

= Nels Nelsen =

Nels Nelsen (3 June 1894 ? 3 June 1943) , born Nils Johan Nilsen and sometimes incorrectly referred to as Nels Nelson , was a Norwegian @-@ born Canadian ski jumper and later ski jumping organizer . He was among the world 's best ski jumpers during the 1920s , and held the world record of 73 meters from 1925 to 1930 . Born in Salangen , he moved with his family to Revelstoke , British Columbia , in 1913 . He quickly became the town 's best ski jumper , making his debut in the town 's Big Hill in 1916 . He competed throughout Canada and the United States , and became Canadian champion five times . Despite holding the world record at the time , he was not allowed to participate in the 1928 Winter Olympics because the officials did not find it suitable for him to have to work his way to Switzerland .

Nelsen worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway , and moved to North Vancouver , British Columbia , where he raised a family . Nelsen lost his hand in a hunting accident in 1933 , and was forced to retire as a ski jumper . He continued as an organizer , and was among other things president of the Western Canada Amateur Ski Association and later vice @-@ president of the Canadian Amateur Ski Association . In 1948 , after Big Hill had been expanded , it was renamed Nels Nelsen Hill . Nelsen was inscribed in the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1971 and the Canadian Ski Hall of Fame in 1983 .

= = Early and personal life = =

He was born Nils Johan Nilsen to a Norwegian family in Seljeskog in Salangen on 3 June 1894 , as the oldest of six children . As a child , Nelsen was an active skier and ski jumper , with more than fifteen ski jumps located in the area . In 1913 , his family emigrated to Big Eddy near Revelstoke . Once in Canada , he anglicized his name . His brother , Ivind Nilsen was also a champion ski jumper , and became among other things Boy 's World Champion in 1922 . Ivind , who chose not to anglicize his last name , was known for his supreme style , while Nels was better known for his length . Nelsen married Emma Pickard , with whom he had ten children . Except for a brief period as a ski instructor , he worked as a brakeman and conductor for the Canadian Pacific Railway , whose flexibility made it easier to participate in tournaments . He moved to North Vancouver where he raised his family .

= = Athletic career = =

Nelsen won the home @-@ town Winter Carnival Tournament , setting the hill record of 56 meters (183 ft) in Big Hill in the inauguration tournament in 1916 . With this and subsequent better distances , he would hold the hill record in Revelstoke until 1932 . In 1916 , he won the Championship of Canada Ski Jumping Contest , which he would subsequently defend every year until 1920 . He continued by setting the Canadian amateur record in 1920 , and breaking it again in 1921 and 1923 . He was among the most successful jumpers in Canada from 1916 to 1925 , taking home most trophies . Among his methods to improve his jumps was placing pieces of lead at the front or back of the skis to give optimal balance .

Nelsen traveled throughout Canada and the United States to attend ski jumping competitions . In British Columbia , he attended competitions in Nelson , Trail , Rossland , Princeton , Kamloops , Sandon , Nakusp , Kimberley and Cranbrook . In Alberta , he attended tournaments in Calgary , Edmonton , Banff and Camrose ; in eastern Canada in Ottawa and Montreal . In the United States , he attended events in Mount Rainier and Leavenworth in Washington ; Dillon , Steamboat Springs and Denver in Colorado ; Salt Lake City ; and Brattleboro , Vermont . He became Canadian champion five times , in 1917 , 1918 , 1919 , 1920 and 1922 . His various best jumps were Canadian records from 1916 to 1932 .

During the 1925 Winter Carnival Tournament , Nelsen , sick with influenza , set a world record at the Big Hill . Jumping 73 meters (240 ft) , the record remained until it was broken by Adolph Badrut at Bernina @-@ Roseg @-@ Schanze in Switzerland in 1930 , who jumped 75 meters (246 ft) .

However , Bob Lymburne was able to again claim the world record for the Big Hill , when he jumped 82 meters (269 ft) in 1932 . Although accepted as a record , it was not at the time favored in Europe to stress distance records . This was because it was regarded that simply building a larger hill would undoubtedly give a longer jump , and in part because such records did not take style into consideration . Nelsen and Melbourne McKenzie planned to travel to St. Moritz , Switzerland , to attend the 1928 Winter Olympics , but lack of funding meant that they planned for work for their fare on a freighter . These plans were stopped by officials from the British delegation , who felt it was inappropriate and not fitting for the team , and Nelsen never competed in any Winter Olympics . Nelsen kept his amateur status , but did well against professionals those times he competed against them . During the winter of 1932 , he worked as a ski instructor in Quebec . In a hunting accident in 1932 , he lost an arm , and never jumped again .

= = Organizer career and legacy = =

After arriving in Revelstoke , Nelsen was instrumental in the establishment of Revelstoke Ski Club and the Big Hill located within Mount Revelstoke National Park . In 1927 , he helped establish a ski jump in Grouse Mountain in North Vancouver . After his accident , he started working to establish Field Ski Club in Field , British Columbia , where he spent time between trains . He promoted a strict adherence to the amateur code , and stated that debates regarding professionalism were disruptive for the United States National Ski Association .

Traditionally , governing of skiing in Canada was split between the Canadian Amateur Ski Association (CASA) and the Western Canada Amateur Ski Association (WCASA) . Nelsen was the latter 's president , and after years of rivalry , which even reached the point where they did not recognize each other , Nelsen eventually was part of the negotiation for an amalgamation which took into consideration the needs of the western clubs . Nelsen subsequently became vice @-@ president of CASA from 1934 .

He died of heart failure in Field on 3 June 1943 ? his 49th birthday . In 1948 , after Big Hill had been expanded , it was renamed Nels Nelsen Hill . Nelsen was inscribed in the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1971 , the Canadian Ski Hall of Fame in 1983 , and the following year in the BC Sports Hall of Fame .