

# **Dr. Frank Hayden**

The Development of the Special Olympics



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April 4, 2008

Dr. Frank Hayden was an extraordinary professor who changed the course of sport history and the course of life for many individuals. As an individual with a mental disability during the 1950's and 1960's, the concept of a fitness program was a foreign thought. However, due to Dr. Hayden's determination and commitment to children with mental handicaps, the Special Olympics were developed.

During the early 1960's, Dr. Hayden, began to test children with mental handicaps. At the time, it was assumed that handicapped children were physically unfit due to their mental handicap, although Dr. Hayden proved this to be incorrect. By means of a control group, Dr. Hayden studied the effects of an intense fitness program. The results showed that when given the opportunity to exercise, mentally challenged persons could become physically fit as well as improve their social and emotional skills. This newfound information caught the attention of the Kennedy Foundation in Washington, DC through Mrs. Eunice Kennedy Shriver, who assisted in the development and support of the foundations of the Special Olympics.

The Special Olympics are sport competitions for those with mental disabilities, used to improve their physical, mental, and social proficiency. It contains the Provincial Games held every two years, and the International Games held every four years. The first games were held at Soldier's Field, Chicago in 1969, featuring athletes from Canada and United States. Now the Games host athletes from one hundred and twenty countries around the world.

Research from the Toronto Star Archives illustrates the automatic growth and excitement of the Special Olympics. On Thursday, June 3, 1971, (Appendix A) Jim Kernaghan wrote an article describing the involvement of famous athletes. The author mentions some returning volunteers, such as George Armstrong of the Toronto Maple Leafs, Bill White of the Chicago Black Hawks, Dave Dryden of the Buffalo Sabres, and many more. Even Elaine Tanner, 1969 Canadian's swimmer, stayed at the last Games for the entire day to hand out medals to the winners. The Canadian Olympics for the Mentally Retarded began on June 9 and ran for three days with most events at the CNE, University of Toronto's Benson Building, and the closing ceremonies were held at Ontario Place.

Another article from the Toronto Star archives, written by Allan Ryan, on Thursday, June 10, 1971 (Appendix B) was a great account of the affect that the Special

Olympics had on the children as well as the volunteers involved. Author Allan Ryan discussed the 'Little Stanley Cup' champions, being the winners of the floor hockey tournament at the 'Canadian Special Olympics for Retarded Children' held at the Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto, Ontario. Special Olympic teams came from Canada, as well as the United States, with the name and colours of their local NHL team. Brad Park, coach of the New York Ranger squad, said "That's one thing, they sure are great competitors and they sure hate to lose." One incident described at the Gardens, occurred when Brian O'Keefe, defenseman of the Pittsburgh Penguins squad, quit for no apparent reason after the second period. Frank Hayden, director of Physical Education and Recreation at Washington's Kennedy Foundation, said, "It is not that Brian had become emotional or upset, but that he actually lost interest in playing any longer." Frank Hayden was also quoted to say, "Floor hockey is a good team game for these kids because they can pick up enough skills in one session to start playing the game. And the team is important because it's a chance for him to relate to a group – something he doesn't often get. Also, it does something for a boy's ego, whether he's retarded or not, to come to the bench knowing he's been in there doing something...just feeling a few bruises is important."

On Friday, March 14, 2008, I spoke with Dr. Frank Hayden regarding his journey with the development of the Special Olympics. The following information is a summary of the exciting life and journey of Dr. Hayden.

In the early 1960's, Dr. Frank Hayden's profession was as a Physical Education professor at the University of Toronto. During his time there, he received research grants which allowed him to test modes of physical fitness for mentally retarded children (as they were known during that era). Next, Dr. Hayden moved to the University of Western to continue to teach, as well as maintain his research at the Universities of Western and Toronto. One particular study, which Dr. Hayden completed, involved ten to eleven thousand children from random schools, between the ages of eight to eighteen. He studied the effects that physical activity had on the children, whether the children were mentally handicapped or healthy. His results showed that improved fitness is possible and very beneficial for all children. In the year 1967, Canada celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. As a centennial project for the national celebration, Dr. Hayden presented a proposal in Ottawa, for the 1967 National Games at the CNE for swimming, track, and floor hockey, as well as the Centennial Fitness Awards, which are now known as the 'Canada Fitness

Awards'. Dr. Hayden's goal was to have two years to create the local games in support of the development of fitness programs for the mentally challenged.

