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Once an individual has acquired the title of "Olympian," it is his or hers forever. The University of Utah has had in its ranks such athletes who have earned that title through talent and skill, hard work, commitment, and dedication. A select few of these alumni are featured in this issue's "Through the Years" section.

Richard D. Movitz BS'49 was involved for a number of years in Olympic and world skiing events. After completing two

of the U.S. team competing in the world ski championships in Aspen, Colorado, in the slalom and giant slalom races.

Movitz's ski racing career ended after that, but in the late 1950s he became a part of the U.S. Ski Association and was chair of the International Competition Committee in 1958. Then in 1960 he served as a member of the Olympic Ski Committee in Squaw Valley, California. His son and two daughters continue the skiing tradition.

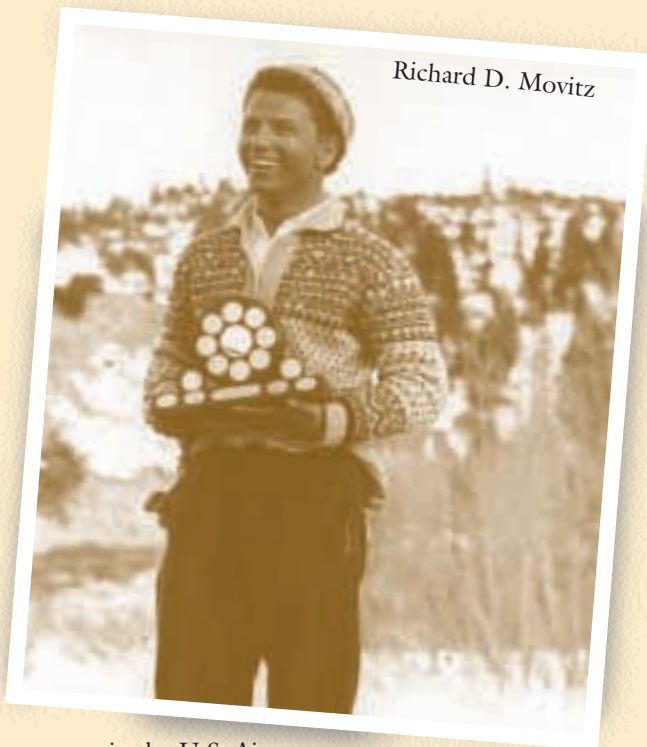
the Salt Lake City East High team at the age of 15. As a member of the U ski team, Rytting won the national downhill and combined titles in 1948 and the national giant slalom championship in



1951. In all, between 1947 and 1952 she was a seven-time national champion-

the Olympic tryouts at Sun Valley, Idaho. Before she could compete, Olympic officials discharged her from the team when it was revealed that the flu-like symptoms she was experiencing were, in fact, the first signs of morning sickness in her two-week-old pregnancy. Despite doctors' assurances that she could compete, the officials would not allow it.

Rytting has been elected to the U.S. Ski



Richard D. Movitz

years in the U.S. Air Force during World War II, he returned to the U where he was a member of the



NCAA national champion ski team in 1947. Movitz competed with the

1948 U.S. Olympic Alpine Ski Team in St. Moritz, Switzerland, racing in downhill and slalom events. Two years later he was a member

With his skiing career behind him, Movitz joined his father's importing business, from which he retired in 1996. He still keeps in close contact with the U as a fan and a generous donor. He will be enjoying the 2002 Games from his home in Holladay, Utah. **AM**

Suzanne Harris Rytting ex'51 (better known as Suzy) began skiing at the age of 13 and started racing with



Suzanne Harris Rytting

ship medalist.

Her first Olympic experience was as second alternate with the 1948 team in St. Moritz, Switzerland. She was named to the 1952 team for the Oslo Games after placing fifth in the downhill, second in slalom, and fourth in combined in

Utah Sports Hall of Fame, the Crimson Club Hall of Fame, the *Salt Lake Tribune's* top 50 athletes of the century, and the U's Marriott Library Ski Archives Legends of Skiing. A dedicated volunteer in her community, she has worked on a suicide prevention hot line, and with the

Association National Ski Hall of Fame, the

Children's Center, the National Charity League, The Boys and Girls Clubs of Salt Lake City, and the U Crimson Club. She was named a community hero honorary torchbearer for the 1996 Olympic torch relay. Rytting and her husband, **William ex'46**, have two daughters and four grandchildren, most of whom are skiers.

