Vern Powers Ski Jumping Career
1936-1963
This document is by no means a full accounting of all Vern’s ski jumping history. Vern skied in many more tournaments than those listed here. There are likely some inaccuracies. This document is simply a compilation of the written and pictured information I inherited after Vern’s death, and the stories I remember him telling. It will always be considered a work in progress.

-Ron Powers
The cover of the book shows Mt. Washington ski slide in Eau Claire, WI, where Vern began his ski jumping career. However, his interest in ski jumping began at a very early age, much as it did for most of the boys growing up in Vern’s Shawtown neighborhood.

The picture on the right shows Vern at 7 years old skiing off a home made jump located on the neighboring Bunce farm. (Vern later married Ardis, once of the Bunce girls.) If a kid was lucky enough to have an old pair of skis, he spent most of the winter building and skiing off jumps like this. That’s how Vern and his friends passed through their childhood winters. If one were to walk to the top of the hill behind Vern and turn around, one would be looking down the Mt. Washington ski slide in Eau Claire, WI.

A junior ski club called the Flying Eagles was forming at Vern’s former Mt. Washington elementary school, where they were building a junior jump. However, Vern had already begun hanging around the big slide known by the locals as “The Mountain,” which referred to Mt. Washington. It was located on the western edge of Shawtown and had a ski jump for senior jumpers. During the winter of his 14th year Vern began skiing at the Mt. Washington jump and did quite well. Vern skipped over becoming a junior jumper with the Flying Eagles after he was asked at age 15 to join the senior club as a member of Class C.

The picture on left shows 15-year-old Vern in front of his home on Francis Street as a new member of the Eau Claire Ski Club. That winter he took 2nd place in his first tournament at Mt. Washington.
Vern rides the Mt. Washington slide above.

Right: Vern Powers, Marcille Bunce, and Don Hotejec.
Vern improved quickly and took second place at both Wisconsin Rapids and Menomonie. He followed that by winning Class C at Seymour Hill in Eau Claire and also at Devil’s Hollow in Oconomowoc, WI.

Those wins vaulted Vern into Class B.
COONEY SKI CHAMPIONS—Conquering a slide made up of a mixture of manufactured and natural snow, these jumpers captured titles in the fourteenth annual Milwaukee-Oconomowoc Ski club tournament at Devil’s Hollow Sunday. Walter Bistlia, shown in action, bagged the class A title and also sailed 126 feet to a new hill record. Vernon Pogge, upper left, won the class C laurels, and Jørgen Johannsen and Ole Reiseberg, left to right, upper right, tied for the senior crown.
Part of jumping in tournaments was making exhibition rides as a way to attract the public and keep them at the tournaments in the cold weather. Vern and his ski pals often did double jumps. In the picture above, Vern is on the right, and Lee Hoff is on the left. Riders needed a lot of confidence in each other to perform this jump.

However, the double jump paled in comparison to the diamond jump, where 3 separate tracks were laid down side-by-side on the jump. The maneuver would require 4 jumpers. One would lead in the center followed by two on the outer tracks, followed by a fourth on the center track. All 4 jumpers would be on the scaffold within inches of one another. They would hit the takeoff almost simultaneously, and fly through the air in a diamond formation. It was critical that each man make a stable landing. Vern completed the Diamond Jump at Strum with Bob Fleming, Mickey Hotejec, and Ralph Pope. No photographs are available of that event.

As a side note: I can remember jumping at a junior tournament on Mt. Simon Hill in Eau Claire. There was some talk going around that some guy was going to jump off the big hill on just one ski. We all crowded at the end of the outrun to watch the guy fly though the air, make a perfect landing, and make a perfect stop at the end of the outrun—all on one ski! I was flabbergasted to see that it was my dad (Vern). That won him the admiration of all my friends.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Placed</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Hill Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Age 15</td>
<td>Mt. Washington</td>
<td>Eau Claire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td></td>
<td>Old Hill</td>
<td>Whitehall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Nationals</td>
<td>Red Wing</td>
<td>Red Wing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wis. Rapids</td>
<td>Wisconsin Rapids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>104-106</td>
<td>Wis. Rapids</td>
<td>Wisconsin Rapids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>110 (longest)</td>
<td>Semour</td>
<td>Eau Claire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>First rider to ride big hill under lights</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
<td>Devil's Hollow</td>
<td>Oconomowoc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
<td>Menomonie</td>
<td>Menomonie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strum</td>
<td>Strum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1938 - Completed Diamond Jump at Strum with Bob Fleming, Vern Powers, Mickey Hotejec, and Ralph Pope

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Placed</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Hill Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>110 longest</td>
<td>Seymour Hill</td>
<td>Eau Claire WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>98-102</td>
<td>Devil's Hollow</td>
<td>Oconomowoc WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
<td>Menomonie</td>
<td>Menomonie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vern Powers
Class C
Ski Tournament
Summary
The Central United States Championships were held on the above slide in 1939, where Vern won Class B. He would go on to win Class B on this hill again in 1940 and in 1942 at the International Meet held here.
At New London, WI (left) in 1940 Vern placed 5th.

Vern placed 2nd at Whitehall in 1939.

Vern jumps for 3rd Place at Mt. Washington in 1939
Vern Powers, Jim Running, and Walter Nelson at Iron Mountain, MI on Feb. 11, 1940.

In 1941 Vern took 4th place in Class B at Iron Mountain, MI with jumps of 220 and 223 feet. The following year he would jump his personal career best at Iron Mountain.

Iron Mountain Slide in 1940
In 1941 Vern took second place at both Beloit and Eau Claire. He followed those tournaments with winning Class B at Wolverine Hill in Ironwood, Mi and at Mount Valhalla in Washburn, WI. He also won 2nd place at Whitehall, WI.
The United States National Ski Jumping Championships were to be held in Seattle, WA in 1941, and Vern learned that he was qualified to go. He would be sponsored by the ski club, but he would also need to solicit donations on his own. He was concerned that he might not raise enough money to go, but friends and community members came through for him and sent him to Seattle. It was an exciting trip for a young man who had never been more than 200-300 miles away from home. He had never seen the mountains, and he was amazed at the amount of snow there. He would later learn that mountain skiing offered some unique surprises that he had not yet encountered.
Eau Claire Winter Sports Club
INCORPORATED

...AFFILIATED WITH...
CENTRAL U.S. AND NATIONAL SKI ASSOCIATIONS
EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN

Inasmuch as Vernon Powers of this city has demonstrated exceptional ability as a skier in this city and at the several tournaments in which he has participated, representing Eau Claire, the winter sports enthusiasts feel that he should be given the opportunity to participate in the National Ski Tournament to be held in Seattle, Washington. This is an opportunity for everyone to help a young athlete of this city to spread the name of Eau Claire on the Ski records of the far West.
Vern headed out to the Snoqualmie Ski Bowl, located in mountains of Hyak, WA, which is just east of Seattle. Once he arrived, he sent the postcard below home to his parents. Postmarked Feb. 26, 1941, it reads, “Dear Folks, Here’s where I ended up. It’s a nice place way up in the mountains 65 miles from Seattle. Nice hill here. Can’t practice before Friday I guess. Some Real Skiers came in tonight. I’ll write again if I have time. Love, Vern
Vern was a favorite to win Class B at the nationals. He was in first place after the first jump and seemed on the way to a big win. However, the mountain air played a trick on him during his second ride. He hit an air pocket and suddenly seemed to lose all of his lift. He was able to remain standing, but was disappointed to drop back to 6th place.
January 8, 1942.

Mr. Vernon Powers
221 Ferry Street
Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Dear Vernon:

Thanks for your kind letter of the 6th as well as for your kindness in sending the photo. This I plan to use in news publicity, once the entry blanks come through.

Glad that you liked our hill a year ago. It will be even better this year because we have done a lot of work in connection with the hill and the large parking areas.

Will be looking for your club to send your entry on to us and will be glad to see you when the National rolls around.

Thanks again for the photo.

