

## Spirit of Sportsmanship

“Despite a heavy rain storm that washed the highways and fields clean of snow, seven endurance skiers waxed their long runners tonight, determined to start their 190-mile Bangor-Caribou grind tomorrow morning,” wrote the Lewiston Daily Sun on February 15<sup>th</sup> 1937. This was the second running of the four day race. For the race the U.S. Postal Service arranged for special postmarks in Bangor and then again in Caribou. Between them the racers would be carrying 2,000 letters which would receive this postmark.

After racing out of town on the bare roads the skiers were driven several miles to find snow. Then the race began in earnest.

On the second day, “Long stretches of bare road hampered the racers on their 45 mile jaunt,” wrote the Lewiston Daily Sun. Bob Johnson and Buck Ostlund of New Sweden, pressed Sam Ouellette most of the distance but were forced to fall back when the Milo veteran staged a spurt in the last few miles. Harold Bondeson, also of New Sweden, furnished the surprise of the day by jumping from fifth to third position.”

Bondeson grew up in New Sweden. His grandparents had emigrated from Sweden and were among those who brought the skisport to this country. Bondeson grew up on the family potato farm and in the winter, skis were a primary mode of travel. He was one of the founders of the New Sweden Athletic Club, won a number of shorter races and competed in several multi day, 100+ mile races.

Because of the harsh conditions in 1937, skiing on roads that often had no snow, racers were allowed two pair of skis. When a fellow competitor, Sam Oullette, wore out his skis Harold loaned him his back up pair. Sam went on to win the race. Harold ended up third.

“It was Harold’s spirit of sportsmanship and love of the camaraderie of competition that made him a legendary ski marathoner,” wrote his son, Carl Bondeson.

It was 150 years ago that Swedes first settled in New Sweden. This will be the 150<sup>th</sup> year of skiing in Maine and it is appropriate that Harold Bondeson is to be inducted into the Maine Ski Hall of Fame. Please go to: [skimuseumofmaine.org](http://skimuseumofmaine.org) to see more about Harold Bondeson and the rest of this year’s inductees.

Carried by the contestants in  
 the Bangor to Caribou Ski Mar-  
 athon, 176 miles. Leave Ban-  
 gor 8:00 A. M., Feb. 15, arrive Caribou after  
 noon of Feb. 18th. One of the features of the  
 CARIBOU WINTER CARNIVAL AND  
 ANGSTROM SPORTSMEN'S SHOW



SKI MAIL



Ski Marathon Committee,  
 Bangor, Maine.

Mr. Harold Bondeson,  
 New Sweden,  
 Maine.