Marvin A. Melville BS'59 is an icon in the



Marvin A. Melville



William Allen Spencer

skiing world. In honor of his many accomplishments, he was inducted into the Utah Sports Hall of Fame in 1991



and into the University of Utah Crimson Club Hall of Fame in 1992.

Melville's skiing career began when he competed for Granite High School in Salt Lake City from

1950 to 1953. Later, as a member of the U ski team, he was voted All-American in recognition of his many achievements in the sport—NCAA wins in both downhill and slalom in 1959; member of the 1956 U.S. Olympic ski team in the downhill races in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy; and a top 20 finisher with the 1958 National Federation of Skiing team in Badgastein, Austria. Melville's Olympic experience continued in 1960 in Squaw Valley, California,

where he again raced for the United States in downhill competition.

In 1961 Melville turned his attention to teaching. Along with two other ski enthusiasts, he organized the Alpine Training School for junior ski racers in Salt Lake City. In sessions at various junior and senior high schools, the young students would practice on dry land, skiing year-around.

From 1963-66, Melville coached the U ski team, which finished second in the NCAA using only half the number of skiers of the other teams. During his years as U coach, at least four members of his team became Olympic skiers. He coached the women's ski team in the 1964 Olympics in Innsbruck, Austria; was a member of the NCAA Skiing Rules Committee and chair of the U.S. Ski Association Alpine Competitions Committee; and in 1992-93, served as chair of the U.S.

Ski Association National Alpine

Spencer became an expert skier, and he learned marksmanship skills through his



high school junior ROTC program. His talent was further enhanced when he

competed in cross-country skiing at the U, and he honed his shooting abilities through service in the National Guard. Combining these skills, he earned a place on the U.S. Olympic



Peter Karns

Masters Committee.

With homes in Salt Lake City and in Sun Valley, Idaho, Melville is still teaching skiing—to his five children and 27 grandchildren. **AM**

William Allen Spencer BS'61 was awarded the Pioneer of Progress Award for Sportsmanship and Athletics in 2001, honoring his accomplishments and service in marksmanship and cross-country skiing over the past four decades. In his youth,

Biathlon team in 1964 and 1968, and was U.S. National Champion in 1965, 1966, and 1967. Spencer also competed while in the military.

After the Olympics, he turned to coaching and officiating. He was the shooting coach of the U.S. Olympic team in 1976, 1980, and 1992, and served as a referee through IBU International at the Nagano Olympics.

Spencer is now assistant chief of competition for biathlon at Soldier Hollow in Wasatch State Park, Heber City, Utah, and will help conduct the biathlon programs

in the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. He is also a member of the J. Willard Marriott Library Ski Archives Advisory Board. He is married to **Judith Spencer BS'72. LM**

Peter Karns BS'67 holds two records for best finishes by an American in biathlon set during the 1972 Olympic Winter



Games in Sapporo. He placed 14th in the 20-kilometer biathlon and was on the U.S. relay

team that placed sixth in the biathlon relay. These records still stand today, but he hopes they will be broken in February 2002.

Karns competed with the University team from 1964-1967, during which time all team members were skimeisters (competed in all four events). In the NCAA championships, he placed third in 1965 and second in 1966. His favorite event was cross country, in which he placed fourth in the NCAA in 1966. That year he was also named NCAA All-American. Prior to his Olympic experience, he was a two-time national champion in the U.S. biathlon competition.

Karns was a coach for the U.S. biathlon team from 1973-1976, and coached the team for the 1976 Games in Innsbruck, Austria. He will be a race official for the biathlon events at the 2002 Games.

Jackson Hole, Wyoming, is home to Karns and his wife, Jeanine, and his Real Estate of Jackson Hole brokerage. Their three children are all skiers.