Warmest regards.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Harold A. Grinden, Sec.
After a disappointing 8th place in the National Ski Jumping Championships in Duluth in 1942, Vern went on to Wolverine Hill in Ironwood, MI, where he had won the year before. He placed second with a pair of 196 foot jumps. His Class A idol, Torger Tokle, was there and jumped 216 feet.

Norge Hill in Fox River Grove near Chicago, IL was next and Vern placed 5th there.
The 1942 US Central Championships were held at Big Hills Memorial Park in Beloit, WI, where Vern got 2nd place with jumps of 171 and 165. Ray Nelson of Beloit beat him with 2 jumps of 166, but better style points. Ray won a pair of skis for first place, and after the tournament Ray brought the skis over to Vern and handed them to him saying, “You beat me. These skis are yours.”

Vern thanked him for his kindness, but refused to take the skis. He told Ray that style points are part of the game and that Ray deserved to get 1st place, even though Vern had outjumped him.
Devil’s Hollow in Oconomowoc was Vern’s next tournament where he took first place in Class B. He followed that with another win at Battle Creek Park slide in St. Paul MN. The very next tournament at Whitehall, WI was Vern’s first entry into Class A. He was now skiing in the same class as some of the greatest skiers in the nation.

Below a jumper sails off the Battle Creek Park slide in St. Paul, MN...
## Vern Powers Class B Tournament History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Placed</th>
<th>Dist</th>
<th>Hill Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>177-176</td>
<td>Beloit</td>
<td>Beloit WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>CUSSA Title</td>
<td>Battle Creek</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>167-169</td>
<td>Whitehall</td>
<td>Whitehall WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mt. Washington</td>
<td>Eau Claire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td></td>
<td>New London</td>
<td>New London WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>135-135</td>
<td>Mt. Washington</td>
<td>Eau Claire WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>Battle Creek 2-2-40</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>220-223</td>
<td>Pine Mountain Slide</td>
<td>Iron Mountain MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td></td>
<td>Beloit</td>
<td>Beloit WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>171-165</td>
<td>Beloit</td>
<td>Beloit WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
<td>Eau Claire</td>
<td>Eau Claire WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
<td>Washburn</td>
<td>Washburn WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>181-183</td>
<td>Wolverine Hill</td>
<td>Ironwood MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>167-169</td>
<td>Whitehall</td>
<td>Whitehall WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>192-186</td>
<td>Snoqualamie Bowl</td>
<td>Seattle WA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**National Tournament: Longest jump in Class B was 201. Class A skied on a different hill.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Placed</th>
<th>Dist</th>
<th>Hill Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>166-175</td>
<td>Duluth (Nationals)</td>
<td>Duluth MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>196-196</td>
<td>Wolverine Hill (Tokle 216)</td>
<td>Ironwood MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>136-145</td>
<td>Norge Hill</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>171-165</td>
<td>Big Hills Pk - Centrals</td>
<td>Beloit WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>98-102</td>
<td>Devil's Hollow</td>
<td>Oconomowoc WI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Walter Beitela had longest in A - 179
Vern’s First Class A Tournament

Whitehall, WI

Hill Record: 200 ft.

Vern Jumped 192 ft. - Longest Jump of the Day

4th Place

Vern outjumped some of the nation’s top skiers at Whitehall, but he had never been as stylish as some skiers. Although he often outjumped others, they would move ahead of him in the final standings because of their higher style points. One thing in his favor is that he almost never fell.
In 1942 Vern headed back to the huge Pine Mountain Slide at Iron Mountain, MI. Here he had the greatest thrill of his skiing career when he jumped his personal best of 275 ft. during practice. Although his longest jump during the tournament was 257 ft., that mark was the longest jump ever by an Eau Claire skier at that time. It stood for 6 years until Billy Olsen surpassed it by jumping 271 ft. at Iron Mountain in 1948.

The previous year, the American Distance Record had been set here by Alf Engen at 267 feet. Vern’s 257 foot tournament jump was just 10 feet short of Engen’s historic jump one year earlier.

Vern was in awe during that tournament as he stood at the top of the gigantic iron Mountain slide, sandwiched directly between his two greatest idols, Walter Bietila and Torger Tokle.

A side note on Torger Tokle: Back then, most skiers in the ready track at the top of the box would push the backs of their skis hard against the back of the box in order to thrust themselves forward on the start as fast as possible to get extra speed for distance. Vern watched Torger Tokle, on at least one occasion, stand up straight on the upper half of his downward run on the scaffold in order to break his speed so that he wouldn’t out jump the hill. That’s how confident and powerful a jumper was Tokle.
Pictured on the left is Vern and his long time teammate, Jim Running. Jim was a very stylish skier. Vern often outjumped Jim, but Jim would often place higher than Vern because of his higher style points. Jim and Vern were always trying to outscore each other, but they were just good buddies in a friendly rivalry.
Vern returned to Eau Claire and a tournament at Mt. Washington “The Mountain,” where he finished in second place in Class A.

Left to Right: Unknown, Marv Piper, Oscar Severson, Ardis Bunce, and Lee Hoff
Changes were taking place in the world, and Vern was called upon to serve his country in the U.S. Army Air Force. His sweetheart, Ardis Bunce, who had attended many of his ski tournaments, agreed to marry him in Lincoln NE before he was deployed to England, France, and Germany as the Crew Chief on a Republic P-47 Thunderbolt Fighter Bomber. There would no more ski jumping until 1946.
After WWII ended, Vern wanted to get Eau Claire skiers jumping again. In 1946 he got Bob Anderson, Puck Lahner and J. Mon together and headed to Beloit.

Vern was very excited to start jumping at the same level he had jumped before the war. If Vern had one signature move in ski jumping, it was that he just never fell. That day in Beloit he had one long jump, but he fell on the other try.
Vern returned to the Battle Creek Park slide in St. Paul, MN. It was a hill that he had won on in 1942 in Class B. It was a steep landing hill with a very sharp dip at the bottom. It favored a long jumper with a steady landing, making it perfect for Vern. However the Battle Creek tournaments of 1946 and 1947 were not so kind to Vern. His best in those 2 years was a 10th place finish.

A visit to the Dulth, MN slide provided a better result, where he took 6th place.
Vern had won at Wolverine Hill in Ironwood, MI when he was in Class B. During the competition there in 1946, he had to settle for 8th Place due to a shorter first jump.

Vern was looking forward to returning to Iron Mountain and challenging his career best jump of 1942, when he set the record for the longest jump by an Eau Claire skier. However, with jumps of 201 and 203 feet, the old snap from 1942 just wasn't there, and Vern missed placing in the top six.
A group of skiers from Eau Claire participated in the Wisconsin Hoofers Ski Meet at Muir Knoll in Madison, WI. There is no information available regarding the standings of the tournament.

In late fall of 1946, Vern became a father, resulting in responsibilities that would curtail the amount of ski jumping competitions for him.

1947 - A return to the Battle Creek Park slide in St. Paul for the U.S. Central Ski Jumping Championships resulted in a 10th Place finish for Vern.

Vern entered a tournament at his home hill at Eau Claire, where he took 3rd place, beating his pals Jimmy Hendrickson and Jim Running. At another tournament at “The Mountain,” Vern placed 2nd.

He again skied Big Hills Park in Beloit, WI, and Wolverine Hill in Ironwood, but no statistics are available on those tournaments.

Vern and son, Ron
Vern served as Eau Claire Ski Club President for 1950-51.

In 1951, Vern skied in Class A in tournaments at both Wolverine Hill in Ironwood, and Pine Mountain in Iron Mountain, MI. No results of those tournaments are known. However, they are the last known tournaments in which Vern skied in Class A.

