

**THE STORY OF A WAR HERO, INNOVATOR AND ADAPTIVE SKIING PIONEER
ON AN HISTORIC JOURNEY TO CREATE A MOVEMENT**



FRESH TRACKS

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INTRODUCTION TO FRESH TRACKS

SYNOPSIS

This true-life documentary follows the journey of Cleveland native, Paul Leimkuehler, who lost his leg during the Battle of the Bulge in WWII, and turned his amputation into an opportunity by building his own artificial leg and opening a prosthetic business.

He returns to the world of sports triumphantly after designing the first pair of ski outriggers in the U.S. launching the adaptive skiing movement that earned him a spot in the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame, the U.S. Disabled Snow Sports Hall of Fame and the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame. The film follows the influence of his legacy on the Paralympic skiers and snowboarders today including gold medalist, Mike Schultz, and gold medalist and narrator Andrew Kurka on the evolving of technology in adaptive sports.

WWW.FRESHTRACKSFILM.COM

A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE PRODUCER **KATIE LEIMKUEHLER**

The journey of Fresh Tracks started as a story that inspired me my whole life. My grandfather served as a constant reminder of what is possible even in a world of limitations. This film has been a passionate project for several years that I'm grateful to see it come to life and thankful for all partners and team that made it happen.

If there is one thing I hope you're able to walk away with from this film it's to not be confined to what society thinks you're able to do, but empowered to see that all things are possible with the right mindset, initiative and determination to make it happen.

Fresh Tracks is about paving a new way for yourself and others and to redefine the world of possibilities.



PRODUCTION TEAM

KATIE LEIMKUEHLER, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Katie Leimkuehler, an Executive Producer of Fresh Tracks, is the granddaughter of Paul Leimkuehler and wants to share his inspiring story with the world. Katie, the CEO of Leimkuehler Media, is an expert branding storyteller. She is a board member of Cleveland Together Digital and recently was awarded Northeast Ohio Movers & Shakers Top 25 Under 35 Award in 2019.



JEREMY SNYDER, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Jeremy Snyder is an Executive Producer, Producer, Director and Co-CEO at TFA Group. His achievements include Directing the 2018 documentary feature, "Empty Net" – USA Sled Hockey's Journey of Redemption. Jeremy leads the development and production of TV, Film and branded content projects tied to the development and growth of the Paralympic Movement/Adaptive Sports/Disability Rights Advocacy with a focus on changing perception and raising awareness.



HANS ROSENWINKEL, DIRECTOR

Hans Rosenwinkel, a Field Producer/Director, Writer, Cinematographer, Editor at the TFA Group is a multi-award winning production professional. As a freelance writer/producer/director, director of photography, and editor, his projects include producing, shooting, and editing projects for BBC, PBS, Netflix, Amazon Prime, National Geographic Channel, National Geographic Mission Programs, NBC, ABC, ESPN, Fox Sports Network, MakeAHero.org, The Foundation For A Better Life, Values.com, Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, Warren Miller Entertainment and many more.



MALLORY WEGGEMANN, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Mallory Weggemann is a Co-CEO/Co-Founder & Executive Producer at TFA Group and a Paralympic Gold Medalist. Mallory won an ESPY in 2011 for "Best Female with a Disability," recording 15 World Records and 34 American Records on the Road to the London 2012 Paralympic Games, where she brought home a Gold Medal and Bronze Medal. Following the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games as a two-time Paralympian for Team USA, She's been featured in "The Current," a documentary focused on highlighting inspiring individuals with physical disabilities living a life with purpose through their love for the sport.

PRESS COVERAGE

'Fresh Tracks' documentary to premiere at Beaver Run Resort

News [ECLIPSE NEWS](#) | December 11, 2019



Taylor Sienkiewicz [FOLLOW](#)
tsienkiewicz@summitdaily.com



Courtesy of Katie Leimkuehler, and director Hans Rosenwinkel. Tourists at a popular Rocky Mtn Area (COURTESY OF KATIE LEIMKUEHLER)

BRECKENRIDGE — "Fresh Tracks," a documentary produced by Leimkuehler Media and the TFA Group, follows World War II veteran Paul Leimkuehler, an adaptive skier. Leimkuehler lost his leg during his service in WWII and built his own artificial leg, later opening a prosthetic business. He then designed the first pair of ski outriggers in the U.S., launching the adaptive ski movement.

Leimkuehler has been inducted into the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame, the U.S. Disabled Snow Sports Hall of Fame and the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame. Aside from Leimkuehler's journey, the film follows other adaptive skiers including Paralympic gold medalist Mike Schultz.

