



SVEN JOHANSON
In 1968 Photo

Mishap Kills Sven Johanson

Sven S. Johanson, who for 25 years coached and taught skiing to Alaskans, died Saturday afternoon of electrocution in an industrial accident in Eagle River. He was 51.

Johanson was repairing a water pump outside a trailer he leased at mile 21½ of the Glenn Highway at Peters Creek when the accident occurred. He was working alone.

Since arriving in Alaska in 1951 from Korpika, Sweden, Johanson coached and competed in various skiing events, a career which culminated in 1975 when he became the first Alaskan to be named to the U.S. Ski Hall of Fame.

"He's been instrumental in promoting the sport here, probably giving it more than anyone in Alaska," said Kari Liekoski, cross country ski coach at Chugiak who was coached by Svenson from 1968-72 at the Fort Richardson D Biathlon Army Center.

Johanson won the North American Ski championship for cross country in 1955, later winning the national ski title in 1957 and becoming a member of the 1960 U.S. Olympic Team, after being denied membership on the 1956 team because he did not file citizenship papers in time.

Johanson won the Mt. Marathon ski race every year

from 1954 to 1959. He last competed in the race up and down the 3,022-foot Seward slope in 1963, finishing sixth.

Cross-country skiing was his favorite, a sport Johanson once called "the most difficult of all in which I have participated. It takes great technique."

"When we were young, Sven never stopped skiing," said his brother Leo, this morning. "Even up to this day he stayed in shape, either skiing or running three times a week."

Johanson would work out near the Fluor, Inc. trans-Alaska pipeline terminal near Valdez, where he worked.

Funeral arrangements are pending at Forest Lawn Memorial Chapel. Johanson will be buried Wednesday. Memorials are suggested to the Alaska Center for Crippled Children and Adults, the organization to which he donated his Marathon winnings in the past.

He is survived by his wife Signe; his daughter Mrs. Anna Lesa Anderson of Seattle; and six brothers, Leo and B.J. of Anchorage and Ivan, Rune, Gerhard and Folke of Sweden, and three sisters, Eva Andersson, Essie Rosendahl and Sanna Lundberg.

Sven S. Johanson

A funeral for Sven S. Johanson, a longtime Alaskan resident and ski instructor, will be at 2 p.m. tomorrow at Forest Lawn Memorial Chapel. The Rev. Robert Chadwick of Birchwood will officiate.

Visitation will be from 4 to 7 p.m. today and again from 12 p.m. until the service tomorrow at the chapel.

Burial will be at the Angeles Memorial Park Cemetery.

Pallbearers will be Sven Eriksson, Henry Lang, Dick Mize, Jack Ferguson, John Morton and John R. Cress.

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