



Bernie Wells

Junior National Champion, Coach

Bernard “Bernie” Patrick Wells was born on March 17, 1953, in Westfield, Massachusetts. He began ski jumping at age 10, living within walking distance of the 20-meter jump at Living Memorial Park and training through the Brattleboro Outing Club. By age 15 he was winning most jumping contests in the East, and at 17 he won every meet he entered. In 1970, he won the Junior National Championship in Jackson Hole, Wyoming — the first Brattleboro ski jumper to earn that honor — then won the North American Junior Championships with a 245-foot jump on the 80-meter hill in Berlin, New Hampshire. He competed on the U.S. National Team in 1971, 1972, and 1974, placed third at the 1975 National Championships at Harris Hill, and finished sixth in the 1976 Olympic tryouts.

As a coach alongside Steve Squires, Bernie became the mentor every young athlete hopes for — driving kids to practice, standing at the take-off as their biggest fan, and staying connected with them long after their jumping days ended. Known as “the king of the takeoff,” he served for many years as Chief of the Hill at Harris Hill, taking pride in preparing the jump to give every athlete the best possible experience. He coached his own children, Beth and Jeff, passing on both his knowledge and his deep respect for the sport.

Bernie Wells passed away on April 21, 2021, leaving a profound void in the Brattleboro ski jumping community. His legacy lives on in every jumper he encouraged, every friendship he built, and every life he touched. And if you stand quietly at the top of the hill, you might still feel him there — reminding you to finish strong and always land it in a telemark.