

# UNITED STATES BIATHLON ASSOCIATION

## PAMELA WEISS

### HALL OF FAME

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Growing up in the pre-Title IX days, Pam had a similar experience to the many girls in that era by being denied access to sports across almost the entire athletic spectrum, including the ability to train with the boy's track team at High School. Her father was a weekend ski patroller, so she got into alpine ski racing and began skiing for the University of Vermont's Alpine team when she enrolled there in 1972. In her senior year she ran cross-country as a way of improving her skiing and as captain of the alpine ski team helped UVM to place 3rd in the NCAA Ski Championships. After graduation Pam re-located to Jackson, Wyoming where she started cross-country skiing and found immediate success, winning her first 5km race by 6 minutes.

As a result Pam left her graduate studies to focus on full-time competition and in 1979 she won the first West Yellowstone 50 km race and came to the attention of cross-country ski coaches. When the men's biathlon team came to Jackson for early training she heard about Holly Beattie's first efforts to get women involved with the sport. She became fascinated by the sport and the mental aspect of shooting and upon hearing of the first spring training camp to include women in 1980, she found out who to contact and begged to be invited. That training camp was the beginnings of a woman's biathlon team and in October she was named to the first U.S. Women's Biathlon Team..



As one of the first members of the U.S. Biathlon team Pam had early success winning National Championships and being named by the USOC as Biathlete of the Year in 1982. She was a leading member on the US team for the 1985 World Championships at Egg, Switzerland with finishes of 18th and 22nd in the sprint and individual races and 5th in the relay. At the 1986 World Championships at Falun, Sweden she was 20th, 25th and 7th in the same races. She competed in the 1987 World Championships at Lahti, Finland but illness prevented her efforts in 1988. A highlight that season was two gold medals at the North American Championships and she was named to the Pan American Team that was to race in Argentina but was later cancelled. On track to qualify for the first Olympic team to include women in 1992, five days before the Olympic try-outs were to start, she was involved in a car crash when a car going out of control smashed into her car waiting at a light.

Over the 9 years on the national team, Pam was a leader and mentor to her mostly younger teammates. She led the way in fighting the many obstacles they faced and became the first female member of the USBA Board of Directors as an Athlete Representative in 1982, bringing an important voice for the women's program. She continued to stay involved supporting junior clinics and summer biathlon races and was an official at the 2002 Olympic Games at Salt Lake City. Pam now splits her year between New Zealand and Jackson, WY and works as a self-employed CPA. For her pioneering competitive days and continued activism on behalf of women, Pam is welcomed as a member of the U.S. Biathlon Association Hall of Fame.