"Fresh Tracks" Up for Best Documentary at Vail Film Festival

"Fresh Tracks" is a true-life documentary by filmmaker and CU Denver faculty Hans Rosenwinkel that follows the journey of Cleveland native, Paul Leimkuehler, who lost his leg during WWII and turned his amputation into an opportunity by building his own artificial leg and opening a prosthetic business. He returns to the world of sports triumphantly after designing the first pair of ski outriggers in the U.S. and launching the adaptive skiing movement.

The film is in the running for "Best Documentary" at the Vail Film Festival and can be viewed online, Sunday, May 17, 2020. Tickets and passes can be purchased on the [Vail Film Festival website](#) and includes a Q&A session with the filmmakers.



SCENE

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FILM

Documentary About Clevelander Who Designed the First Pair of Ski Outriggers to Premiere on May 17 at the Vail Film Festival

Posted By Jeff Niesel on Tue, May 5, 2020 at 11:50 am



Courtesy of Katie Leimkuehler

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PRESS COVERAGE



FRESH TRACKS: THE INSPIRING LIFE AND LEGACY OF ADAPTIVE SKIER PAUL LEIMKUEHLER

BY AINSLEY SCHOPPEL

Paul E. Leimkuehler was born and raised in humble beginnings in Cleveland, Ohio. The eldest of four children, his parents always encouraged Paul and his siblings to participate in and enjoy sporting activities. After graduating from high school and attending Ohio State University, Paul worked as an engineer, yet even still, his ingrained passion for sports beckoned. A gifted athlete, Leimkuehler competed in the 1936 United States Olympic Cycling trials and even became the 1938 Ohio State Cycling Champion. In 1940, Leimkuehler married his sweetheart, Catherine Cawley, and together they had four children.



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A LEGACY OF HOPE

PAUL "BUD" LEIMKUEHLER AND THE BIRTH OF AMPUTEE SKIING

Words: Nakara Bantson

Even in his later years, Bud wasn't afraid to go fast. Here he proves it at a race in Vail, CO. Photo: Courtesy of Katie Leimkuehler

BEFORE WWII, Paul "Bud" Leimkuehler was a talented natural athlete. An accomplished cyclist and speed skater from the flatlands of Cleveland, he competed in the 1936 U.S. Olympic Cycling Trials and earned the Ohio State Cycling championship in 1938. These dreams continued as the war ramped up, because, unlike many other young American men, his job at a war supply company would allow him to avoid the draft.

Then, in the second round of the draft, his name was pulled. He was assigned to the European front, where he fought in one of the bloodiest conflicts of the war, the Battle of the Bulge, and where he lost a number of fingers and his left leg. Although he was done cycling and speed skating, Bud also understood how lucky he was—as least he'd returned with his life.

It wasn't until he was 38 when, filming some friends and family skiing in Pennsylvania, he began talking to an Austrian ski instructor, who told Bud of an "outsigger" system in Europe that aligned amputees to ski. Bud watched a video the instructor suggested, and he made a decision—he was going to be a skier, leg be damned.

"To him it was a new challenge, something he couldn't do before," explains his granddaughter, Katie Leimkuehler, an internal media and control technician in Chicago who is writing a screenplay about Bud's exploits. "He wanted something his whole family could do together. I think at that time there wasn't a whole lot of other things for amputees to do, and he had to lead the way in order for him to become part of that."

Bud attacked the project with the same tenacity he'd shown with regard to cycling and speed skating. Using modified crutches attached to his skiis, he developed a customized system similar to what he had seen from the Austrian instructor—and with that, became the first amputee skier in the United States. Mous a few material improvements and some added bells and whistles, his setup was essentially the same three-track outrigger system that is used today. Bud wasn't selfish about his creation either—he quickly began advocating both the design and the activity.

"He actively pursued the concept, but never took any patents for it so other people could use it," Katie says. "He wanted everyone—two legs or no legs—to have the opportunity to get involved and create their own—a system that everyone could ski."

And promote it he did. Along with his skiis system, Bud also designed and built his own prosthetic leg, and, in 1948, started a prosthetics company in Cleveland with the hope of providing similar opportunities to folks with disabilities. He would spend the rest of his life encouraging people to hit the slopes, and his efforts earned him places in the US Ski Hall of Fame, the Ohio Veterans



Hall of Fame and the Disabled Ski Hall of Fame. His prosthetics company, Leimkuehler, Inc., is still in business, and run and owned by Paul's three sons and daughter. It continues the legacy of hope Bud started more than 90 years ago.