Vern and Ardy Powers at Iron Mountain on right.
### Vern Powers Class A Ski Tournament Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Placed</th>
<th>Dist</th>
<th>Hill Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>192-184</td>
<td>Whitehall 2-22-42</td>
<td>Whitehall WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>257-238</td>
<td>Pine Mountain</td>
<td>Iron Mountain MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mt. Washington</td>
<td>Eau Claire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>170-Fell</td>
<td>Beloit (1st after War)</td>
<td>Beloit WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td></td>
<td>Battle Creek</td>
<td>St Paul MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>177-177</td>
<td>Duluth</td>
<td>Duluth MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>155-172</td>
<td>Wolverine Hill</td>
<td>Ironwood MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>201-203</td>
<td>Pine Mountain</td>
<td>Iron Mountain MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>99-99</td>
<td>Hoofers Muir Knoll</td>
<td>Madison WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>165-156</td>
<td>Battle Creek</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>109-110</td>
<td>Mt. Washington</td>
<td>Eau Claire WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>73-75</td>
<td>Menomonie</td>
<td>Menomonie WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Big Hills Park</td>
<td>Beloit WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wolverine Hill</td>
<td>Ironwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Club President</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
<td>Devil’s Hollow</td>
<td>Oconomowoc WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wolverine Hill</td>
<td>Ironwood MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pine Mountain</td>
<td>Iron Mountain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first evidence of Vern moving into Veteran's Class comes from his entry into a tournament at Brokaw, WI in 1954. Brokaw is just on the northern edge of Wausau. Vern won Veterans class on the Brokaw jump in 1954, 1955, 1956, and 1957. He took second place in 1958.

As a family, we spent many of our winter weekends traveling to ski tournaments. Brokaw was one I remember well. I think my dad liked it because he won there so often. It wasn’t always trophies and medals for winning. Prizes were often awarded, such as ski equipment or small home appliances.
There is a large gap of information available on Vern’s ski jumping between 1948 and 1955. It may be that Vern just did not place high enough in tournaments to register in the local papers, or that there were just gaps in his participation during that time. Demands on his time were likely greater from both work and family. He became self-employed and opened up his own automobile service station in 1951.

Vern and Ardy had 3 children, Ron, Pam, and Ann by 1951. Jody, a 4th, came in 1959. Vern was a devout family man, and that may have curtailed the amount of skiing he could do.
In the late 1950s the Beloit slide was dismantled and brought to Eau Claire and assembled by Eau Claire Ski Club members on the far northern end of what is now called Stein Boulevard. Once the jump was operational, the club moved over to the new hill. The new Eau Claire Ski Club hill was called Hendrickson Hill, in memory of Jimmy Hendrickson, one of Vern’s Eau Claire Ski Club teammates. Jimmy lost his life in a ski jumping accident on Norge’s Cary Hill near Chicago.

Vern took 9th place in both 1958 and 1959 on this hill, but finished at 15th in 1960. He was also Hill Co-Captain that year, and on the board of directors the previous year.
Natalie Bailey Will Jump Here

Other Skiers Sign Up for Tourney Sunday

Interest in the Chippewa Valley club's annual ski tourney at Ser-More hill Sunday—already at a maximum—was enhanced yesterday with the announcement that Natalie Bailey of the St. Paul Ski club will make exhibition jumps.

Known as the only "lady jumper" in the Central Ski association, she is a new member of the St. Paul club. She is an exceptional performer on skis.

Other entries from St. Paul who will appear here include Dean Linnerooth, Edward Zaspel and Walter Miescher, Class B; Harry Southward and Luke Solar, Class C.

A number of riders from the Eau Claire Ski Club also are entering the tournament. They include Frits Mittlestedt, Art Pope, Doug Kolberg, Lloyd Madison and Lawrence Shelly, Class B; Warren Evans, Bob Flemming, Ralph Pope, Class C, and Erick Cynild, Senior class.

Ski Tourney Draws 25,000

Twenty-five thousand winter sports enthusiasts are shown here as they watched some of the world's greatest skiers perform in the International Ski Tournament on Clay Hill, in River Grove, Ill. The meet title was won by Norway's Olympic champion, Birger Ruud, with a mark of 172 feet.
A couple of good finishes came Vern's way in 1961 when he took 2nd at Iola, WI and 2nd at Mt. Washington. He also placed 5th at Rushford, MN. In addition, he entered tournaments at Hendrickson Hill in Eau Claire and Battle Creek Park in St. Paul, MN that same year.
### Vern Powers Veterans' Class Ski Tournament Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Placed</th>
<th>Dist</th>
<th>Hill Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brokaw by Wausau</td>
<td>Brokaw WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
<td>Carver Lake</td>
<td>Mpls. MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brokaw by Wausau</td>
<td>Brokaw WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brokaw by Wausau</td>
<td>Brokaw WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brokaw by Wausau</td>
<td>Brokaw WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>1st + MG</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brokaw by Wausau</td>
<td>Brokaw WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>136-128</td>
<td>Hendrickson Hill</td>
<td>Eau Claire WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>143-152</td>
<td>Hendrickson Hill</td>
<td>Eau Claire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td>105-104</td>
<td>Hendrickson Hill</td>
<td>Eau Claire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>124-123</td>
<td>Iola</td>
<td>Iola WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>24th</td>
<td>129-110</td>
<td>Battle Creek Park</td>
<td>St. Paul MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>124-123</td>
<td>Hendrickson Hill</td>
<td>Eau Claire WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>81-81</td>
<td>Mt. Washington</td>
<td>Eau Claire WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Vets</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>92-85</td>
<td>Rushford</td>
<td>Rushford MN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1950-51 Club President  
1955 4th Highest Club Jumper  
1959 On Board of Directors for Ski Club  
1960 Co-Hill Captain
**Night Jumping Returns**

*By Ron Buckli*  
*Leader-Telegram Staff*

Vern Powers was the first one to ride the hill under lights. "The hill was not completely ready and it was kind of rough," said Powers, 81. The hill was the 40-meter Mt. Washington jump and it was one of the largest in the area 65 years ago. The Eau Claire Ski Club was preparing for the United States' first ever night ski tournament under the lights on February 28, 1937. "It was a great experience," recalled 85-year-old Fritz Mittelstadt, who also jumped in the competition.

More than six decades later, the club will stage another night tournament under the lights, this time at 90-meter Silver Mine Hill on Friday, January 25. In 1937, a field of 120 jumpers, some of the best from the midwest, showed up for the historic event during the highday of ski jumping. Lighting was provided by the Eau Claire Senior High electrical department and lit up the Shawtown area of the city. It drew contrasting views. "The hard part was the lighting," said Mittelstadt, who retired as U.S. Chief of Nordic Officials 10 years ago. "They had a string of lights and it was a little difficult to judge the end of the takeoff as far as I was concerned. Once you got onto the landing hill, it was OK." Powers remembered the lights as quite adequate.

"Officials say that visibility will be eminently satisfactory," reported the Eau Claire Leader. Powers said that the slide would vault the jumpers high in the air over the landing hill. "We had quite a flat to cover on top so we often built up the takeoff to get over," said Powers, a member of the Eau Claire Ski Club Hall of Fame. "Once you got over you could go a ways down." The club plowed out 15 acres at the bottom of the hill to allow spectators to watch from their cars should they wish and a crowd of 3,000 showed up for the unique event.

It was figured that the night-time snow would increase the speed of the jumpers and that the hill record of 149 feet would be broken. It didn't turn out that way, although the record was approached. Eugene Wilson, Coleraine, Minn., had the long jump of 144 feet but finished second to Sverre
Fredheim, U.S. Olympic jumper from Minneapolis at the time. Fredheim had jumps of 137 and 142 feet. Eau Claire’s Jimmy Hendrickson, who was a member of the U.S. Team that jumped in the Olympics in Germany a year earlier, took part but apparently fell and did not place. Max Raentsch, Minneapolis, won Class B with Raymond Nelson of Strum seventh and Art Pope of Eau Claire eighth.

Powers, only 16 at the time, had a good day, placing third in Class C, or Boys’ Class, with rides of 119 and 125 feet. Roy Laramie, Coleraine, took first with a long jump of 131 feet, and Walter Nelson, Strum, was second with Ralph Pope of Eau Claire fourth. City riders swept the first three places in Senior Class with winner Henry Fleming followed by John Olson and Vic Jensen. “There was some falls, but I remember standing all three of my rides,” said Mittelstadt, also a member of the Eau Claire Ski Club Hall of Fame. Jumpers at Silver Mine Hill this month will go twice as far and more on the Olympic-sized jump.

