



So, do you know your famous
Norwegians?

We will talk about one today..

Do you know who she is?



Do you know who she is now?



You guessed it!



Sonja Henie

The World Figure Skating Champion

1936 in Germany
at the Winter Olympics





Sonja Henie (April 8, 1912–October 12, 1969) was a Norwegian figure skater and film star. She was a three-time Olympic Champion in Ladies' Singles, a ten-time World Champion and a six-time European Champion.

Henie won more Olympic and World titles than any other ladies' figure skater.

<u>Event</u>	<u>1923</u>	<u>1924</u>	<u>1925</u>	<u>1926</u>	<u>1927</u>	<u>1928</u>	<u>1929</u>	<u>1930</u>	<u>1931</u>	<u>1932</u>	<u>1933</u>	<u>1934</u>	<u>1935</u>	<u>1936</u>
Winter Olympics		8th				1st				1st				1st
World Championships		5th		2nd	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
European Championships									1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
Norwegian Championships	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st							



Early Life

Henie was born in Kristiania, current Oslo, the only daughter of Wilhelm Henie (1872–1937), a prosperous Norwegian furrier, and his wife Selma Lochmann-Nielsen (1888–1961). In addition to the income from the fur business, both of Henie's parents had inherited wealth. Wilhelm Henie had been a one-time World Cycling Champion and the Henie children were encouraged to take up a variety of sports at a young age.



Henie initially showed talent at skiing, and then followed her older brother Leif to take up figure skating. As a girl, Henie was also a nationally ranked tennis player and a skilled swimmer and equestrienne. Once Henie began serious training as a figure skater, her formal schooling ended and she was educated by tutors.

After the 1936 World Figure Skating Championships, Henie gave up her amateur status and took up a career as a professional performer in acting and live shows. While still a girl, Henie had decided that she wanted to move to Hollywood and become a movie star when her competitive days were over, without considering that her thick accent might hinder her acting ambitions.



In 1936, following a successful ice show in Los Angeles (orchestrated by her father), Hollywood signed her to a long term contract at Twentieth Century Fox, which made her one of the highest-paid actresses of the time.





In addition to her film career, Henie started touring her ice shows in the U.S. At this time, figure skating and ice shows were not yet an established form of entertainment. Henie's popularity as a film actress attracted many new fans to her ice shows. Throughout the 1940s, Henie skated at Rockefeller Center attracting millions of ticket buyers.



At the height of her fame, Sonja's shows and touring activities brought Henie as much as \$2 million per year. She also had numerous lucrative endorsement contracts, and deals to market skates, clothing, jewelry, dolls, and other merchandise branded with her name. All these activities made her one of the wealthiest women in the world in her time.



Sonja Henie Movies



Year	Title	Role
1927	Seven Days for Elizabeth	Skater
1929	Se Norge	Herself
1936	One in a Million	Greta "Gretchen" Muller
1937	Thin Ice	Lili Heiser
	Ali Baba Goes to Town	Herself
1938	Happy Landing	Trudy Ericksen
	My Lucky Star	Krista Nielsen
1939	Second Fiddle	Trudi Hovland
	Everything Happens at Night	Louise
1941	Sun Valley Serenade	Karen Benson
1942	Iceland	Katina Jonsdottir
1943	Wintertime	Nora
1945	It's a Pleasure	Chris Linden
1948	The Countess of Monte Cristo	Karen Kirsten
1958	Hello London	Herself

World War II



Henie's connections with [Adolf Hitler](#) and other high-ranking Nazi officials made her the subject of controversy before, during, and after World War II. During her amateur skating career, she performed often in Germany and was a favorite of German audiences and of Hitler personally. As a wealthy celebrity, she moved in the same social circles as royalty and heads of state and made Hitler's acquaintance as a matter of course.



Controversy appeared first when Henie greeted Hitler with a Nazi salute during an exhibition in Berlin some time before the 1936 Winter Olympics; she was strongly denounced by the Norwegian press. She did not repeat the salute at the Olympics in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, but after the Games she accepted an invitation to lunch with Hitler at his resort home.



During the occupation of Norway, German troops saw Hitler's autographed photo prominently displayed at the piano in the Henie family home in Landøya, Asker. As a result, none of Henie's properties in Norway were confiscated or damaged by the Germans.

Henie became a naturalized citizen of the U.S. in 1941. Like many Hollywood stars, she supported the U.S. war effort through USO and similar activities, but she was careful to avoid supporting the Norwegian resistance movement, or making public statements against the Nazis. For this, she was condemned by many Norwegians and Norwegian-Americans.



After the war, Henie was mindful that many of her countrymen considered her to be a [quisling](#). However, she made a triumphant return to Norway with the Holiday on Ice tour in 1953 and 1955.



Henie was married three times, and had a variety of love interests, including a much-publicized affair with Tyrone Power, a romance with actor Van Johnson and a very high profile relationship with Liberace.



Tyrone Power



Van Johnson



Liberace



Death

Henie was diagnosed with leukemia in the mid-1960s. She died of the disease at age 57 in 1969 during a flight from Paris to Oslo. Generally regarded as one of the greatest figure skaters in history, she is buried with her husband in Oslo on the hilltop overlooking the Henie-Onstad Art Centre.