



SQUAW VALLEY USA

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Squaw Valley National Ski Patrol Wins the National Outstanding Large Alpine Patrol Award for 2009-10

[Squaw Valley USA] August 9, 2010 – In recognition of their dedication to service and safety, the Squaw Valley National Ski Patrol, the volunteer arm of the ski patrol, was selected as the winner of the 2009-10 National Outstanding Large Alpine Patrol Award.

The award's official name is the "Charles Minot 'Minnie' Dole Award for Outstanding Large Alpine Ski Patrol," named for the founder of the National Ski Patrol. Minnie Dole founded the National Ski Patrol in 1938 and directed the organization until 1950. Among other achievements, Dole convinced the US War Department to form the 10th Mountain Division, the famous mountaineering unit of WWII.

Squaw Valley's volunteer patrollers were chosen for the award as a result of their high level of performance and their successful integration with the resort's paid patrollers. Due to the diversity and caliber of Squaw Valley's terrain, all patrollers must train to higher standards and demonstrate outstanding alpine skills and techniques including high angle belaying, cliff rescue and mountaineering skills.

"Over the years the volunteers have worked really closely with the professional patrollers to create a seamless and unified patrol," said Squaw Valley's head of National Ski Patrol, Wes Schimelpfennig. "This feat primarily stems from dedication and experience. The average National Patroller at Squaw Valley has been patrolling at the mountain for 18+ years, while the national average for years worked by ski patrollers is 6 years."

Squaw Valley USA is one of the few world class resorts in America to use volunteer patrollers, yet Squaw's volunteer patrollers have been able to adapt and find a secure niche in the operation of a major ski area. They have not only succeeded in this regard but have admirably demonstrated that National Ski Patrollers can fulfill a vital role in today's ski industry.

Schimelpfennig continues, "The patrol has overcome its challenges in an outstanding manner and may serve as a prime example for other patrols."

To win the Minnie Dole Award, Squaw Valley's volunteer patrol first went up against four other patrols to win Outstanding Large Patrol in the Eastern Sierra Region. They then competed against three other patrols from other regions to win Outstanding Large Patrol in the Far West Division, and finally went on to compete with nine other patrols from other divisions to win the Minnie Dole.

Site of the VIII Winter Olympic Games, Squaw Valley USA is located five miles north of Lake Tahoe along the Truckee River on Highway 89. The year-round resort offers 4,000 acres of lift-served terrain for skiing, snowboarding, ice skating and snowtubing. Off the slopes, guests enjoy a vibrant après scene and world-class shopping and dining in the Village at Squaw Valley. Summer and fall activities include mountain biking, hiking, mountaintop swimming, paintball, disc golf and zip-lining. For more information call 530-452-4000, or visit www.squaw.com.

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