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LOCAL GEM

"Coach" Tom Reynolds



Tim LaVallee photo

Reynolds was instrumental in starting the Ski Industries program at the University of Maine at Farmington. His contributions to skiing have ranged from instructing and coaching, to motivating and developing programs around the world.

Farmington High, it wasn't long before the University of Maine came to Tom to coach their new ski team. Finally, that collegiate level coaching job had come to Coach, but it came with strings. Coach was not only to coach skiing, but he would also be head coach of men's soccer and men's tennis. Coaching tennis was not a problem, but Coach had never even seen a soccer game. Not to be daunted, Coach read a lot of books and quickly befriended a graduate assistant from Latin America who had extensive soccer experience and was very instrumental in the soccer team's success.

It wasn't long before the University of Maine at Farmington was looking to

By Ellie Duley

According to Miriam-Webster's dictionary, a gem can be a highly-prized or well loved person as well as a precious stone. In the greater the Farmington and Carrabassett Valley area we can claim Tom Reynolds as a local gem.

Reynolds, or Coach as he is called by most people who know him, was raised in Bingham. His first ties to our area came when he met Amos Winter and the kids that Winter brought over to Bingham to ski at a small ski area with just a rope tow that was put in by some men from the North Conway area when they came to Bingham to work for the town wood mill during World War II.

An athlete in high school, Coach went off to the University of Maine at Orono with a place on the baseball team and dreams of someday becoming a collegiate level coach. Even though Coach skied on his high school team, he didn't ski at all while in college. It was about a year after graduation that a friend of his asked him to go to ski at Sugarloaf, where he ran into Amos once again. This time, Amos Winter had a proposition for Coach; Winter wanted Coach to help with the ski school program at Sugarloaf, which consisted of one guy from Switzerland.

It was this weekend part-time job that got Coach back into skiing and eventually ski coaching. Still working toward his dream of coaching on the collegiate level, Coach was getting experience teaching and coaching football and baseball at Madison High School.

Connections from Sugarloaf led Coach and his young family out west, spending summers at ski camps in Washington State. This networking through the ski industry proved very valuable to Coach as he met many people who would continue to weave in and out of his life.

After coaching a very successful ski program at

start a ski program and went looking for Coach. This is how Tom Reynolds came back to the Farmington and Carrabassett Valley area.

Coach attributes his success to his PhD, or a passionate, hungry and driven nature. Passionate he is when it comes to teaching and coaching in any sport. In fact, skiing was not even on Coach's radar when he was first thinking of coaching as a career. It was his passion for other sports and the fundamentals of training that he transferred to skiing as well as his motivational skills and belief in discipline that has made Coach so successful.

Today, Coach is retired from the University of Maine at Farmington where he was instrumental in starting the Ski Industries program. Coach insists that he is "a cog in a big wheel," when it comes to the ski industry in general. His contributions to skiing have ranged from instructing and coaching, to motivating and developing programs around the world. He is the author of two books on ski coaching and firmly believes in the principle that teaching is, "an element of simplicity."

Coach can be found as a "basic line-up instructor," at Sugarloaf during the week, while running a Web site (www.ski-race-coach.com), with a partner, doing motivational speaking and working with the Völkl ski company. He credits many people for his success in the ski business including his two ski heroes: Roger Page and Wes Marco. Coach also is, "really thankful that I could be involved in all of it," of the many programs that Coach has been involved in over the years.

If you are in need of a tune-up for your ski technique or are new to the sport, this unassuming gentleman is sure to put you on the path to success.

For tips on training and skiing got to the Web site: www.ski-race-coach.com.



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