

ROGER ALLEN

Nation: Gwich'in First Nation
Birth: May 5, 1952
Birthplace: Aklavik, Northwest Territories
Sport: Cross-Country Skiing
Competitions: 1970 World Nordic Juniors Championships, Gosau, Austria
1970 World Nordic Championships, Vysoke Tatry, Czechoslovakia
1972 Olympic Winter Games, Sapporo, Japan

Career highlights

- 1970, represented Canada at the European Junior Championships in Austria and the World Championships in Czechoslovakia
- 1972, competed with Team Canada at the Sapporo Olympic Winter Games, placing 13th in the relay event
- 1999, elected to the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly representing Twin Lakes/Inuvik

Biography

Born in Aklavik, Northwest Territories, Roger Allen grew up with his trapper grandmother. In the winter, he'd get up early, cross the frozen Mackenzie River, and run for 2.4 km along the trampoline, gathering snared rabbits.

At a residential school in Inuvik, Allen excelled at sports like running; after he won a foot race in 1967, Father Jean-Marie Mouchet, founder of the Territorial Experimental Ski Training (TEST) program, suggested that he join the new cross-country ski team.

At his first major meet, in Anchorage, Alaska, Allen came fourth. By the end of the season, he was one of nine skiers from Inuvik on the Canadian Ski Association's National Junior Team. In 1970, Allen competed as part of the Canadian team at two major world ski races — the European Junior Championships in Austria and the World Championships in Czechoslovakia.

At 19, Allen competed at the 1972 Olympic Winter Games in Sapporo, Japan. There, his team placed thirteenth in the 4 x 10 km relay event; he placed 50th in the 15 km classic.

After the Games, Allen left the National Team. He was offered a full ski scholarship from the University of Colorado, with which he raced at the North American Championships in Thunder Bay.

In 1999, Allen was elected to the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, representing Twin Lakes/Inuvik. As a cabinet minister, he held the portfolio of Justice, Housing and Youth and invited former team-mate, Sharon Firth, to become a Youth Programs Advisor.

Several scandals later ended his political career.