



ROSS MARTIN

1943 - 2011



Discipline: Cross-Country Skiing

Olympic participations: Grenoble 1968

Medal awarded in: 2020

Ross Martin got his start in Cross-Country skiing via his step-uncle Bruce Haslingden, who represented Australia at the 1952 Winter Olympics. After Ross finished high school, he worked at the Haslingden family property, Kelton Plain, in Cooma, NSW. In 1956 Ross followed his uncle's example and joined his ski clubs, first associating himself with the Kosciusko Alpine Club (KAC) and then, not long after, with the Cooma Ski Club.

Cutting his teeth in Cross-Country ski-racing in the early '60s meant that Ross could follow the example of the many European-born Cross-Country skiers who were dominating the Australian scene at the time, athletes such as Robbie Kilpinnen, Kore Grunnsund and Otto Pinkas. Martin's early competitive years forged that character and determination which later became the foundation of his success, despite having to deal with an asthmatic condition for all his career.

Success was a long haul for Ross. One of the highlights of his career was participating in the first Paddy Pallin Classic Race, from Round Mountain to Perisher, in 1965. The elite of the Australian racing community fronted up for the 50km journey. The skiers had to take turns breaking track and navigating through extremely challenging weather conditions. Eventually, the ones who managed to get to Perisher decided to finish together - so that all of them could be considered winners. This was a great example of sportsmanship from the last period of amateur sport.

In 1966 Ross decided to go to Norway to further improve his skiing. His plan worked, and two years later he was selected for the 1968 Winter Olympics in Grenoble, France. Selection was tough and Ross joined Malcom Milne and speed skater Colin Coates as Australia only sent a team of three to the Games. Martin competed in the 15km and in the 30km Cross-Country events, finishing 60th in both events.

Ross Martin could have become a two-times Winter Olympian in 1972, when the Australian Ski Federation nominated him for the Sapporo Olympic Games in Japan. Unfortunately the Australian Olympic Federation did not support his candidature, and Grenoble remains his only Olympic experience.

Ross Martin also represented Australia at the 1970 World Championships. In his career, he was Australian Champion seven times, NSW Champion five times, KAC Champion 14 times and won countless other races. A series of results that put him among the greatest Australia Cross-Country skiers of all times.

Off-piste, Ross was also a driving force in getting one of the largest Cross-Country ski races in NSW off the ground, the KAC XC Classic, and was instrumental in the development of the Sverre Kaaten Nordic Shelter, in Perisher Valley.

[RETURN TO LIST](#)