The club, which annually holds tournaments on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, decided on a Friday night event to avoid conflicts with a Continental Cup meet at Westby the same weekend and the NFL semifinal games on Sunday. “We’ve been kicking around the idea of a night tournament for a number of years,” said Dino Amundson, ski club hill captain. “With some recontouring and other hill work, we felt it is now possible.”

There will be permanent poles for security and lighting at strategic places on the hill and portable lights on the slide. Amundson said the club is investing an estimated $10,000 into the overall project.

“We also have a commitment from four Russian and Ukrainian jumpers who will be here,” Amundson said. That includes Vladimir Glyvka, a member of the Ukrainian Ski Team who set the Silver Mine Hill record at 308 feet last year.

There is also the possibility that some foreign jumpers scheduled to compete in the Continental Cup meets Saturday and Sunday at Westby may be here for the Friday night event. Friday’s tournament will be followed by a second tournament Saturday afternoon.

(Left) 40-meter Mt. Washington Ski Jump as the Eau Claire Ski club prepared to host the first night tournament in the United States on Feb. 28, 1937.

(Right) The front of the program promoting the 1937 ski jumping tournament held at Mt. Washington that featured 120 jumpers.
November 21, 1991

Vern Powers
6171 Hillside Park
Eau Claire, WI. 54703

Dear Mr. Powers:

The Eau Claire Ski Club is proud to announce that you have been selected for membership in the Eau Claire Ski Club Hall of Fame.

Members are being honored in three categories: athlete, club builder and early era.

This year's new members include:
Athlete - Ted Lahner, Vern Powers, Curt Bestul
Club Builder - Ron Buckli
Early Era - Thomas Hagen

Formal induction will take place at the club's Hall of Fame dance to be held at Westgate Sportsman Club, Saturday January 11, beginning 8 P.M. Inductees will also be introduced at the club's LaMoine Batson Memorial Tournament the following day at 1 P.M.

We hope that you or a representative of your family will be able to attend.

Sincerely,

Paul Seipel
Hall of Fame Chairman
EAU CLAIRE SKI CLUB
HALL OF FAME

Vern Powers
January 11, 1992
ATHLETE
Ted Lahner, the 1954 national Junior Class champion, and Vern Powers, whose career spanned nearly three decades, have been named as athletes to the Eau Claire Ski Club’s Hall of Fame.

Joining them as club builders are Curt Bestul, who also excelled as an athlete, and Ron Buckli, Leader-Telegram sports editor who has covered the local tournaments for the past 35 years.

Entering in the early era category is Thomas Hagen, who stood out as a jumper and also served as club builder in the early 1900s.

The four modern entries bring the Hall’s total to 23 members. They will be honored at the club’s Hall of Fame induction ceremonies Jan. 11 at Westgate Sportsman Club. The annual ski jumping tournament at Silver Mine Hill will be held Sunday, Jan. 12.

Ted Lahner

One of four brothers to excel at the sport, he grew up in the Mount Washington area and began jumping at an early age at the Fourth Ward School slide.

After an outstanding career with the Flying Eagles junior club, he moved to the Eau Claire Ski Club in 1952 and a year later, at the age of 16, took part in the national championships at the 90-meter slide in Steamboat Springs, Colo. He had the second longest jump in his class (273 feet) but a fall cost him a second-place finish.

In 1954, he won the national Junior title at Ishpeming, Mich., with jumps of 209 feet and 199 feet. Moving to Class B, he won at Eau Claire’s Hendrickson Hill in 1955 and in the nationals at Leavenworth, Wash. He had the longest jump (280 feet) in his class but fell.

He was second at Eau Claire in 1956 and in the national championships at Westby and he tied Class A champion Keith Zuehlke for the longest jump of 201 feet but fell on his second ride.

Elevated to Class A in 1957, he suffered a broken collarbone at Ishpeming, but came back the next year to enjoy his finest season.

In the Central championships at Hendrickson Hill, he stunned the field (which included former Olympian Bill Olson and ex-national champion Zuehlke) to win easily with jumps of 183 feet and 177 feet, the longest of the day. A Milwaukee sportswriter tabbed him the "Flying Bartender."

Later in the season, he went to Iron Mountain, Mich., to place third in the national championships, won by Olson. Zuehlke was fourth in a dominating showing by the Eau Claire Ski Club.

In 1959, he staged a sizzling duel with Olson for the championship at Hendrickson Hill, jumping 197 feet to tie the hill record. But Olson was declared the winner by .2 of a point although he had shorter jumps.

Later that season, he took part in the pre-Olympic meet at Squaw Valley, Calif., and placed 13th in an international field. He was the seventh-ranked American.

In 1962, on leave from guard duty at Ft. Lewis, Wash., Lahner a great all-around athlete placed fourth at Eau Claire. The same season, he won the Northwest Division championship at Mt. Hood, Ore.

He continued to be a top competitor through 1964, when he retired after 12 years of jumping. He also excelled as a professional baseball player and played on 10 state championship fastball softball teams.

Lahner, 55, introduced the current "fish style" of jumping with arms pinned at his sides in the 1950s and was labeled the "Human Torpedo." Always a fearless, daring and long jumper, falls cost him many honors.

Vern Powers

One of the few city jumpers who did not begin with the Flying Eagles, Powers joined the Eau Claire Ski Club at the age of 15 in 1936 and by the time World War II arrived, he was jumping with some of the best skiers in the world.

After becoming a top finisher in Midwest tournaments, he went to Seattle, Wash., for the national championships in 1941 and after the first ride, he was in first place in Class B. On his second ride, he hit an air pocket and nearly fell, but still finished sixth.

At the peak of his game in 1942, he went to the huge slide at Iron Mountain and jumped directly between two of the greatest skiers of the day, the legendary Torger Tokle and Walt Bietila. While Tokle was setting the North American record at 289 feet, Powers turned in a respectable jump of 257. It was the longest jump ever by a city skier at the time.

He said his biggest thrill came that morning when the hill was icy and most of the top jumpers wouldn't ride. Jumping with Jim Running, he had a near-record practice effort of 275 feet.

World War II robbed him of his best jumping years. He served with the Air Force in Europe but returned to continue his career in 1946. He jumped in Class A through the mid-1950s and then entered Veteran’s Class for several more years before retiring in the 1960s.

Powers, 71, won championships in all four classes of competition—A, B, Junior and Veterans. As a long and spectacular jumper, he ranked as one of the city’s more successful and popular skiers of his day.
Powers has fond memories

By Ron Buckli
Leader-Telegram staff

He never made an Olympic team. He never won a National championship — or a Most Graceful trophy.

But for 30 years — spanning the golden era of the sport — he was one of Eau Claire’s most successful and popular ski jumpers.

"I was always a long jumper," he reflected this week. "I was not as graceful as some but I was steady and I seldom fell. And that says something for the conditions we skied under back then."

Vern Powers is 61 years old. He’ll be at Silver Mine Hill Sunday. As the riders speed down the chute and explode into the air, he’ll be reminded of days of yesteryear — the days he was setting sail with some of the greatest jumpers in the world.

"I still go to the tournaments," he said. "I’ll be there Sunday. It gets in your blood and you never lose that."

Powers won championships in all four classes of competition — A, B, C and Senior — beginning as a 12-year old in 1936 and continuing through his years in Veteran’s Class in the 1960s.

He remembers the day in 1942 when he outjumped some of the nation’s top skiers at Whitehall. His jump of 144 feet vaulted him into Class A.

He remembers the time he jumped aboard the train with Jim Running and headed for Seattle. And he remembers the time he jumped directly between the two greatest jumpers of the day.

It was in 1941 that the 20-year old Powers joined Running on that train heading west for the National championships in Hyak, Wash.