More than anything, Katie wants people to be inspired by Bud's amazing true story. Katie's screenplay, the trailer of which placed in the top 20 at the International Movie Trailer Festival by popular vote, is a work in progress, and she is working on having it produced as a feature film. She has also developed a website called Conquer the Edge, highlighting similar motivational stories and courage in the face of adversity.

"I have always been inspired by what he's done," she says. "He has an amazing story that makes people feel as if they can do anything. In the back of my mind, I am always thinking that if I complain about something, I remind myself that my grandpa had it so much worse than me. And if he can take something so difficult and turn it into a positive experience, then I can do the same thing." ■



TV INTERVIEWS



Loss of limb gave WWII vet gain of new career, hobby

By JIM DEARDEN
Chronicle-Telegram

HAY VILLAGE. — A jagged piece of shrapnel tore a deep cut in Paul Leimkuehler's chest in the Army during World War II. It also signaled the beginning of a career and hobby that have since earned him national recognition in the field of prosthetics.

Leimkuehler's wound during the Battle of the Bulge in 1945 resulted in amputation of his left leg and a finger but the Hay Village resident turned the misfortune into a gain when he became interested in the manufacture of artificial limbs.

Leimkuehler also possessed a unique ability to this country and it, the first handicapped skier in the Hall of Fame in Intermountain.

"The only thing I can say is that I look ahead of my disability," Leimkuehler said. "That changed my life and my children's lives."

AFTER REINO, trained in the use of a MASH (Machinist's Artificial Limb) machine, Leimkuehler underwent his first amputation at a field hospital in Belgium. Doctors in England and later at McGuire General Hospital in Richmond, Va., service him during his stay.

It was at McGuire that Leimkuehler became acquainted with prosthetics through his own need for an artificial leg.

Because there were no more new orders for limbs and artificial limbs just after the war, he helped out in the hospital's brace and cast shop while waiting for his own leg.

"I figured that I would be wearing one of these things for the rest of my life, so I might as well find out about it," he said.

Leimkuehler quickly picked up the method of making artificial limbs and became an expert in fitting them that he began to make the rounds with the doctor in the hospital examining amputees.

While on a ski trip with his wife, Kay, and a few friends in 1958, Leimkuehler learned that European amputees who grew up in skiing areas continue to adapt the sport despite their disability.

"I WENT ALONG on that first ski trip thinking I'd take pleasure in the handicap," he said. "The Austrian (Dr. Mirz) on this, 'changed my mind.'"

Leimkuehler designed his own ski equipment, which includes a regular sized ski for his one good leg, and two 18-inch skis or "strappers" on the end of arm crutches which act as a balance.

In 1961, he was inducted in the Ski Hall of Fame as the "Father of Amputee Skiing in the U.S."

"This is a really great sport for the disabled. Today there are about 10 amputee ski leagues here in the country," said Leimkuehler, who still gives on regular ski trips out west with his family.

Leimkuehler's three sons, Jim, Bill and Bob, are all certified fitters and now run the family business, located at 5001 Denwood Road, Cleveland, Ohio. Leimkuehler's sons, who work for the prosthetics supply company, which Leimkuehler also founded.

"WHEN I HEAR fathers saying that they're sorry their children haven't gone into the family business, I feel sorry for them. When I come home at night, my wife and the kids would listen and understand what I was saying about my experience that day," Leimkuehler said.

"People are unhappy at first when they come in as crutches or in a wheelchair," he explained. "Amputees are from all walks of life — veterans, kids, people who have been in industrial accidents or auto accidents, or have cancer or diabetes."



A HISTORIC STORY



THE PLAIN DEALER, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1991

A pioneer of amputee skiing in U.S.

Forty-six years ago, Paul Leimkuehler's future was loaded into a German canteen and fired, and seconds later his former life was gone along with most of his left leg.

Though he may have lost a limb, he gained a career as founder of the local prosthetics manufacturing firm, Leimkuehler Inc., and played a key role in development of amputee skiing in the United States.

Before joining the Army during World War II, Leimkuehler had been a technical engineer at Timmerman Products in Cleveland. He'd been at the front line more than a month when that fateful shell hit. "It landed in an alley, and all of a sudden my leg felt warm," Leimkuehler recalled.

