

Tom Sears joined the CSP in 1970. At the time he was the head of the physical education department at a school in Oshawa and frequently had to deal with athletic injuries and medical conditions of students, some more serious than others. A fellow staff member was a patroller and Tom took the CSP first aid course to get better training than he could anywhere else. Tom had skied once or twice before so he joined the patrol!

In 1972 Tom became a first aid instructor and with his background in education, upgraded the instructional level within the entire zone. From 1975-1978 Tom was also the Dagmar patrol leader at a time when there were only six to eight patrollers on the roster which resulted in many duty days for everyone. Gradually the size of the patrol grew and had huge spirit, which led to some great après-ski gatherings.

With the boom in the Nordic industry, trails began to develop at Dagmar, and the patrol became acquainted with Nordic duties as well. Tom also became the Kawartha Zone VP of Education somewhere in this time.

In 1975, as a result of Tom's first aid skills at an incident at his school's pool involving CPR, Tom performed CPR for more than 20 minutes all the way to the hospital. The student survived and Tom received the Issie Wachman Life Saving Award. CPR did not become a mandatory part of the CSP first aid curriculum for another 10 years although the zone offered CPR courses through the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Tom became the zone president in 1978 and under his tenure the zone received the Ontario Division Outstanding Zone Award (1980) and the national President's Award for outstanding growth and progress (1981).

In 1982 Tom became the Ontario Division President at a time when the emphasis on safety was increasing. Under his guidance the division developed a slide-tape presentation which was circulated widely and was recognized in 1983 with the Safe Skiing Award.

In 1984 Tom became the National VP of Training right at the time the CSP was preparing for the 1988 Winter Olympic Games in Calgary at which the CSP became responsible for training all of the on-site patrollers for on-snow events (jumping, biathlon, cross country, alpine, Nordic disciplines and the freestyle and disabled skiing demonstration events in the pre-Paralympic days). Tom also patrolled the cross-country events at Canmore during the games.

In recognition for all of his work, Tom was awarded one of the first Kawartha Zone Life Membership Awards. Tom's patrolling career continued including overseeing the addition of CPR instruction into the first aid curriculum.

Tom retired from the administration side in 1989 but remained an active patroller and instructor/examiner in the zone. He also represented Cross Country Canada on the Ontario Ski Council, serving as its president from 1992-1996. In 1995 Tom received a Special Achievement Award from the Ontario Government. Tom continued to instruct and examine first aid and patrol events until osteoarthritis forced limited ski activity and he felt he could no longer safely handle a toboggan. He fully retired from the patrol in 2002.