



Mount Pearl Sports Hall of Fame Inductee
Don Coaker
Athlete 1997



Donald (Don) Coaker is considered to be one of the best athletes in Newfoundland during the 1960s. Don dominated all running championships held in the province from 1962 to 1968 when he ran for the Church Lads Brigade (C.L.B.) Old Comrades Track and Field Club. Don's debut, and initial win, happened while he was running in the United Collegiate Track and Field meet of 1961. In this meet, he made a name for himself winning both the 880 yard race and the one mile race. Later on during that same year, he won a five mile road race in St. John's. Moreover, in 1962 Don won the annual "Tely Ten" road race and both the one mile and the six mile races at the Provincial Track and Field meet held in Gander. For three years following the races previously named were Don's races; he was simply unbeatable. Apart from upholding his standings in those races, Don participated in numerous other running events throughout the province; He won an additional one, three, six, ten and fifteen mile races. In 1964 Don won a twenty-six mile marathon, an event that granted himself with the acknowledgment of his excellent

athleticism by the A.A.U. In fact, Don was the first Newfoundlander to ever be recognized by the A.A.U. for his accomplishments. In 1965 Don established a new record for the fifteen mile run and placed second in the marathon. Don retired from running in 1968 due to an ankle injury yet remained an active individual in the sports community of Mount Pearl.

In addition to his phenomenal Track and Field record, Don has maintained an active presence in several other sports. He played Mercantile Hockey in St. John's from 1963 to 1968, and subsequently earned himself the title of highest scoring player in the league. Don continued to play in the St. John's and Mount Pearl Recreational Leagues until 1990.

Don always had his hand in rowing; he took part in the Annual St. John's Regatta from 1968 to 1974 in which his rowing crews made it to the championship finals on four separate occasions. Moreover, Don has also played an important role with the Mount Pearl Minor Soccer Association; he volunteered his time as a minor league coach and referee from 1974 to 1982 and served as a member of the Executive Committee from 1978 to 1982. During his tenure he was part of the team that created the new soccer field in Mount Pearl.

The Mount Pearl Sports Alliance recognizes Don Coaker's outstanding athleticism and contributions with his induction to the Mount Pearl Sports Hall of Fame.