During his hospitalization, Leimkuehler joined a long list of soldiers waiting for new limbs. Tiring of the delay, he decided to make his own at the hospital's limb and brace shop. "I was handy with my hands and pretty good at analyzing things," he said.

Leimkuehler said he became so adept at making artificial limbs that he was soon joining doctors on their rounds, examining amputees.

When he returned to Cleveland, he decided to put his newfound skills to work, purchasing in



FOUR: PETE COPELAND



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Paul Leimkuehler

Class of 1981

Paul Leimkuehler Hall of Fame Class of 1981

Information submitted in a nomination letter to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame by William E. Steiler, Chairman - Handicapped Skiers Committee, USSA - Central Division.

The many programs of instruction and the long trail of handicapped people seeking out the sport of skiing today owe a great deal to this man who got it together, Paul Leimkuehler.

Paul Leimkuehler, a native of Cleveland, Ohio, was born August 22, 1918. In 1936, as an active youth of seventeen, he competed in the U.S. Olympic Bicycle Road Race Finals in Patterson, New Jersey. He lost his left leg above the knee in 1944 while serving as an infantry lieutenant in World War II. For a while, he thought his days of lively activity were behind him.

The direction of Paul's life as an amputee was to be dictated by an experience in the hospital where he was assigned for recovery. He involved himself (on a voluntary basis) in the artificial limb and brace shop while his leg was being made. In a matter of months, Paul was up and around on his own new leg and making and fitting artificial limbs to other veterans.

On his release from the hospital, Paul entered the prosthetic field, quickly established himself as a certified fitter with a business of his own and in recognition of his skills (by his peers) has risen to the presidency of two national prosthetic and orthotic associations. He is listed in "Who's Who in America."



WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT FRESH TRACKS

"FASCINATING & AUTHENTIC"

"I just finished watching Fresh Tracks - so well done and so fascinating! There's a real authentic family feel to the film that doesn't translate as well in others I've seen - you all have done a great job telling this story and sharing the adaptive sports message."

-Melinda Quick

"A TRUE INSPIRATION"

"This film is a must see! Katie you did such an amazing job sharing the story of your grandfather's life and all the wonderful people and organizations he helped because he never gave up! A true inspiration!"

-Annette Pisco

"GAVE US MOTIVATION"

"Such an honor to included among many great athletes and be apart of this film. Paul set adaptive skiing in to motion he gave us freedom on ski regardless of disability. He took away our excuses and gave us motivation."

-Kyle Moxley

"A FILM THAT SHOULD BE SEEN AROUND THE WORLD"

"A film that should be seen around the world. What a truly amazing story."

-Kathy Kuack

"UPLIFTING & INSPIRING"

"I enjoyed the movie Fresh Tracks. It was just so uplifting and inspiring. Paul Leimkuehler seemed like a "glass full" kind of person."

- Ken OHare



FILM SCREENINGS



PRIVATE SCREENING EVENTS



FRESH TRACKS ADAPTIVE SKIING DOCUMENTARY PANEL

3:00 - 4:00 p.m. ET
Thursday, 10/29

This true-life historical sports documentary follows the journey of Schwab employee, Katie Leimkuehler's, grandfather - Paul who lost his leg in WWII. His epic story of launching a prosthetic business and a new ski technology landed him in the U.S. Ski and Snowboard of Fame.

Panelists will include:

- Katie Leimkuehler - Executive Producer & Schwab employee
- Mike Schultz - Paralympic Snowboarder Gold & Silver Medalist, 2018 ESPY for "Best Male Athlete with a Disability"
- Andrew Kurka - Paralympic Gold & Silver Medalist in Skiing Downhill & Super-G
- Mallory Weggemann - Paralympic Swimmer Gold & Bronze Medalist
- Jeremy Snyder - Executive Producer, CEO of TFA Group

Watch the trailer bit.ly/FreshTracksTrailer



National Disability
Employment
Awareness Month



Department of Rehabilitation Medicine DOCUMENTARY SCREENING & PANEL DISCUSSION

April 24, 2020 | 5 pm
Best Buy Theater, Northrup



Fresh Tracks is a documentary about the first U.S. amputee skier and his design that launched the adaptive skiing movement.

Join us while we screen the documentary and enjoy a panel discussion with leaders in the adaptive sports community. Stay for a post-event reception!

Free and open to the public.
Must RSVP to attend:
z.umn.edu/FreshTracks



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"Fresh Tracks" Private Screening & Panel Discussion
Sunday, February 16, 2020 • 4 - 6:30 PM

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BEHIND THE SCENES



CONTACT INFORMATION



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