The value of the National Games from Dr. Hayden's perspective was not the actual once a year publicized games, but the motivation to involve children in physical fitness. During the era of the 1960's, it was a common assumption that if someone was mentally challenged then they were unfit as a result of the handicap. Although, as shown through Dr. Hayden's studies, that assumption was incorrect, suggesting that, if programs were created for the mentally handicapped, then it would improve their fitness levels. The challenge was how to properly harness a sports program for the mentally handicapped in such a way that it would be a mass operation with motivation and much volunteer work. The obstacle was to formulate the idea in society's minds, since everyone thought he was crazy for his efforts. Unfortunately, doctors working with mentally handicapped people were not supportive of Dr. Hayden's sports proposal. During the 1960's, the primary focus was on the development of institutions and healthcare availability for the mentally challenged, rather than considering a sports program to be of assistance. As a result, Dr. Hayden continued to work on his research and teach at university.

A short time after, Dr. Hayden received an unexpected phone call from Washington, which was the phone call that changed the course of his sports movement. The call came from someone working on behalf of the Kennedy Foundation. The Kennedy Foundation provides support to those working with the development of improvement for the mentally challenged. Apparently, Mrs. Shriver and her colleagues had been reading Dr. Hayden's research and were very interested in his work. They asked Dr. Hayden to travel down to Washington to talk about his work and thoughts of his proposal. Thus, before travelling out to Washington, he sent them more information such as his 'National Mental Retardation Games' proposal. This included his budget, schedule, rules, and more. The Kennedy Foundation were very pleased with his proposal and agreed to provide funding and assistance to develop the program, provided that Dr. Hayden live in Washington to work on the project. Although, Dr. Hayden was still a professor and was unable to move to Washington to work on the project at this time in his life.

However, a little while later, Dr. Hayden traveled to Washington to continue to discuss progress in the development and remained there for approximately seven years.

In the fall of 1967, he received another unexpected call from someone in Chicago who spoke about a handicapped girl who wanted to run in a race. This was a great start, although Dr. Hayden had larger plans, he wanted more than just one race. And so, the program began to advance at the National level, contrary to his original thoughts of starting at the local level. Shortly after, he received a grant to run regional games, then state programs, area programs, and lastly local games. Dr. Hayden said it was comical that it developed in the complete opposite pattern of his original plan, but he was excited about the growth.

By 1969, there were seven organized regional games. Canada's first national games involved swimming, track and field at the CNE, as well as floor hockey at the Maple Leaf Gardens, in Toronto, ON. Although the first Games that year were held at Soldier's Field in Chicago. Dr. Hayden had hoped for a full squad to come out to Chicago from Toronto, but they only received a floor hockey team. The team played against Chicago resulting in a 6-6 tie. The Toronto floor hockey team was assisted by Mr. Harry Foster, a businessman and sports announcer whose voice was heard across Canada as the first to master the play-by-play announcing. Mr. Foster also created his own business, still existent today, known as the Foster Advertising, and his own charity organization known as the Harry E. Foster Foundation, which is a great assistance to the development of the Special Olympics. Once in Chicago, Mr. Foster turned to Dr. Hayden and said "Frank, this is wonderful, we should have this in Canada." So Dr. Hayden received another grant for Mr. Foster so that he may continue the development in Canada, particularly Toronto.

I asked Dr. Hayden how he felt that day in 1969, when he saw all the hard work and dedication that he, along with others, worked towards. Dr. Hayden said, "I was delighted to see that it was happening." Dr. Hayden continued to discuss how even though it began in the United States, it was exciting to see it grow internationally, and it was good to open doors. Dr. Hayden continued to run directors' conferences to teach others rule, formats, and the organization of the program.

In Toronto, Harry Foster was primarily interested in the actual participation of the games, whereas Dr. Hayden was more concerned with the everyday training and development of the children. People in the area were becoming a little discouraged about having games every two years with these games not meaning anything, and so they didn't

want to offer time, money, and support, but this was due to the fact that the general public still did not fully understand the underlying purpose of the Special Olympic Games. Now the Special Olympics are a host to over 3 million athletes, those are the ones to consider, not just the ones attending the actual games.

To avoid losing growth and acknowledgement, the games are held every two years to maintain interest. In 1968 and 1970 they were held in Chicago. At the 1970 games there was only a floor hockey team from Toronto, but there was a team of 6 athletes from France, which was exciting to see the beginnings of international attendance. In the 1972 Los Angeles games, Canada did not attend due to finances and an underdeveloped program, but there was a team from France once again.

In 1972, Dr. Hayden returned to the University of Western to continue teaching. The growth of the Special Olympics continued to grow on the International front. The foundation of this growth stands on the fact that most often the games are held at a university. A University is a prime location due to the vast facilities offered, such as housing, fields, gymnasiums, and pools. As a result, many foreign students attending the university in the United States become interested in the program and bring the idea back to their home land. As well, many volunteers would go to work in the Peace Corps, where they would bring the idea to the developing nations that they travelled to.

