



BONNIE BLAIR

5-Time Olympic Gold Medalist Speed Skater

Inducted October 29, 2013

Born in Cornwall, New York and raised in Champaign, Illinois, Bonnie Blair started skating at two and went on to become one of the world's greatest speed skaters and one of America's most decorated female Olympians, with five gold medals and a bronze medal.

Blair skated for the United States in Sarajevo, Calgary, Albertville and Lillehammer and won both the 500 and 1000 meter races in 1992 and 1994.

She was named the Associated Press Female Athlete of the Year in 1994 and inducted into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame in 2004. She was the first U.S. Olympian to win three consecutive gold medals in the same event in a Winter



Games by capturing the 500 meters in 1988, 1992 and 1994.

She set a world record in the 500 meters (38.99) in 1994 after the Olympics in Calgary, making her mark as the first female skater in history to go under 39 seconds. She then lowered the record (38.69) prior to her retirement in 1995. Blair competed for the final time on her 31st birthday and set an American record in the 1000 meters.

Blair also competed in short track speed skating, becoming the overall short track World Champion in 1986. She trained and competed in Olympic Festivals in Colorado Springs from 1979-1994.