"After the first ride, I was in first place," he recalled. "But on the second one, I hit an air pocket. I wasn’t used to that mountain skiing. I got my points down. I stood, but I was out of kilter."

While Running placed second, Powers still finished a very respectable sixth in that tournament as the legendary Torger Tokie sailed to a new North American distance record of 288 feet.

Powers most memorable performance? That was the following year at the gigantic new slide at Iron Mountain, Mich.

"I’ll never forget that," he said. "I skied directly behind Walter Bietela and directly in front of Torger Tokie. They were the two greatest ski jumpers of the day."

While Tokie soared to a new record of 289 feet, Powers was settling for a creditable jump of 257 feet.

"I felt pretty good just to be able to ride between the two greatest jumpers in the country," he said. "What do you do? When they call your name, you go."

Powers rated the two among the best he’d ever seen. "Tokie was a tremendous jumper. He was awful wide on his landings, like me, but he could do things nobody else could do. He could jump far — very far — and stand."

He also skied with such jumpers as Eugene Wilson, Sverre Prechtl, Reidar Andersen and Birger Ruud. "I guess Ruud would have to be the best," he admitted.

But more than anything else, he remembers that day at Iron Mountain. "Jim Running and I went out there the morning of the tournament and took some practice rides," he recalled. "It was icy and a lot of the big guys wouldn’t ride. I had a ride of 275 feet and that was the biggest thrill I ever had."

Powers was at the peak of his game when he went in the Air Force in October of 1942. He became a crew chief on a P-47 fighter-bomber, went to Europe through the war and earned the bronze star.

"I don’t know if I’d ever been an Olympic jumper or anything like that, but I was finished first, second or third in most of the tournaments before I left," he said.

When the war ended, he remembered getting Gerry Chamberlain, Jack Moore, Bob Anderson and Darrel Lahner and heading for a tournament in Beloit with inadequate equipment.

"We got skiing going again that winter (1946)," he said. "I skied Class A until I was 32, then I went into Veteran’s Class."

Of his four children, Powers oldest was a boy. "Ron skied in the Flying Eagles and did real well there for a while," Vern said.

Vern was one of the few old-time ski stars that didn’t get his start with the Flying Eagles.

"I would just ski around, build bumps on the hills and jump. And then I got up to the Mountain one year and they asked me if I wanted to join the Eau Claire Ski Club."

Powers story, he took the first night ride in U.S. ski jumping history on a big hill...at Mt. Washington in the late 1930s...and, oh yes, the winners..Tomten in Vets, Mike Shuplien in B, on a limb with Mattoon over Olsen in Junior...and Zuehlke...who else?...in A...and we think Reed can pump a 276-footer out of it this year.

Vern Powers
Other than baseball players, there weren’t many sports stars in the 1930s and 1940s. However, there were some true “rock stars,” or heros, in the sport of ski jumping. Vern’s number one hero was Torger Tokle. Vern had read about about Tokle’s prowess as a ski jumper and tried to follow his achievements. Vern would have given anything just to meet him. Little did he know back then that one day soon he would be standing on the top of the gigantic Iron Mountain slide sandwiched between Torger Tokle and Walter Bietla. Talking with them before and after the tournaments was an unbelievable thrill for Vern. In comparison it would be like competing with, and getting to know personally, some of your favorite sports stars of today.
TOKLE SHOWS TOP SKI-JUMPING FORM

MAGIC-EYE SHOTS OF CHAMPION

In ski jumping more than any other sport, the individual is on his own. Roaring down a ramp at faster than 50 m.p.h., sailling into space and landing far below on a steeply pitched slope, the ski jumper uses his skis as wings and his arms as his helms. He is a combination of courage, skill and muscle.

Best ski jumper in the U.S. is 36-year-old Norwegian carpenter named Torger Tokle. In the two years he has been in this country, Tokle has won 25 out of 26 meets, now holds the American record of 272 ft. Below, in a magic-eye sequence, Tokle makes a 200-ft. jump on the new 60-meter hill at Duluth, Minn.

In Picture No. 1, Tokle starts down the ramp, picking up speed for his flight. In Nos. 2 and 3 he takes off. Contrary to popular belief, the ski jumper does not jump. Rather, he takes full advantage of his forward speed by lifting himself from ankles and thrusting his chest forward like a diver executing a swan dive. This makes his line of flight in an upward direction. Most important part of the entire jump is the take-off because it determines length of jump and how the jumper will land. It is also the greatest thrill.

In Nos. 4 through 9, Tokle in full flight counter acts air pressure by leaning far forward over his skis. He uses his arms to maintain proper balance. In Nos. 10 to 12 Tokle lands with his knees bent and one ski ahead of the other to take up the shock. For more magic-eye pictures on Tokle's jump, see page 61.
SKI MEET COMMITTEEEMEN—Eau Claire Ski Club members who have important roles in staging the tournament at new Hendrickson Hill here Sunday are shown going over assignments with President Orv Gynnild (left) who is general chairman. Others in front row are (left to right): Don Walker, registration; Vern Powers, communications; Don Enerson, banquet and judges; and Bob Mittlestadt, dedication. In the back row (left to right) are Keith Zuehke, hill work; Ralph Anderson, tickets; Gale Skamsen, programs; Dale Severson, decorations; Marv Pieper, tickets; and Jim Severson, prizes.
FLYING BIELTILAS
LEAD SKI MEET

Take Two First Places and One Second At
Devil's Hollow

Oconomowoc, Wis. Jan. 12 (AP)—The Flying Bieltiis brothers, of Ishpeming, Mich., drew the attention of 2,500 spectators at the annual Milwaukee-Oconomowoc Ski club jumping tournament at Devil’s Hollow Sunday as they took the two first places and a second in a field of 150 riders.

Walter Bieltia, representing the Wisconsin Hoofers club, of Madison, won the Class A championship with jumps of 103 and 105 feet. His score had marks of 104 and 108 feet, but finished in second in second place on the evening record.

Ralph Bieltia, youngest of the quartet and with the national Class C title at Seattle last year, won the C title here with leaps of 91 and 96 feet. Leonard Bieltia, eldest of the brothers, fell on his second jump to lose any chance at the senior title.

Summaries of the jumping events follows:

Class A
1. Walter Bieltia, Wisconsin Hoofers, Madison, 103 and 105 feet—144.9 points
2. Roy Bieltia, Ishpeming, 104—143.7
3. Fritz Pohlman, Beloit, Wis., 98—142.3
4. Jim Running, Beloit, 92—138.8
5. Brent Saar, Ishpeming, 87—130.6

Class B
1. Vern Powers, Eau Claire, 98—143.1
2. Gordon Robate, Munising, Mich., 96—142.3
3. Walter Nelson, Beloit, 94—140.2
4. Jim Lawson, Ishpeming, 100—139.1
5. Tom Hagen, Eau Claire, 94—135.2

Senior
1. Ingvar Arneson, New London, 83—94—124.5
2. Arthur Norgren, Norge, Chicago, 92—131.1
3. Ole Besseberg, Norge, Chicago, 89—123.4
5. Tom Nelson, Beloit, 87—131.1

Class C
1. Ralph Bieltia, Ishpeming, 96—136.3
2. Oscar Severson, Eau Claire, 89—135.6
4. Gale Eymer, Kiwanis, Iron Mountain, 89—126.7
5. Walter Alexander, Munising, 87—128.1

BIETILA TAKES
CLASS A TITLE

But Gets Competition From
Unidentified Norwegian Riders.

Bielta — (AP) — An atmosphere of international mystery was present yesterday when two only partially identified Norwegian ski club competitors were advertised as the second and third men to the Bieltia brothers of Ishpeming, Mich., in class A of the Central Union, United States Ski championship.

The title of the crowd of 2,000 who witnessed the event as "Old" and "Sigurd." They escaped from Norway, home of skiing, after the Nazi occupation and made their way to Canada. Their last names were withheld to protect their relatives who are still in Norway.