In the early 1980's, Dr. Hayden was invited to a conference in Washington to discuss the program development. Also attending the conference were twelve to fourteen countries, from Europe and South America, whom showed up without being invited, to learn more about the program. These countries were very new to the idea and thought that it was beyond their facilities and place in society. They wanted a separate program to meet their needs, so they requested to speak with Mrs. Shriver, from the Kennedy Foundation. They requested that one person be appointed from the head administration to help build up new programs started in Europe. Mrs. Shriver agreed that it was a good idea and they would just need to find the right person for the job. Dr. Hayden commented that he walked around the parking lot with Mrs. Shriver for a few hours following the meeting to discuss who would go. Mrs. Shriver asked Dr. Hayden if he would go, but he was still teaching at the time, and he offered to go for half of his time on sabbatical to assist. But sure enough, the half of a semester on sabbatical turned into three and half years. These years were spent working with McMaster University in Hamilton and the Washington

International Development of the Special Olympics Incorporated. Within these three and half years, Mrs. Shriver and Dr. Hayden were faced with an obstacle of the program name being the 'Special Olympics'. Apparently, according to Dr. Hayden, the Olympic Committee wanted them to change the name of their program because the Olympics had already received full ownership of the name and they did not want the public to confuse the two games. But the Special Olympics organization did not want to change the name because then they would have to start all over again with recognition and finances, as they were already 'operating on a shoestring' (as quoted by Dr. Hayden). So Mrs. Shriver and Dr. Hayden entered a meeting with the Olympic board to discuss the title issue, and walked out as class C or D members of the Olympic Committee, with permission to maintain the title of 'Special Olympics'. Thus, Dr. Hayden continued to work 25% at McMaster University, 25% in Washington, and the remaining 50% of this time was spent traveling around Europe developing sport and fitness programs for the mentally handicapped.

Dr. Hayden was very excited to speak about the growth of the games. By 1983, there were over 50 countries represented. One of the main differences seen in the growth was of the opening ceremonies. In 1968, he had to move people around in the crowd to make it appear in the newspapers that there were more spectators present than there actually were, whereas by 1983, there were approximately 75,000 people in the stadium.

In 1984, Dr. Hayden returned to Hamilton and continued to teach at McMaster University. Before his sabbatical he was director of Physical Education at McMaster for three years, so he mentioned that it was very different returning with fewer responsibilities. However by 1988, he was called once more by the Special Olympics Committee. Years earlier he had begun work in the Asian Pacific, particularly China. Almost every other area now had an established regional office and administrator, except China. Dr. Hayden's successor worked further with China and now required someone to work as the regional manager. Dr. Hayden said the timing was ironic because it coincided with his early retirement plans. So he prepared to work with the Chinese program, but then he was sent to Europe instead and remained in Paris, France for the following three years, working with the International Development. After the walls came down around Russia, he handed the organization to European leaders, and returned to Hamilton where he remains to this day.

Currently, Dr. Hayden works part-time for the Canadian Special Olympics. As well, he served as a citizen judge for two terms in Toronto, Niagara Falls, Kitchener, and Hamilton. He comments that he has no remaining connections with the staff at the Toronto location, but he still maintains constant communication with the Ontario Committee working with promotions for the upcoming spring games in Durham, Ontario. He has completed promotional work with local celebrity John Tavaris from the Oshawa Generals, a hockey team in the Ontario Hockey League, as well as with CTV host, Ken Shaw.

“Let me win, But if I cannot win, Let me be brave in the attempt.” (The Special Olympics athlete’s oath). Dr. Frank Hayden and those with whom he worked with were definitely brave individuals who worked together to succeed. They won the struggle to develop a fitness and sports program for those with a mental handicap, so that these children are also given the opportunity to participate in athletic competition and grow as individuals.

It was a great joy and encouragement to hear Dr. Hayden’s story. What an amazing journey and struggle to see the result of a dream, a dream that now improves the life of millions of children as well as the millions of spectators who see the happiness of those children, as they accomplish their own goals.



Article written by Jim Kernaghan



—Star photo by Bob Olsen

**THRILL OF A LIFETIME:** Youngster wheels around Maple Leafs' George Armstrong and gets set for shot on goal guarded by former Toronto netminding great, Johnny Bower. They're taking part in

workout for team, coached by Armstrong, which will be participating in floor hockey tournament, just one of many events scheduled during Canadian **Special Olympics** for Mentally Retarded from June 9-11.