When **Curtis R. Canning MS'73 MD'73** was looking for a sport to join at the begin-

ning of his freshman year at Harvard University, he turned to rowing instead of football (in which he had lettered at Skyline High School in Salt Lake City). While it seems a strange choice for someone who hails from Utah, a landlocked state with an average annual rainfall of 14 inches, Canning felt that crew would leave more time for a

“And Finally,” p. 48).

In 1993, Canning and the entire crew were inducted into The Harvard Varsity Club Hall of Fame at the Harvard Club of Boston.

A psychiatrist practicing in Logan, Utah, Canning is currently president of the Utah Psychiatric Association. He is married to **Rebecca Petersen Canning MEd'73**.

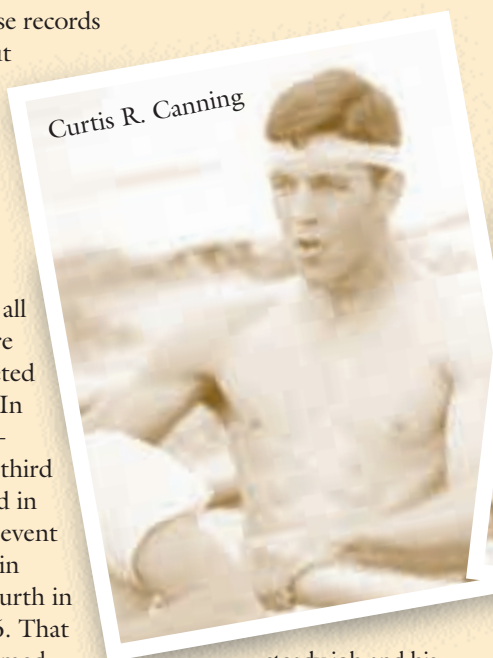
While rowing may seem a million miles away, there are reminders of competitions past—an oar from the Pan Am Games tacked on a wall in his home, and occasional reunions of the

and 1994 when he raced overseas in the World Cup.

Bodensteiner is involved with the 2002 Olympic Winter Games as a member of the SLOC Board of Trustees. He is also president of the Soldier Hollow Legacy Foundation, a nonprofit organization that will operate that venue after the Olympics. He works as nordic director for the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association and U.S. Ski Team and is a delegate to the International Ski Federation, where he remains actively involved with U.S. Olympic athletes in cross country, nordic combined, and ski jumping. Bodensteiner's

book, *Endless Winter: An Olympian's Journal* (see “Bookshelf,” p. 40), tracks his year leading up to the 1994 Games.

Along with his many ski awards and activities, particularly as a member of the U ski team from 1959-1962, **Alan Engen BS'63 BFA'63** is chair of the Alf Engen Ski Museum Foundation (see “Bookshelf,” p. 40). He recently turned over the ceremonial key to the museum, part of the newly completed Joe Quinney Winter Sports Center in the Utah Olympic Park, to SLOC chair Mitt Romney. The entire sports center and the adjoining day lodge will be used to accommodate more than 400 media personnel who will be covering the Olympic events staged in the park. Following the Winter Games, the museum will house memorabilia of Alf Engen, along with other historical ski items. Engen and David Amidon, executive director of the museum, report that the museum will have multiple uses, including an educational program headed by **Ted Wilson BS'64 (AM)** and **Barbara Engen BS'63**.

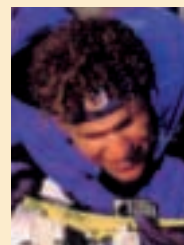


steady job and his studies. Not necessarily so. “Little did I know then what I was getting myself into,” he comments. “Every spare moment was devoted to training.”

Ultimately, Canning became Harvard's 95th heavyweight crew captain his senior year, and he managed to hold down his job and graduate magna cum laude, as well. His team participated in the Pan Am Games, the North American Championships in St. Catherines (Ontario), the European Championships in Vichy, France, and the Olympic Games in Mexico City (see

Harvard '68 crew of eight. **AM**

Luke Bodensteiner BA'94 is another repeat Olympian, having competed in the 1992



and 1994 games. A cross-country skier, he raced in three different distances in 1992 and in four different distances in 1994. As a member of the U ski team from 1989-1993, he won the NCAA championship twice as an individual and once with his team, then took a leave from school in 1992



UTAH'S FIRST NATIONS:

Peoples of the Great Basin and Colorado Plateau

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Opening Bid

BY NETTIE BAGLEY-PENDLEY



(L-R)
Jack Gallivan,
Dev Jennings,
Gene Donovan,
Max E. Rich,
Walker Wallace

In the early '60s, a group of energetic business leaders, including U of U friends and alumni, found a way to set the Utah ski and tourism industries soaring.

