

1957 U.S. Tryout Seeding

Seeding	Name	Total Points
1	Nora Foley	94
2	Sally Deaver	70
3	Madi Springer-Miller (Kraus)	70
4	Betsy Snite (Reilly)	56
5	Linda Meyers (Tikalsky)	38
6	Penelope Pitou (Zimmerman)	36
7	Catherine Cox (Gorsuch)	35
8	Beverly Anderson	38
9	Gladys Werner	38
10	Mary Lind (Beck)	14

The top six seeded women were selected to attend the 1958 FIS Championships. Pepi Gabl was the women's coach and Othmar Schneider coached the men. The coaches were appointed by the National Ski Association at the Forty-Ninth Annual Convention, held May 23-25, 1957 at Timberline Lodge. Two managers were also named for the men's and women's teams that were to represent the United States in the world championships; Jim and Jane Huidekoper of Jackson Hole served in this capacity. \$40,000 was the expected cost for sending both alpine and nordic teams to Europe. The total amount was not subscribed and the National Ski Association went \$30,000 in the hole.

This was the first FIS race under the change of slalom rules made at the June, 1957 FIS Congress in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia. The penalty rule had been abolished; if a slalom runner now failed to cross all slalom gates with both feet, he would be disqualified as in the giant slalom. The width of gates now had to be at least ten and one-half feet and the gates at least thirty inches apart. The number of gates in the ladies slalom was limited to forty-five in international competition and fifty in FIS and Olympic championships. Men had a limit of seventy-five for both. Increased and rigid specifications were being stipulated. Competitors in alpine events were to start within one second of the word "go"; false starts would constitute a disqualification.

The 1957 Congress made two other important decisions. A committee to study the physiological effects of high altitude running on cross-country racers was appointed. The interest in the individual was duly noted. Another debate concerned cross-country skiing for women and the congress turned down a proposal for a five-kilometer race for women in world championship events.

Sally Deaver, who had been training full-time since dropping out of college, turned in a performance that once more brought glory to United States' skiers; she won a silver medal for second place in the giant slalom. As a whole, the team did well. Buddy Werner's fall at the last control gate of the downhill was disappointing, for the favorite had deserved more.

U.S. Women Placements - 1958 FIS

	Giant			
	Slalom	Slalom	Downhill	Combined
Sally Deaver	19	2	24	8
Nora Foley	-	13	-	-
Linda Meyers (Tikalsky)	15	30	19	13
Penny Pitou (Zimmerman)	-	-	11	-
Betsy Snite (Reilly)	25	-	-	-
Madi Springer-Miller (Kraus)	Disq.	23 (tie)	28	-

Since the inception of the Olympic Games, they had been held in well established resorts. New facilities were built at Lake Placid for the 1932 Games but nothing as extensive as Squaw Valley could be envisioned. A site master-tailored to Olympic needs did have value; for the first time events, with the exception of cross-country, were to be within one locale. The wave of interest and enthusiasm in having the VIII Winter Olympic Games in the United States and the herculean attempt at organizing a spectacle of talented skiing skill in a setting of a "white world of peace and silence" flooded the news media of the world.

The women's team was rated by Andrea Mead Lawrence, as the best that the United States had ever selected. To prepare herself for the Games, Penny Pitou (Zimmerman), among other Americans, skied in Europe during the 1959 season and came home in time to compete in only the two Eastern tryout races. She felt that this intensive competition was more helpful. She was showing her forte and so was Betsy Snite (Reilly). At Grindelwald, Switzerland, Penny and Betsy came in one-two in the downhill; Betsy won the giant slalom and Penny earned the combined title. Penny again came in second on the precipitous Hahnenkamm at Kitzbuhel, Austria. While Betsy took a fifth in a downhill at St. Moritz, Penny was busy winning the downhill and combined at St. Gervais. Competing in European classics on rugged courses did seem helpful; Penny came home to capture a place on the 1960 Team with no difficulty. She had learned a great deal in her wide travels since she had won the National Junior Championships at Whitefish, Montana at fifteen. The FIS points that she collected were to also mean that she would be among the first ten starters in Olympic races. Such seeding positions are important and in 1964 led to quite a conflict.

The Ladies Training Squad included Beverly Anderson, Eleanor Bennett, Renie Cox (Gorsuch), Sally Deaver, Cherie Gerbaz, Joan Hannah, Mary Lind (Beck), Linda Meyers (Tikalsky), Penny Pitou (Zimmerman), Betsy Snite (Reilly), and Sunny Snite. The officials announced at the same time were to be: Amos Little, Jr., M.D., General Manager for the Alpine squads; William Beck, Men's Coach; David Lawrence, Women's Coach; and, Andrea Mead Lawrence, Women's Chaperrone and Assistant Manager.

More than half of the talented training squad had a chance of winning an Olympic medal. The Europe-tested Betsy Snite (Reilly) and Penny Pitou (Zimmerman) found tough competition from the stay at homes Joan Hannah, Sally Deaver, Linda Meyers (Tikalsky), and Beverly Anderson. This was expected because Sally placed second in the Giant Slalom at the 1958 FIS, Linda was on the 1958 FIS team, and Beverly had almost made the team. The whole squad, however, did very well. Top racing schedules in the United States had given them all valuable experience. It was a well-balanced group and the squad had depth.

From the first of December until January 10, the squad met in Aspen, Colorado for training. During this time the girls had to pay their own expenses for food and lodging, in addition to transportation costs. Only after the six team members, four starters and two alternates, were chosen, were funds available and disbursements payable for expenditures applicable to the Olympic Games.

The six women selected for the 1960 VIII Winter Olympic Games were: Beverly Anderson, Catherine "Renie" Cos (Gorsuch), Joan Hannah, Linda Meyers (Tikalsky), Penny Pitou (Zimmerman), and Betsy Snite (Reilly). Andrea Mead Lawrence skied down Little Papoose Mountain with the torch; the flame had been fired from the hearth of a Norwegian cottage where Sondre Norheim (1825-1897) the father of modern skiing and Norway's first famous skier had lived. She then passed it to a skater, who circled the rink before lighting the caldron.