

jurisdiction over the pre-game competition schedule and the European training program. Since skiers need to get acclimatized to terrain, conditions, and altitude, the independence of the National Ski Association was considered vital. At this point in time, if the United States Olympic Committee supplied the funds, the squad would have left three days before the opening of the Olympiad.

The men's and women's Alpine squads flew from New York to Italy December 1, 1955 to commence training. In January they entered the Lauberhorn in the Bernese Oberland, Switzerland and the Hahnenkamm at Kitzbuhel, Austria. These races helped the manager in selecting the four competitors who were allowed to enter each Olympic event.

From January 26 to February 5, 1956, all attention was focused toward the Italian Dolomites. At this point, many sidelights and preparations leading up to the event were forgotten. Facts are never a point of contention: Betsy Snite (Reilly) dropped out of her senior year at high school for a period of intensive training only to injure herself while practicing for the Downhill; Dorothy Modenese Surgenor was skiing after recovering from a broken hip in 1955; Katy Rodolph (Wyatt Wegeman) had been injured at Kitzbuhel before the Olympics; and Penny Pitou (Zimmerman) was a young Middlebury College freshman. Evaluation by the public was strongly recognized by the winning of medals. Each of the three events for women had significant and propitious elements that would commend and encourage those responsible for designing the ultimate test of the sport.

#### Results of 1956 Winter Olympic Games

	Placement		
	Giant Slalom	Slalom	Downhill
No. of Competitors	48	49	47
Andrea Mead Lawrence	4 (tie)	25 (tie)	30
Penny Pitou (Zimmerman)	34	31	34
Betsy Snite (Reilly)	disqualified	--	--
Dorothy Modenese Surgenor	--	20	38
Gladys Werner	22 (tie)	27	10

The majority of the United States' team competed in Europe after the Olympics. It did not cost much to race in Europe because often expenses were paid for and, in comparison to the states, prices were lower. Penny Pitou (Zimmerman) brought up the hopes of the Americans. In the Grand Prix at Chamonix, one week after the Olympics, she placed second in the downhill. In this same race, Bud Werner also won. Andrea Mead Lawrence, Bud Werner, and Ralph Miller accepted an invitation to attend the 59th running of the famous Holmenkollen Kandahar at Oppdal, Norway, March 2-4, 1956. Andy skied superbly and placed second in the downhill, third in the slalom, and a respective eighth in the giant slalom. The White Ribbon Classic was at St. Moritz; Brooks Dodge won the slalom, Bud Werner won the downhill and giant slalom, and Penny Pitou (Zimmerman) won the ladies downhill.

The 1956 National Alpine Championships followed the Olympics. It did not attract the Olympians as a team. Since the races were held at Squaw Valley, California, the site of the 1960 Winter Games, it was a test of terrain and a preview of the younger skiers. Catherine "Renie" Cox (Gorsuch) won the Downhill and Combined, while the late Sally Deaver became the Slalom and Giant Slalom Champion. Among the newcomers were Nora "Noni" Foley and Madi Springer-Miller (Kraus). At this race there was much discussion and controversy over the downhill course. However, more races were planned at Squaw and as experience was gained at the area the development would become suitable. The point to note was that at this time only two FIS recognized downhill courses existed in the United States;

one in Aspen and the one that was under development at Squaw. Where were the United States' hopefuls to gain experience in the downhill?

Americans realizing the value of overall physical conditioning and year-round training were beginning to participate in organized summer programs. Penny Pitou (Zimmerman) and the late Sally Deaver joined some of the men racers and some of the country's ranking juniors for a session at Mt. Hood, Oregon.

In October 1955, Brooks Dodge, a member of 1950 FIS and 1952 Olympic teams captain of 1954 FIS and 1956 Olympic teams, and a Dartmouth graduate, ran a ten-day training camp in New Hampshire. Penny and Betsy Snite (Reilly) were invited to attend. Many felt the Americans did not lack training but that the type of training program that was available did not enable the racers to reach their ultimate potential.

At the Annual Convention of the National Ski Association in 1956, the Board of Delegates recommended that "the chairman of women's skiing in each division should be the person to have the best knowledge of racers in their division". It was felt that skiing for women could profit by starting to promote women racers and Junior skiers naturally. Concentration should be on developing their thinking ability in order to cut down accidents and parental worry. It was suggested that the Association cooperate with school systems and that information, instruction, speakers, and movies be utilized. Aware also of the expense of skiing, divisions were urged to keep classification fees low.

The 1958 FIS World Championships were awarded to Lahti, Finland for the Nordic events and Badgastein, Austria for Alpine events.

The all-important races designated as qualifying events were the Roch Cup, the National Championships, the International, and North American Championships; a total of eleven records were at stake. The Roch Cup and the Nationals were held at Aspen; Stowe was the traditional site of the Internationals. The addition of the North American Championships at Squaw Valley as a tryout race did benefit those who needed points or desired experience in racing against some of the Europeans; however, again the travel expense and time element became factors for young college students, especially, to consider.

Nora "Noni" Foley was the top United States' woman at eighteen years of age. Unquestionably she earned her place on the team; she won five out of nine tryout events which she entered and beat Europe's best in her first international competition. She had won the National Giant Slalom Championship, the American International Giant Slalom and Slalom Championships, and the downhill and giant slalom in the Roch Cup.

Noni was not an unexpected success. She had been skiing since she was six. In her first National Junior Championship she placed eighth but in her third Junior Nationals she was third. This qualified her for selection to a national training camp. These sessions were held by the National Ski Association during the Christmas holidays and were to give special coaching to qualified juniors.

Although she had skied superbly in the tryouts, it was not felt that she had reached her peak performance level and that she would not adapt herself to the FIS situation until she gained big-time international experience.