If we bid it, they will come.

Such was the mindset of a select group of prominent Salt Lake business leaders in the early 1960s. At that time, Park City, Utah (or United Park City Mines), was pretty much a ghost town with a new ski industry that was regularly losing money. Even though Utahns *knew* they had the “greatest snow on earth,” the rest of the world was oblivious to this fact. Moreover, there were no funds available to bring it to the world’s attention.

To correct this situation, the group searched for a way to make Utah a tourist destination—and so were formed the Downtown Planning Association, Ski Utah, Travel Utah, and Pro Utah, all privately funded. The organizations’ missions were clear—build a major convention center in the city, promote winter tourism, and encourage winter and summer visitations to Utah’s national and state parks and other natural wonders. But how could this be done when there were no funds?

The late Gen. Maxwell E. Rich ex’35, then president of the Greater Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce, approached Gov. Calvin L. Rampton JD’39 and *Salt Lake Tribune* publisher John W. Gallivan with the suggestion that Salt Lake try for the U.S. nomination for the 1972 Olympic Winter Games. A little apprehensive about the idea, the governor asked, “What do we do if we win?” Rich’s answer: “No way we can win. . . . But we will win millions of dollars of free publicity worldwide that will establish Utah as an Olympic-class place to ski.”

The United States did award the nomination to Salt Lake City, worldwide publicity became a reality, and Utah ski resorts began their prosperous and continuous upward climb. A far cry from the impoverished days of the ’60s, Summit County, where Park City is located, now has the highest per capita income in the state.


Rich and Gallivan were joined by five other organizing committee members, H. Devreaux Jennings ex’46, Gene Donovan, Glen Adams, F. C. Koziol, and M. Walker Wallace, in putting together a bid proposal for the selection that was eventually announced in Rome, Italy. Rampton, indeed, did not have to worry—Sapporo, Japan, was

awarded the 1972 Olympic Winter Games.

The 1972 bid was a work of art. The selection of venue sites was especially imaginative. Central to the plan was a \$17 million indoor arena that would seat 10,725 spectators and was already under construction—the building that would come to be known as the original Salt Palace. This facility would house the ice hockey and figure skating events. The F.I.S. (International Ski Federation) had already approved courses for alpine events in Alta-Gad Valley, Snowbasin, and Park City, and the luge and bobsled runs would be built to terminate on the Mountain Dell golf course, where the Nordic Center would be established. The biathlon would take place in the same area, and speed skating events were to be held at the Utah State Fairgrounds on an upgraded grandstand track.

The U was an important part of the 1972 bid: the Olympic Center was to be in the Student Center (then the Olpin Student Union Building), the Olympic Village was proposed for Fort Douglas as it existed then, with some modifications, and the football stadium, or “Sports Bowl,” as the committee called it, would accommodate the “pageantry” of the Games. The proximity of Salt Lake to nearby ski areas was touted, and the fact that there were over 15,000 hotel and motel rooms available for visitors was a strong selling point. The Tabernacle on Temple Square was to be the premier concert hall, and the Tower Theatre was available for international films.

The Salt Lake City 1972 Olympic Winter Games bid book that committee member Wallace keeps as a fond reminder of this experience extols the virtues of the city in English and French, accompanied by beautiful pictures of the city and surrounding snow-covered mountains.

Indeed, we did bid it—again and again—and they did come—eventually. And in a few short months, far greater numbers of visitors than the ’72 committee could have imagined will witness the “greatest show (and snow) on earth”—the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. 

