



RICHARD WALPOLE

1927 -



Discipline: Cross-Country Skiing
Olympic participations: Squaw Valley 1960
Medal awarded in: 2020

Richard Walpole was the sole representative selected in the Australian Cross-Country Skiing team for the 1960 Olympic Winter Games at Squaw Valley, USA. It was only the second time that Australia was represented in Cross-Country Skiing at the Olympics, after Bruce Haslingden and Cedric Sloane appearance at Oslo 1952.

In a competition dominated by Scandinavian skiers, he placed 51st in the 15km event raced at the McKinney Creek Stadium, in Tahoma.

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HAL NERDAL

1927



Discipline: Nordic Combined
Olympic participations: Squaw Valley 1960
Major career results: 4 x National Nordic Champion, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962
Medal awarded in: 2020

Hal Nerdal is Australia's sole representative in Olympic Nordic Combined, the discipline in which athletes compete in a Ski Jumping event, followed by a Cross-Country Skiing race.

Born on 22 September 1927 in Dalsgrenda, a village in the municipality of Rana, in Northern Norway, Hal was brought up in a rural area, the youngest of ten children.

He moved to Australia in 1951 to work as a carpenter on the Guthega Dam, one of the sixteen in the Snowy Mountains Scheme. He subsequently moved to Canberra and was part of the original YMCA ski club (now known as the Brindabella Ski Club), joining their ranks in 1958 before starting a streak of four national Nordic titles between 1959 and 1962.

Like many athletes of his era, Hal lacked formal coaching. Yet his combative nature fuelled his sporting career, paired with the fierce competition provided in the Cross-Country Skiing races by the many Norwegians who were living in the Snowy Mountains at the time. When asked about his training routine, he identified running as one of the keys to his success. Back in Norway, Nerdal used to run in the summer and ski in the winter, a training combination which he continued with much success once in Australia.

In 1955 Hal married his adored wife Jean, loved mother of their daughters Lynn and Judy. They would be married for almost 60 years.

The qualification process for the 1960 Winter Olympics was very competitive and involved a series of races in both NSW and Victoria, with selection up for grabs until the very end. Nerdal won the last race, which finally qualified him for the Olympic Winter Games in Squaw Valley. The Brindabella Ski Club gave him a big send-off and were instrumental in funding his travels.

He then valiantly represented the green and gold in Squaw Valley against an elite field of European competitors, finishing 31st in a race that saw Germany, Norway and the former USSR on the Olympic podium.

Hal kept on skiing competitively after returning from the Olympics. He moved to Canberra and kept enjoying sports such as soccer, competitive Cross-Country and track running. He now lives in Brisbane, QLD.

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