## Special Olympics cry for involvement

By JIM KERNAGHAN

Involvement obviously is the name of the game, for hard-bitten hockey stars, for crowd-shaken figure skaters—even for cynical reporters. The Canadian Special Olympics for the Mentally Retarded made its first Toronto stop two years ago and now, in its first renewal, you see the same faces everywhere.

The **Special Olympics** 20 June 9-11. You might say that National Hockey League players are a rugged lot. Consider the returnees. George Armstrong of Maple Leafs; Ken Hodge and Ed Westfall of Boston Bruins; Dave Dryden of Buffalo Sabres; Bill White, Chicago Black Hawks; Gary Bergman, Detroit Red Wings; Bryan Watson, Pittsburgh Penguins.

They're back for their very special reasons, none of which even the most jaded of us can knock.

And, there are newcomers. Pierre Bouchard (Montreal); Noel Price (Los Angeles); Tony Featherstone (California Golden Seals); Fred Barrett (Minnesota); Brad Park (New York); Brut Selby (St. Louis) and Orland Kurienbach (Vancouver).

"You'd be amazed at how they get involved," said Bob Little, executive assistant of the Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded.

"Dryden has done a great job getting the kids together and Watson, who is tremendously involved, is the same.

"We all know about George Armstrong and the meaning the kids have to

him. You always get somewhat cynical about the feelings of major professional stars. I've had some real eye-openers."

One of those came last time around, which was in 1969 Elaine Tanner, Canada's swimmer par excellence at the time was on hand.

"She ended up handing out medals all day—nobody asked her to—she just wanted to," said Little.

The Canadian Olympics for the Mentally Retarded begins June 9 and runs through three days.

The floor hockey kids get going June 9, leading off some 1,600 mentally retarded youngsters from around Canada and the United States.

The following day, a parade which organizers say will rival anything in Toronto, gets underway at Canadian National Exhibition Stadium to kick off the track and field events.

There is swimming, too. University of Toronto's Benson Building, both June 10 and 11, is the site for that.

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau will drop the first

puck in the floor hockey tournament.

A number of interested parties will participate in the clinics set aside for the CNE. Tennis, golf, tumbling, badminton, gymnastics, soccer and football demonstrations will be shown Friday, June 10.

Windup of the whole affair will be at Ontario Place, following the sports clinics.

The mass march-past of the 1,600 kids and marching bands—free to the public—could be the highlight of the three days.

## European Cup stays in Neth

LONDON (CP) — Ajax Amsterdam became the second Dutch club to win the European Cup in two years when it outclassed Greek

soccer final at Wembley Stadium last night.

With a goal in each half, Ajax roared to a 2-0 victory to succeed Feyenoord of

only four minutes. Dick Van Dijk headed the Dutch side into the lead.

It was not until three minutes from the end that Ajax

## Appendix B:

Toronto Star Archives.

Thursday, June 10, 1971.

Article written by Allan

Ryan



—Star photo by Ron Bull

ACTION IS HOT AND HEAVY as New York Rangers storm Philadelphia Flyers' goal during floor hockey at Maple Leaf Gardens yesterday. Rangers, unfortunately,

were double losers in event at Canadian Special Olympics for retarded children. Games are played across width of floor at Gardens. NHL clubs sponsor teams.

# Canadiens considered team to beat even in a floor hockey tournament

By ALLAN RYAN

There were mumbblings in the corridors of Maple Leaf Gardens yesterday about how Canadiens looked like a solid bet to repeat as Little Stanley Cup champions, but also how you certainly couldn't discount Philadelphia nor take your eye off Penguins.

Those three sides remained undefeated after two rounds of the floor hockey competition of the Canadian Special Olympics for retarded children.

Actually, St. Louis and Vancouver have unbeaten entries as well but by virtue of early morning qualifying matches, they were considered by a panel of judges to be of lesser ability.

They were, therefore, grouped with four other teams (California, Buffalo, Boston and Chicago) to contend for the Clarence Campbell Cup. The Campbell Cup and the Little Stanley are equal in significance.

One of the first impressions one gets, taking in any of the three or four matches simultaneously in progress, is that each and everyone of the 230 players is taking this round-robin very seriously.

The players, aged 15 through 17, are resplendent in official colors of the 14 NHL teams.

"That's one thing," offered Brad Park, honorary coach of the New York Ranger squad, "they sure are great competitors and they sure hate to lose."

Rangers, unfortunately, lost twice yesterday—6-3 to Montreal and 9-1 to Philadelphia, which lost to Montreal in the Little Stanley final during the last special Olympics here in 1969.

Rangers also lost their goalie, Randy Ousley, for a few minutes when he decid-

ed he had had enough after tiny Flyer Nelson Artis pounced on a loose puck and deked him for a 6-1 Philly lead.