—*Nettie Bagley-Pendley BA’59 is Continuum editorial assistant.*



A Salt Lake City Olympic pin was created as a fund-raiser for the 1972 bid for the Olympic Winter Games. “We had them made at a cost of three for five cents and sold them for a dollar apiece,” Gallivan says. “We took them to the cities and to the remote parts of the state, and people wanted them.” Eventually, enough pins were sold to pay the entire cost of the bid—a whopping \$27,000!

Just a Game

BY CURTIS R. CANNING

Nearly 34 years ago I backed into the Olympic Games. I wasn't exactly naive. I wasn't exactly fully informed either. But I most definitely wanted to go. More than that, I wanted to compete, and to win.

In my sport, rowing, oarsmen sit facing the stern of the boat—that is, backwards. So if your back makes it across the finish line before the backs of your competitors, you win.

In July of 1968 at “my” Olympic trials, my back didn't, in fact, cross the finish line ahead of our closest competitor, a very fast University of Pennsylvania crew. Only about eight inches of our 60-foot shell did! The margin of victory was 4/100th of a second (0.04 sec).

Such a narrow victory marked a fitting start to our Olympic experience. It demonstrated, oh so clearly, how slight the difference between the best of the world's athletic efforts could be. It taught us respect for those with whom we competed. It reminded us to be humble when our fortune was good. And it raised the inevitable question: If we had finished second (or sixth, for that matter), would that have been a failure?

A well-prepared team trained to win, we nevertheless had to adjust our perspective(s) if we were to learn from a near loss. Without tarnishing the joy of victory, this strange awareness shadowed our Olympic trials' victory and presented the first of several paradoxes which, for me, became the quintessential Olympic experience.

Never mind that Baron Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympics, said, “The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well.” We knew better: we were to win.


Immediately after qualifying, we knew that we had become ambassadors for the motherland, America the beautiful, land of the free. While 1968 virtually exploded with domestic turmoil fueled by the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy and by the anti-war and civil rights movements, as Olympic athletes we were expected to keep our mouths shut and just row. Engaging in the controversy surrounding our black teammates' threatening to boycott the Olympics was considered off limits by members of the U.S. Olympic Committee who wanted no appearance of disharmony.

The Presidential Commission on Civil Disorder headed by Illinois Governor Otto Kerner had released its report verifying that America was becoming “two societies, one black, one white, separate and unequal.” Flight to the suburbs,

along with a widening opportunity gap between “haves” and “have-nots,” increasingly characterized these United States. As young idealists who not only rowed but who also believed the seemingly paradoxical Olympic promise of international cooperation, we felt the U.S. team should not have two non-interactive components, one white and one non-white. We wanted to represent our country by interacting openly with our fellow Americans and with athletes from around the world.

The Olympic Village experience validated much of our optimism. Despite constraints imposed by workouts and preparations for the actual competition, we were free to meet other young people from all over the globe. We quickly discovered that many athletes and staff members wanted to trade pins, clothing, bags, hats, whatever. An African runner, who called me an “Oo-tah” (Utah), coveted my lime green and yellow plaid Bermuda shorts, for which he willingly swapped a very nice gym bag.

However, it was also clear that powerful economic and political forces were at work orchestrating a grand theatrical production, a passion play based on the nation-state and the Cold War. Epitomizing this view of the Olympics was the medal count. In the official 1968 United States Olympic Book published by the U.S. Olympic Committee, a summary of the swimming events included the comment, “The medal standings below not only show the difference of achievements among the countries, they point out also the absolute superiority of American swimmers.” But the host nation, Mexico, which was listed in 6th place with three medals (one gold, one silver, one bronze), was hardly going to hang its national head in shame because nations such as East Germany (with six medals) and the USSR (with 11) had garnered more! On the contrary, Mexican citizens were thrilled at the successes of “their” athletes, aside from the medal numbers. And fans around the world delighted in the courageous efforts of athletes from every corner of the globe.

So as the Olympic Games come to Utah, I am filled with wonderful memories of the friendships built through my experience but also with ambivalence about the seemingly inevitable nationalistic pageantry. My wish is that we celebrate the competitors, those who play the games, and worry less about massaging national egos that demand a medal count in order to feel superior to others. 

—Curtis R. Canning MS'73 MD'73 is a psychiatrist practicing in Logan, Utah.





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