They gave Bieltia—who won his third major meet in as many weeks—a close competition. Bieltia leaped 179 feet in his first try and 165 on the second. The distances, together, with form rating, gave him 232.4 points.

On had a jump of 176 feet, 257.1 points and second place, while Sigurd, junior of 179 and 177 feet for 224 points.

Bieltia's second leap was the best of the day, but it was far under the hill record of 212 feet held by Eugene Wilson, of Coleman, Minn., who placed fourth behind "Sigurd." Damp snow hampered his performance.

Other winners were Raymond Nelson of Beloit, class B; Ralph Bieltia, of Ishpeming, class C, and Ingvar Arneson, of New London, Wis., senior division.

The summary:

Class A
1. Walter Bieltia, Ishpeming, 176—185—230.5
2. Sigurd. Little Norway, Canada, 170—176—247.1
3. Eugene Wilson, Coleman, Minn., 172—173—234.4
4. Jim Running, Beloit, 176—172—212.5
5. Class B: Raymond Nelson, Beloit, 165—168—212.5
7. Nels Halverson, Minneapolis, 170—169—200.4
8. Charles Soder, Madison, Wis., 162—167—200.7
Class C
1. Ralph Bieltia, Ishpeming, 168—179—218.2
2. Cel Eymer, Iron Mountain, 161—169—222.3
3. Charles Ulven, St. Paul, 152—151—205.4
4. Oscar Severson, Eau Claire, 144—139—203
5. Roy Kistler, Duluth, Minn., 155—151—251.4

WALT BIELTILA ENTERS EVENT

Gets Week End Release
From Navy for Iron Mountain Affair.

Iron Mountain—The entry list for the all-star ski jumping classic on Giant Pine Mountain slide, where the nation's crop will aim at 300 feet, grew more impressive today with the entry of six more Class A stars.

Walt Bieltia, toast of Ishpeming's famous family, filed his entry from Green Bay, Wis., where he is training to develop "wings" for the "wings" in the U.S. Navy air corps. The Navy has granted him a weekend release to compete in the classic.

Roy Laramie, another Crack A rider, entered from the Kiwanis Ski club, of Iron Mountain. Beloit's entry list received today, included three more A contestants—Jim Running, Pirtt Pahlman and Roy Nelson. Eau Claire has also entered its Class A threat, Vernon Powers.

With more entries coming, here's the star-studded field which is lined up to date: Torger Tofte, of Brooklyn, N. Y.; Eli Engen, of Sun Valley, Idaho; Art Zbozicki, of Lake Placid, N.Y.; Ted Zbozicki, of Land o Lakes; Walt Bieltia of U. S. Navy air corps; Roy Laramie, of Iron Mountain; Vern Powers of Eau Claire, and Jim Running, Pirtt Pahlman and Roy Nelson, of Beloit.

The leading C entry to date is Cel Eymer, of Iron Mountain, who last week edged past Ralph Bieltia for the title in the Ishpeming meet. Ralph, Roy and Leonard Bieltia are also expected to enter.

The two leading senior class contestants entered so far are Elmer Jacobson, of Chicago, and Walt Bratton, of the Kiwanis ski club here.

With the bulk of the entries yet to arrive, Jack Pfeustle of Iron Mountain, and Walter Nelson, of Beloit, are the leading B riders.

Ted Zbozicki, who holds the hill record here of 272 feet, arrived here yesterday for a series of tune-up rides before the big event.
DON'T MISS THE . . .
9th Annual SKI Tournament
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16 at 1:30 P.M.
AT WOLVERINE HILL

UNDER THE REGULATION OF THE NATIONAL SKI ASSOCIATION
Nationally Known
Riders to Compete

Approximately 100 riders will be on hand to
represent their clubs.

ADMISSION

ADULTS — 15,000
CHILDREN — 7.00

CANTEEN SERVICE
Hot dogs and hot coffee will be served at the
hills.

SURVEYED PARKING
By police officers at the hill site.

DRESS WARMLY

Dress for the occasion.

SKI DANCE
SUNDAY NIGHT
9 P.M.
MEMORIAL BUILDING—Ironwood
Admission, Couple $7.50
Single $5.00
Orchestra music for dancing

Central Jumpers
Eligible to Enter National Listed

WAUSAU, Wis., Jan. 24—The following list of Central U.S. Ski Association registered ski jumpers are de-
cleared eligible to enter the 1947 National Jumping Championships at
Ishpeming, Michigan, February 22
and 23.

This is the first list and includes
skiers who have proved themselves
eligible through placing in one of the
ten places in their respective
classes at sanctioned Tournaments of
the Association in 1946 and through
the sanctioned Tournaments of January
12 and January 19 of 1947.

Additional qualification for entry
in the National Championships may
be achieved in sanctioned Tournaments,
approved by the Ski Jumping Com-
mittee, of January 26, February 2
and February 9. In accordance with
the action of the last Convention the
Committee may rule out competitions on very small hills as qualifying contests.

Further lists of qualifying ski
jumpers will be issued as the con-
testants qualify for possible entry in
the remaining tournaments.

The following and subsequent lists
do not indicate these skiers have
been entered in the National Cham-
pionships. It does indicate the entries
of these skiers will be accepted for
competition by the host club if they
are filed correctly and in the usual
manner by the skier's club. Entries
of skiers not listed will not be ac-
cepted.

Respectfully submitted,
Arthur J. Barth, President
George Morissette, Secretary
Central U.S. Ski Association

CLASS A

Ahlers, Paul, St. Paul S. C.
Bietila, Ralph, Ishpeming S. C.
Bietila, Roy, Ishpeming S. C.
Bietila, Walter, Kiwanis S. C.
Dagget, Arthur, Wis. Hoofers
Enersen, Ralph, Norge S. C.
Fedrick, Herbert, Duluth S. C.
Fredheim, Sverre, St. Paul S. C.
Hansen, Henry, Bush Lake S. C.
Hendrickson, James, Eau Claire W. S. C.
Jansen, Howard, Norge S. C.
Laramie, Roy, Longview S. C.
Lawson, James, Ishpeming S. C.
Mitchell, Elseworth, Ishpeming S. C.
Nelson, Raymond, Beloit S. C.
Perrault, Joseph, Ishpeming S. C.
Powers, Vernon, Eau Claire W. S. C.
Roecker, Robert, Duluth S. C.
Riley, Robert, Itasca S. C.
Running, James, Eau Claire W. S. C.
Sedivic, Charles, Norge S. C.
Wilson, Eugene, Norge S. C.
Wingsnes, Martin, Norge S. C.
Zoberski, Ted, Goebel Range S. C.

CLASS B

Anderson, Robert, Eau Claire W. S. C.
SKI TOURNAMENT WINNERS.—Top finishers in the Central U. S. Ski association jumping tournament held Sunday at the Mt. Washington slide here, concluding event of the Eau Claire Winter sports week, are pictured as they appeared at the post-tournament banquet Sunday evening at the Tagles hall. The tournament and banquet were arranged by the Junior Chamber of Commerce and the Winter Sports club.

The winners, left to right, in front row: Bill Duckwitz, Madison, second in Class B; Lyle Engedahl, Eau Claire, fourth in Class C; Rolf Eversen, Chicago, fourth in Class A; Eugene Wilson, Chicago, first in Class A; Herb Feddiek, Duluth, tied for second in Class A; Vern Powers, Eau Claire, tied for second in Class A; Dick Zuehlke, Milwaukee, third in senior class; Olaf Hatlen, Beloit, first in Senior class.

Back row, left to right: Robert Nerovitz, Chicago, third in Class C; Luke Soel, St. Paul, fifth in Class B; George Lauer, Eau Claire, second in Class C; Oscar Severson, Eau Claire, first in Class B; Billy Olson, Eau Claire, first in Class C; Marty Kutzmandz, Duluth, third in Class C; Jimmy Hendrickson, Eau Claire, fifth in Class A; Jim Running, Eau Claire, sixth in Class A, and Gjardar Iverson, St. Paul, second in Senior class.
Where Storm Wrought Damage

Bush Lake
Ski Jump
Collapses

Before

The Bush Lake ski slide, scene of many national tournaments, such as shown at right, was blown down Monday afternoon in a wind and rain storm in that area. It lay today in a wreckage of twisted metal as shown below.

