



Western Region is proud to announce that David Olson is in the National Ski Patrol's Hall of Fame.

Dave Olson joined the National Ski Patrol at Hyland Hills in 1974. Many of us have heard the stories of Dave's legal studies, a stint in the Army where he served much of his time as a Chaplain's Assistant, and his early days at Hyland. From that start, Dave has gone on to become a highly active and resolute member of the NSP, serving with distinction at every level of the organization. Dave was a "dual patroller" in the 1970's, Alpine Patrolling at Hyland Hills, and Nordic Patrolling with the Viking Nordic patrol. He achieved Senior status in both the Alpine and Nordic disciplines in 1976.

Dave was among the first five Nordic patrollers awarded the Senior Nordic patroller status in the Central Division in 1976. At that time, Dave became regularly active in the NSP's newly created Ski Mountaineering Program, completing both the "Circle M" and "Mountaineering Patch" courses. He went on to become an Instructor in the Program at both the Division and National Levels, receiving a Registered National Ski Mountaineering Instructor appointment. He served as the Western Region Ski Mountaineering Advisor for six years and was a member of the American Birkebeiner cross country ski race patrol for six years as well.

Undoubtedly, Dave's biggest impact on the NSP is through his long and continuing presence as a Legal Advisor. Dave has served in that capacity at the Region, Division, and National levels. He is currently, and thankfully, the Western Region Legal Advisor. As our National Legal Advisor, his guidance at a critical juncture with the landmark legal case of Kane v. the National Ski Patrol resulted in core changes to the NSP and the Ski Industry, clarifying the relationships between patrollers, the NSP, and the Ski Areas.

This is when risk and liability became a focus. Patrollers had to learn that they volunteered for specific ski areas and were trained by the NSP. The NSP had to learn that they were responsible for quality training and not area specific management or policies. The individual ski areas had to learn that they were to manage the patrollers who volunteered or worked at their areas. David was key in the dissemination of added information that was used by NSP leadership, local patrols and NSAA leadership. At National, Divisional and Region meetings he made presentations on risk management, liability, and the joint statement of understanding between the NSP and the NSAA. He fielded questions by members of the board of directors. He authored articles for patrol officer bulletins.

When the NSP's insurance company questioned the NSP's policies and procedures, David

provided key input into a major rewrite of this document. One momentous change was the title of patrol director (PD) was changed to patrol representative (PR.) The PR was to manage NSP tasks such as patroller registration and training of NSP programs, while the PD was to interface with ski area management and direct the local patrol operations. David encouraged PRs to meet with their area managers and talk about roles and responsibilities. This was difficult for many PRs who were fearful of the results of such conversations.

To this day, David's lessons are still taught. New patrollers learn how patrollers, local patrols, area management and the NSP work together. As Region Legal Advisor he is still providing counsel related to risk management and provided guidance and input during the recent pandemic. As a result of his leadership, the NSP has improved and is better prepared for future challenges.

Dave's 49 years of commitment to the National Ski Patrol has been honored with numerous accolades, including Yellow Merit Stars in 1993 and 2003, the Distinguished Service Award in 2000, and in 2002 the National Retirement Board of Directors Award. Most recently Dave received the Central Division Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019 and just received the prestigious Western Region 10th Mountain Division Award.

On top of these achievements, Dave is a great guy — friendly, positive, and thoughtful. As Dave's close friend and fellow Hyland Patroller Mike Peters says, in "mountaineering lingo," and in a reference to the 10th Mountain Division, "he's someone you wouldn't mind sharing a snow cave with."

Congratulations to David Olson - 2022 Inductee into the National Ski Patrol Hall of Fame!

Western Region has five patrollers in the National Ski Patrol Hall of Fame: Howard Holz, Sue Gormley, Jeff Olsen, David Olson and John Thomas.