Randy slammed his helmet to the floor and bounded into the red seats, where he sat until teammate Jose Serrano assured him the defence would indeed tighten up and that he, personally, would see Randy received some protection around the net.

Pittsburgh, which defeated Detroit, 6-5, and Minnesota, 7-4, also was faced with a walkout—that of star defenceman Brian O'Keefe, who, after two solid periods against Detroit, quit for no apparent reason.

Frank Hayden, formerly of St. Catharines but now director of Physical Education and Recreation at Washington's Kennedy Foundation, explained "It's not that Brian had become emotional or upset, but that he actually lost interest in playing any longer."

Later, as Penguins took their turn in the buffet line-up in the Hot Stove Lounge, a Pittsburgh coach, his arm around Brian, told Hayden how Brian had returned for the Minnesota game and had made a key block to save the afternoon. Brian beamed.

"Now, that kid feels like a million," Hayden pointed out.

"Floor hockey is a good team game for these kids because they can pick up enough skills in one session to start playing the game. And the team is important because it's a chance for him to relate to a group—something he doesn't often get."

"Also," Hayden added, "it does something for a boy's ego, whether he's retarded or not, to come to the bench knowing he's been in there doing something... just

feeling a few bruises is important."

This is the second Canadian Special Olympics. It runs through Friday with another 1,500 children taking part in a track and field meet at the CNE beginning at 10 a.m. today.

Floor hockey runs all day at the Gardens with the two finals beginning at 7.30 p.m. Floor hockey results:

### CAMPBELL CUP

#### First Round

ST. LOUIS 22 (Bruce Logan 7, Jeff Steadman 2, Gary Weaver 2, Mike Watermeyer 2, George Flowers, Mike Posey); CALIFORNIA 1 (Jerry Hood); VANCOUVER 11 (Randy Johnson 6, Ray Pascoe 2, Danny Thorsen 2, Irvine Tate), BOSTON 2 (David Wallace, MacDonald); CHICAGO 16 (Edward McIsaac 4, Edward Green 3, William Blazey, Bernard Clark, Tommy Green), BUFFALO 8 (Victor Peluso 6, Robert Head 2).

#### Second Round

VANCOUVER 8 (Johnson 4, Kenny Shaw 2, Doug Weaver, Nathan Riley), BUFFALO 6, Shutout: Ray Driscoll; BOSTON 11 (MacDonald 3, Gordon Esles 2, Thomas Qualey 2, Lloyd Turin, Joseph Kochanski, Norman Dean), CALIFORNIA 2 (Jesse Capitulo 2).

ST. LOUIS 14 (Steadman 5, Watermeyer 3, Cremer 2, Bruce Logan 2, Al Simpson, Flowers), CHICAGO 6, Shutout: Larry Gobe.

### LITTLE STANLEY CUP

#### First Round

TORONTO 8 (Doug Connors 2, Bob Wapp 2, Mike LeFranc, Frank Clippstone, Gord Billinger, Victor DeMull), MINNESOTA 7 (Rick Amundson 2, Jimmie Spearman 2, Richard Grouman 2, Walter Cox); PITTSBURGH 4 (Jim Gennare 2, Paul Hardy 2, Gary Cutler, Wayne Wilson), DETROIT 5 (Donald Wolfe 4, William Viner); PHILADELPHIA 16 (Thomas Blackwell 2, Daniel Ross 2, Nathaniel Riviera 2, Michael Hickman 2, Jerome Carpenter 2, Garrett Hart 2, Robert Stevenson, Oscar Davis, Joseph Watts).

Garv Williams: LOS ANGELES 1 (John Moore); MONTREAL 8 (Michel Deschamps 5, Gaston Richer 2, Gilles Bolyon); NEW YORK 3 (Alfred West 2, Willie May).

### Second Round

PITTSBURGH 7 (Cutler 3, Howard Goudy 2, Keith Thomas 2, Hardy); MINNESOTA 4 (Spearman 2, Amundson 2, Doug Anderson); PHILADELPHIA 9 (Blackwell 3, William Shupe, Williams, Watts, Nelson, Arndt); NEW YORK 1 (Walter Moore).

MONTREAL 16 (Deschamps 7, Richer 6, Ronald Caver 2, Pierre Brisset, Daniel D'Aragon, Bolyon); TORONTO 1 (John Armstrong); LOS ANGELES 10 (Tom Cutler 5, Bob Friso 3, Art Medina, Moore); DETROIT 4 (Joss Johnson 2, Henry Edwards 2, W. L. Potts, Vign).

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