After
Left: Vern and Art Pope doing Double Jump at Mt. Washington.

All jumpers on lower 3 photos are Vern Powers, locations unknown.
Mt. Washington Slide in 1936
Suicide Hill in Ishpeming, MI

**Left:** Old Hendrickson Hill before the replacement from Beloit.

**Right:** Vern Powers (left) and Art Pope on Chippewa Valley slide.
Don Hotejec and Vern Powers at Strum in 1939-40

Vern Powers - Location Unknown
On October 12, 2019, Vern Powers was inducted into the American Ski Jumping Hall of Fame. His son, Ron, and Ron’s wife, Dianne, were in attendance to accept the award on behalf of the family. The ski on the left is the induction award with pictures as follows: 1) Vern at Mt. Washington, 2) Vern on right and Lee Hoff on left performing double jump at Mt. Washington, 3) Vern at Iron Mountain, MI, 4) Vern at age 15 in front of family home on Francis Street in Eau Claire, WI.

Vern’s Great Grandchildren, Aria, Arthur, Cecil, and Bryn with ASJHOF award.

Vern was asked, at age 15, to join the senior Eau Claire Ski Club in 1936. He competed for the next 26 years, and won championships in all four classes.

In 1938 Vern was the first skier in the U.S. to ski under lights on a senior hill (Mt. Washington). He was often introduced over the PA at tournaments as, “Vern Powers, the Power Jumper.” He wasn't the most stylish skier out there, but he seldom fell. He could jump far, and his recorded jump of 257 ft at Iron Mountain in 1942 was the longest jump ever recorded by an Eau Claire skier. That record stood for 6 years until Olympian Billy Olsen surpassed it in 1948.
Addendum: The Short Ski Jumping History of Vern’s Son, Ron Powers

From the time that I was just a few years old, my dad encouraged me to ski. He got me an old pair of used skis with pointy tips and leather toe straps for my boots. We had a short, but very steep hill that had been made when fill was brought for building our house on a lot that was not at street grade. He tried to help me get started, but it usually ended in frustration for me, mostly because I think the hill was too steep. I can still remember trying time after time to ski down that hill without falling, but I could never seem to do it. I would get so angry that I would take each ski off and throw it as far as I could. I wanted so badly to show him when he came home from work that I could stand up going down the hill.

One day something clicked, and I could stand it all the way down. I was so excited that I rode down over and over again. When Dad came home from work it was already dark, but I was waiting for him. I showed him what I could do, and he acted very proud of me. Without even going into the house he grabbed a shovel and built a little snow jump on the flat just past the dip in the hill. When I rode down again, the jump threw me for a loop. The frustration started all over again. However, as time went on, I figured it all out and was soon building my own little jumps on our hill and other hills in our neighborhood. Pretty soon, other neighborhood kids brought skis, and we were building little jumping hills all over the place.

When I started school at Mt. Washington 4th Ward School, I learned that it had a ski jump. There was a large, wooden ski scaffold towering above the playground. The landing area was part of the bank of the large hill on which our school sat. There was a street crossing right at the bottom of the hill, so the City of Eau Claire had to close that street in the winter. Jumpers would sail off the jump, hit the landing hill, ski across the street and fly right down the alley across the street. In the winter, you might see 25-30 pair of jumping skis lined up and leaning on the wood braces under the ski jump. As soon as recess began, kids would fly out the door, wax their skis, and start ski jumping. When I got old enough to jump, I always tried to get to school early so that I could store my skis under the jump in a spot away from the sun. The sun softened the wax on the skis, slowing your speed on the jump, and decreased jumping distance. Carrying those heavy oak skis 0.6 mile each way on my shoulder every day was not very easy, but it all seemed worth it when I sailed off that jump.
The youngest kids would be lined up to ride down the landing hill only. Others would be climbing the steep scaffold with skis on their shoulders to take their turns at flying off the jump. Usually, one of the students would take responsibility by standing near the end of the jump, directing the skiers with a flag. After a few jumpers had a turn, the flagger would stand in front of the jump and hold the flag steady as a sign that the younger landing hill riders were going down the hill. The rule was that no skier could descend either the jump or the landing hill until all fallen skiers were cleared out of the way. However, not all kids were reliable flaggers. In second grade, I was one of the kids who rode down the landing hill only. I had never made it the full distance without falling. However, I had seen my neighbor, Ray Perry, go off the jump one day. Right then I decided that I could do it if he could. Determined, I carried my skis to the top of the scaffold. When it was my turn, I was given the “all clear” flag and pushed off the top. As I flew through the air, a wonderful feeling came over me, and I knew I was going to love ski jumping… that is until I saw the kid laying in a heap in front of me at the bottom of the hill. I was petrified. When I landed on my skis, my gaze was locked on the kid right in front of me. I flew past him just as he dove out of the way, running over the backs of his skis. As I zoomed across the street and down the alley, the realization finally hit me that I had made it. I had flown off the schoolyard jump and stood up all the way. I was in second grade, but I was no longer one of those little kids who only rode the landing hill and fell down most of the time. From that day forward, I rarely fell while ski jumping.
When I got home from school that day I was bursting with pride. I wanted to tell my mom about it, but I wanted to tell my dad first. My dad was an active competitive ski jumper. We spent most winter weekends going to ski tournaments where my dad was competing. Although he never said it, I always felt that he was disappointed in how slowly I developed in most sports. He thought that he could just tell me or show me how to do something, and I should be able to do it. He had built me many jumps on the hills in our yard, but I always had difficulty mastering them. But now I had something important to tell him. I had sailed off the schoolyard jump and stood it all the way. In addition, I had gone off two more times and stood it both times. I just knew he was going to truly be proud of me. When he came home, I jabbered incessantly, giving him a blow-by-blow account of all three of my jumps. The thing I remember most is the look in his eyes. They were glowing with pride. He didn’t just look at me. He saw me…me. It is a strange and wonderful thing for a child to have the full, undivided, adoring attention of a parent. It was a feeling I will never forget.

I continued ski jumping throughout my elementary school and junior high years after the junior slide moved up next to the senior slide on Mt. Washington. My friends all ski jumped and we always had a fun time. Every night it was carry your skis 0.6 mile, get in as many rides as possible, and carry your skis back home. As skiers carried their skis back up the long icy steps to the top of the hill, tradition was to pause and look up at the judges’ stand. If the coach looked away, you just kept walking up.

One day a wonderful thing happened. When I got to the judges’ stand, Ray Schulte, our coach, gave me a tip to improve my jumping. I went up and tried it. On the next walk up he gave me another tip. From that day forward, Ray coached me. He never turned his back again. Suddenly, his help paid off, and everything started working. Soon I was lucky enough to win 1st and Most Graceful at Mt. Washington and 1st at Westby in class C-2, which meant I was on the smaller hill. But as soon as I had a little success for the first time, the club transferred me up to the big hill. I continued to place in the top seven, but I was back in the middle of the pack again.
I was lucky to be chosen to ski in the Central US Championships in Rushford, MN. It was icy on practice day, and I took advantage of it. My jumps were as long as anyone in the field, including the great Billy Bakke. On tournament day, there was a really strong headwind blowing right up the hill. I had never jumped in such a wind, but I was confident that I was going to be one of the top finishers. When I hit the takeoff, my skis flew right up in my face, and I struggled throughout the flight. Stung by the disappointment, I had no stomach for the second ride, and it showed. To make matters worse, my mom and dad secretly drove down to watch me jump.
**JUNIOR SKI MEET WINNERS** — Top finishers in the Flying Eagles junior ski tournament at Mt. Washington Hill Sunday are pictured above. In front row are Class D leaders, DeWayne Stendahl, Tom Bjornson and Larry Shipman. Next are Class C leaders, Dave Jentile, Rick Garlie and Ronnie Podgers. Next are Class B leaders, Mike Smith, Rick Phillips and Charles Anderson. In back row are the Class A and B leaders, Dick Hanson, Jerry McEvoy, Mike Prince, Mike Olsen, Curt Anderson and Peter Mikkelson. All are from Eau Claire except Mikkelson and Stendahl of Westby.

