

Ski Broadmoor, Breckenridge & Steamboat

Ski Broadmoor, which was built and operated by the famous Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs, was located below Cheyenne Mountain and opened in 1959. Throughout the 1950s, Ski Broadmoor pioneered snowmaking and nighttime skiing.

Veteran Steve Knowlton taught skiing and rock climbing in the 10th Mountain Division. After arriving in Aspen in 1945, he joined the 1948 U.S. Olympic Ski Team and 1950 FIS Ski Team. Knowlton was instrumental in planning construction of Ski Broadmoor and initiating the Junior Ski Program and nighttime ski instruction program. From 1963-73, Knowlton helped to found Colorado Ski Country USA and was the first director.

Leon Wilmot was another 10th veteran involved with Ski Broadmoor. He joined the 10th Mountain Division and later the Mountain and Cold Weather Training Command at Ft. Carson. As the sports director at Ski Broadmoor for many years, he was essential in developing the ski area, snowmaking capabilities and the children's ski program.

In 1986, the ski area was sold to the city of Colorado Springs for two seasons, and then to Vail. Due to insufficient profits and low elevation, which resulted in no natural snowfall, the area closed in 1991.



During the 1950s, Bill Rounds wanted to bring skiing to Summit County and came up with the idea for Breckenridge. The Summit County Development Corporation was created and Peak 8 Ski Area opened Dec. 16, 1961 with one double chair and one T-bar.

Paul Duke, a 10th veteran, managed Breckenridge for many years. He was manager during a large explosion on the mountain, which destroyed the base lodge.

When Aspen Skiing Company bought the area in 1970, more chairlifts installed and ski runs cut. This was the first major resort in the state to allow snowboarding, and hosted the world's first Snowboarding World Cup in 1985. Snowmaking capabilities were also acquired to prevent poor conditions.

Breckenridge joined Keystone in a merge with Vail Resorts in 1996, experiencing \$18 million in improvements and a \$14 million construction project. The resort boasts the first double loading 6-person lift and the highest high-speed quad.

Once Carl Howelsen had established skiing as a sport in Steamboat Springs in 1914, skiers began looking toward Storm Mountain. Throughout the late 1950s, James Temple organized summit trips to explore routes for trails and lifts. To promote the ski area he got permission to use the phrase "Champagne Powder," coined by a rancher. In 1963, the ski area launched as Storm Mountain with one lift, but renamed Mt. Werner in 1964 after Buddy Werner, a famous local Olympic skier, sadly died in an avalanche. The resort is comprised of Mt. Werner, Storm Peak, and Sunshine Peak.

A member of the 10th and a Steamboat native, Gordon "Gordy" Wren taught skiing

to youth at Steamboat and served as the area director and manager. He trained for the 1940 Olympics prior to their cancellation, taught mountain warfare, survival skills and rock climbing in the 10th Mountain Division, and placed fifth in special jumping at the 1948 Olympics.

Steamboat installed a gondola, new lifts and tows, and expanded terrain throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Snowboarding was allowed in 1987, and major expansions took place in the 1990s. Although Steamboat's corporate management and name has changed many times (from Storm Mountain to Steamboat in 1969, owned by Intrawest), the town is informally known as "Ski Town U.S.A." since it has produced more ski team athletes than any other ski area in the nation.

Sources:

- David Leach's 2005 senior thesis for Middlebury College, "The Impact of the Tenth Mountain Division on the Development of a Modern Ski Industry in Colorado and Vermont: 1930-1965."
- Colorado Ski & Snowboard Museum archives