.¹⁰⁸

The **Methow Valley Nordic Club** started in **1995** to promote cross-country skiing in the Mazama/Winthrop/Twisp area. The companion **Methow Valley Nordic Team** promotes youth Nordic



racing.¹⁰⁹ The **Methow Valley Sport Trails Association**, which grooms the x-c trails all winter, started in 1977.¹¹⁰



The **Northwest Ski and Recreational Club**, based in Bellingham, WA, was founded in **1996**. It organizes monthly social gatherings, ski trips in season and other outdoor events such as golf, cycling and tennis in the non-skiing months. It describes itself as a club “with a major in outdoor activities and a minor in parties.”¹¹¹

The **National Ski Council Federation** was formed in **1998** to represent ski clubs, regional councils and area associations throughout the U.S. in order to “strengthen councils, with industry participation, so that they may better serve clubs through communications, education and benefits, and to influence issues relevant to snow sports and ski clubs.”¹¹²



The **Cowlitz County Ski Club** is a year-round outdoor sports club for members in the Cowlitz area. No further information is available about its origins or current level of activities.

The **Vancouver Snow & Sports Club**, founded in **2003**, promotes skiing and ski racing for residents in Clark County, as well as summer activities. It supports racing as part of PACRAT (the Northwest Ski Club Council’s league).



The **Crystal Mountain Alpine Club** is focused on ski racing, “where good skiers become great racers.” It likely started when Jack Nagel moved from

Stevens Pass when Crystal opened in 1962. CMAC provides coaching, training and competitive experience to promote alpine ski racers from beginners (participants in the Mighty-Mite program) through Buddy Werner championships, USSA racing, Evergreen Cup, Northwest cup, to those striving to make the U.S. Ski Team. Coaches include experience on U.S. Ski Team, Olympics and World Cup circuit.¹¹³

The **Mount Tahoma Trails Association** (origin/date unknown) promotes cross-country skiing via a hut system in the Ashford area just outside the southwest corner of Mount Rainier National Park. The MTTA maintains 50 miles of trails including three propane-heated huts and a yurt.¹¹⁴



The **One World Outing Club** is a recent addition (date unconfirmed) to the groups that promote outdoor recreation including cross-country and back-country skiing for members in the Seattle area. One World promotes an “active outdoor lifestyle,” including



bicycling, backpacking, sea kayaking, and winter cross-country skiing.¹¹⁵

The **Spokane Nordic Ski Education Foundation** (founding date unconfirmed) promotes cross-country skiing in the Spokane area and maintains the Mount Spokane cross-country ski park.¹¹⁶

Whew, did I miss anybody? If you know of a historical or current ski club in Washington State that is not listed here, or can provide more background on listed clubs, let me know and we'll add to the regional archive. I would also like to extend this archive to include the rich history of skiing and ski clubs in Oregon, but might have to wait until I retire, unless one of our colleagues to the south has already done the homework.

■ Dave Galvin

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