**Flying Eagles, EC Juniors Divide Honors in Ski Meet**

Dick Hanson of the Flying Eagles edged Jerry McEvoy of the Eau Claire Juniors for the Class A championship of the Flying Eagles Ski Club tournament marked by closest competition in ideal weather at Mt. Washington Sunday. Hanson scored 124.9 points to win by two tenths of a point over McEvoy.

Peter Mikkelson of Westby shadéd Curt Anderson of Eau Claire Juniors by 1.9 points to win the Class B crown. Mikkelson jumped 56 feet, one foot short of the hill record, and led all jumpers in scoring with 127.5 points. Anderson scored 125.6 points.

Charles Anderson of the Eau Claire Juniors won the Class C championship with 128.3 points. In second place was Rick Phillips of the Flying Eagles with 127 points. Mikkelson was the most graceful jumper among Class A, B and C jumpers on the big hill.

**MT. SIMON JUMP** — The first Indianhead junior ski-jumping meet of the season will be held at the Mt. Simon hill, home of the Eau Claire Junior Ski Club, hosts for the meet Sunday afternoon at 1:30. The skiier in flight is Fritz Schroeder.

**FLYING EAGLES** — Members of the host Flying Eagles Ski Club who will compete in Sunday’s Regional meet at Mt. Washington are, from front row, (left to right) Bruce Evers, Rick Phillips, Jim Busendorf, Tom Strassman, Del Grorud, Gerry Potter. Back row, John Bjornson, Rick Hense, Dick Hanson, Ron Powers, Jan Phillips, Dave Jentile and Dale Gibson.
JUNIOR WINNERS — Top placers in Sunday’s Indianhead junior meet at the Mt. Simon hill are shown above following the meet. In the front are (left to right) Tom Bjornotn, FE; Mike Lahner, Jr.s; Tom Strassman, FE; Rich Phillips, FE; Dave Gentile, FE and Charles Anderson, Jr.s. Back row, Jerry McKove, Jr.s; Dick Hanson, FE; Mike Pope, Jr.s; Peter Mikkelsen, Westby; Jon Kent, Jr.s; and Mike Olson, Jr.s.

CLASS D (11 years and under)
1st—Larry Shipman, Eau Claire Jr.—130.2
2nd—Mike Lahner, Eau Claire Jr.—129.7
3rd—Vince Light, Eau Claire Jr.—129.3
4th—Steve LeBower, Eau Claire Jr.—124.4
5th—Paul Harris, Eau Claire Jr.—122.9
6th—Steve Beaulieu, Eau Claire Jr.—116.4

CLASS C-2 (12 and 13)
1—Rick Phillips, Flying Eagles—135.6
2—Tom Giese, Flying Eagles—134.2
3—Dave Gentile, Flying Eagles—132.2
4—Ron Powers, Flying Eagles—131.6
5—Steve Belt, Eau Claire Jr.—127.6
6—Jill Everson, Eau Claire Jr.—120.8
7—James Bushendorf, Flying Eagles—128.2

CLASS B-2 (14 and 15)
1—Eugene Moe, Eau Claire Jr.—129.2
2—Tom Giese, Eau Claire Jr.—122.0
3—Dale Larson, Eau Claire Jr.—120.7
4—Richard Steinke, Eau Claire Jr.—119.7
5—Jim Sprague, Westby—119.5
6—Gordy Petchow, Eau Claire Jr.—118.3
7—Jim Berg, Eau Claire Jr.—115.0

CLASS C-1 (12 and 13)
1—Charles Anderson, Eau Claire Jr.—121.6
2—Ron Zirgibb, Eau Claire Jr.—111.2
3—Mike Olson, Eau Claire Jr.—110.0
4—Mike Protst, Stevens Point—107.9
5—Mike Smith, Eau Claire Jr.—106.2
6—Pat Giese, Stevens Point—103.4
7—Jack Everson, Eau Claire Jr.—99.8

CLASS B (14 and 15)
1—Peter Mikkelsen, Westby, Wis.—141.6
2—Jon Kent, Eau Claire Jr.—130.7
3—Mike Olson, Eau Claire Jr.—130.2
4—Dave Stafslien, Viroqua—126.4
5—Paul Mohl, Eau Claire Jr.—121.0
6—Bob Stokes, Eau Claire Jr.—116.2
7—Gary Baaken, Westby, Wis.—114.9

CLASS A (16 and over)
1—Dick Hansen, Flying Eagles—139.4
2—Jerry MacKove, Eau Claire Jr.—136.8
3—Mike Pope—Eau Claire Jr.—134.4
4—Peter Cooker, Eau Claire Jr.—123.8
5—Jim Kent, Eau Claire Jr.—121.1

MOST GRACEFUL RIDERS
Small Hill—Tom Stansson—Flying Eagles
Large Hill—Peter Mikkelsen, Westby, Wis.

Eau Claire Ski-Jumpers
Cop Honors at Westby

WESTBY (Special) — Eau Claire Junior Ski Club riders won three first places and the Flying Eagles one in the Indianhead ski-jumping meet here Sunday.

The Eau Claire winners were Mike Lahner, Class D; Charles Anderson, Class C-1 and Jerry MacKove, Class A, all of the Jr. Club and Ronnie Powers, Class C-2, of the Flying Eagles.

ONLY IN CLASS B did an Eau Claire skier fail to win. And then champion Peter Mikkelsen of Wesby was pressed hard by Jr. Club rider Curt Anderson, a close second.

Mikkelsen and Anderson tied for Most Graceful honors and were the day’s two top point-getters. The Wesby lad leaped 73-76 feet for 135.7 while Anderson hit 71-72 for 133.9. Mike Olson of the Jr. Club was third and Rick Hense, Flying Eagles, was fourth.

MacKove nipped John Bjornotn and Dick Hanson to win the Class A crown. He leaped 73-74 feet for 131.3 points. Bjornotn had 74-73 for 130.1 and Hanson 70-73 for 129.9.

IN CLASS B-2 Charles Anderson had 124.8 points on rides of 64-62. Rick Phillips of the Flying Eagles was a very close second with 68-67 for 124.5. Jack Everson, Jim Wright and Mike Smith, all EC Jr.s, followed an Eau Claire sweep.

Powers had rides of 35-33 feet for 129.9 points in winning the B-2 title. Jim Bushendorf, Flying Eagles, was second with 31-28 for 128.2.

Lahner reeled off rides of 26-27 feet good for 128.9 points to cop Class D. Larry Shipman and Rick Zirgibb of the EC Jr. Club followed. Lahner was Most Graceful on the small hill.
The ski jumping collage on the back cover was commissioned by the owners of the former Embers America Restaurant in Eau Claire. Sherry, the owner, contacted my dad, Vern Powers, to see if he had any ski jumping pictures they could use to show the transition from the old to the new in senior level ski jumping at Eau Claire. She wanted to display that information in the restaurant. He provided her with the pictures in this collage, and when their store closed, the picture came back through my cousin, Paul, to me.

Please refer to the following picture guide:

**Upper Left:** Vern Powers on the right and Lee Hoff on the left completing the double jump (Vern also completed the Diamond Jump at Strum with Bob Fleming, Mickey Hotejec, and Ralph Pope.)

**Center Left:** Jim Wright (Eau Claire Juniors) riding Little Hendrickson.

**Lower Left:** Hendrickson Hill from the air

**Center Color:** Silvermine (skier unknown)

**Lower Center:** Vern Powers. (Would have been preWWII)

**Upper Right:** Hendrickson Hill - Vern Powers on landing hill.

**Lower Right:** Vern Powers on left and Jim Running on right.