



The Re-ECHO

St. Louis Park

A Newsletter for the members of the St. Louis Park Historical Society

Lloyd Holm

Lloyd Holm was the St. Louis Park basketball coach from 1949 until 1977. During this time, his teams won four Lake Conference championships, four District 18 championships, three times runners up, one regional championship and one state championship. Lloyd attributed this remarkable record to having the right players on his teams but his peers thought the coaching of his teams was a big factor and inducted him into the Minnesota Coaches Hall of Fame. When his teams played they won. When he retired in 1977 he had won a total of 531 games and lost only 234.

Lloyd Holm's job at St. Louis Park was a year-round job. In addition to coaching the senior high basketball teams, he also oversaw the elementary physical education programs. He planned and organized Saturday programs for students in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades. They learned the fundamentals of basketball. The age groups played each other. The program increased interest and enthusiasm and helped to provide a feeder system for the junior and senior high teams.

Lloyd graduated from Harmony,

Minnesota High School and from there attended Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. He wanted to play baseball and basketball, and Luther's programs rated with the University of Minnesota in addition the college was only 25 miles from his home.

Although his family supported him, money was never plentiful. His brother had to lend him a suit to practice-teach his senior year and for graduation. He also had to share this suit with his roommate. The roommate wore the suit to practice-teach in the morning, and Lloyd wore it in the afternoon.

When Lloyd graduated from Luther he still owed the school \$80.00. Even though he had a job, the school would not release his records so he could get his teaching certificate. He had to borrow the money so he could go to work.

Holm first coached at Eyota, MN and then moved to Benson MN. He was then offered a job coaching in Red Wing. In Red Wing his teams won state championships in 1940 and 41. When he returned from service

The name was inspired by the ECHO newspaper published by and for the students of St. Louis Park High School since 1917. The Re-ECHO is published quarterly by the St. Louis Park Historical Society and is written by Robert C. Reiss. Its purpose is to acquaint the members, volunteers and friends on how the activities, programs and resources of the Society are used to preserve the history of St. Louis Park.

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Lloyd Holm cont'd

in 1945, he was asked to coach at Duluth Denfield. In 1947, while competing in the strong Iron Range league, they beat Ely in the state tournament and became state champions. With his success at Denfield, Holm was a candidate to replace Dave McMillan at the University

of Minnesota. Instead he came to St. Louis Park. Lloyd Holm is the only coach in Minnesota to take four teams to the state tournament and go home with two championships. He died in December 2005 at the age of 93.

Pete the Greek

Pete "the Greek" Ralles' family was one of two Greek families living in St. Louis Park in the 1930's. Pete was a hard worker and also an entrepreneur. When he could not find work at Monitor Drill or the Republic Creosote plant, he bought a popcorn wagon and sold popcorn at various celebrations, including football games. Everyone in St. Louis Park knew Pete the Greek. Pete had two sons, Ted and John, who were good athletes and active in both football and basketball. They both graduated from St. Louis Park High. John and his wife Lois were prominent in St. Louis Park business. John was a long time manager of McCarthy's, a popu-

lar supper club located at Highway 12 (now 394) and Highway 100. After that, he and Lois bought the Knollwood Liquor Store. Although both John and Lois are deceased, their family still runs the store.

John and Lois' grandson, Steven, was recently selected to accompany Governor Pawlenty on his November trip to China. Steven was one of seven high school students picked from 79 applicants. He was chosen for scholastic achievement, effective communications, and leadership. Pete the Greek contended that he was not Greek but was an American that just happened to be born in Greece. He would have been extremely proud of his legacy.

How Hockey Came to St. Louis Park

In 1945, a group of high school sophomores got the City of St. Louis Park to divide a big skating rink on Dakota Avenue so they could play "shinny" games (hockey without many rules). These boys thought they were good enough to try to get the high school to sponsor them as a team. They approached Principal Milton Kuhlman, who was also the athletic director. They were told that this would require academic eligibility, good school behavior, and a coach that was on

the faculty. In addition, they needed a rink for which the school did not have money. To the group it was a challenge. They also knew that they had to prove they could play. They entered the St. Louis Park Rangers in the Minneapolis Park Board League for 15 and 16 year olds. Now they had two new problems. The first was protection. They solved this by improvising and using magazines and rubber bands for shin guards. Another problem was to find a player with access to

How Hockey Came to St. Louis Park, cont'd

a car so they could get to games. The shinny games were gone forever. They had never before played with nets, boards, body checks, and referees. In the 1945-46 school year they went on to a season record of 10 wins and two losses. With this record, the City Council provided a rink with boards and nets.

For a faculty coach they recruited the boy's gym teacher. Now they had another problem because Mr. Peter Zanna did not know how to skate. However with this addition, they had an official St. Louis Park High School team for the 1946-47 school year.

The team played to a record of 10 wins, two losses and one tie. This included two wins over Robinsdale and a win over Wayzata. These were the original Lake Conference schools. In spite of their record, they were not invited to the second state tournament. This was an oversight because the tournament organizers did not know the team existed.

The next year the team started with some experience, some new players, and a goal of getting to the State tournament. The first games were hard fought losses to Minneapolis high school teams. The season got better with the emergence of

Jimmie Mattson. When he showed for practice the first year he did not know how to skate. With his remarkable quickness and intense desire he developed into a great goal tender.

The goal of getting into the State tournament was accomplished, but had very little to do with the season record. There were no other eligible teams in the Lake Conference, so St.

Louis Park was seeded into the tournament. It would be the first time they had skated indoors and had real uniforms.

They did not play well in the tournament. They played Warroad in their first game and were beaten 10 to 0. Nevertheless, Jimmie Mattson set a record for saves that still stands. They also lost the consolation game to St. Paul Harding, again with a score of 10 to 0.

From the beginning, interest grew. Other Lake Conference schools took up hockey. Good coaching developed, and arenas were built.

The information for this story was taken from an article written by Rex Pickett for "Lets Play Hockey," published in a hockey newspaper. Rex was one of the original "shinny" kids.

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Please send your check and the 2006 membership/renewal to:

The St. Louis Park Historical Society
3700 Monterey Drive
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

This and That

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An article in the Fall 2005 Re-Echo outlined the attempts to

collect the money lent to St. Louis Park High School students by Herb Leffler. These attempts have been successful in collecting over \$3000.00 with more being paid on installments. The money collected will be used for scholarships for current students.

Happy days for St. Louis Park. On March 2nd, Palm's Bakery reopened. Get you buns in there again.

Have you renewed your membership?

Who We Are

The St. Louis Park Historical Society was founded in 1971 to record and preserve the history of St. Louis Park. The archives of the Society are located in the Depot at Jorvig Park and at the Lenox Community Center. The Lenox site is open on Monday and Thursday from 10:00 AM until 12:00 PM. A more convenient visit can be arranged by calling the Society or any of the listed Trustees.

The St. Louis Park Historical Society's mailing address is at the Rec. Center building at:

3700 Monterey Drive
St. Louis Park, MN 55416.

To call us phone 952-934-2550. Leave a message and someone will call back. If your need is urgent, call one of the Trustees.

Jeanne Andersen maintains a website time line with a great deal of information on St. Louis Park. It is currently accessible through www.jeanneandersen.com. The Re-Echo is written and distributed by Bob Reiss. Bob Reiss also distributes the St. Louis Park history book "Something in the Water."

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