

# Spotlight shines on the past at sports celebrity dinner

BY RANDY PASCAL  
FOR NORTHERNLIFE.CA

Even within the realm of Hall of Famers, there are differences. That was apparent last week as the House of Kin welcomed the "Group of 10" — the latest inductees to join the Sudbury Sports Hall of Fame.

While the average Sudburian is well-acquainted with the fairly recent hockey exploits of former Montreal Canadiens forward Brian Savage, the same could not likely be said for 22-year NHL veteran Doug Mohns.

And while the intensely competitive presence of basketball coaches Mitch Lalonde and Mary Collinson remain a common site at the "Lancerdome," it's been more than 15 years since storied local paddler Joe Derochie last called the Nickel City home — at least, in terms of residing here.

With that in mind, we thought it would be appropriate to spread the Hall of Fame spotlight on a trio of worthy recipients whose names might not be at the forefront in the minds of the thousands of residents who follow local sports.

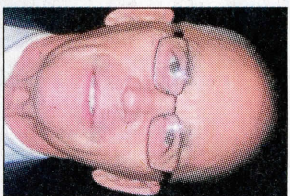
## Matti Jutila

Born in Finland in 1932, the still-fit former world class wrestler moved to Canada in 1956, earning a berth in the 1964 Olympic Games in Tokyo. Competing in the featherweight classification, Jutila wrestled in both the freestyle and Greco-Roman groupings.

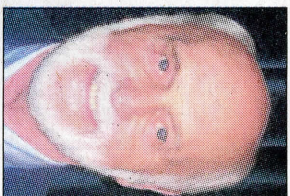
To this day, the silver medalist — at both the 1962 Commonwealth Games and 1963 Pan-American Games — still takes pride in his ability to match up with virtually all opponents.

"I competed with many of the world's best wrestlers and beat them, most of the time," he said with a smile, following the evening's festivities at the Caruso Club last Wednesday.

If not for the harsh reality that challenged many Europeans moving to Canada in the 1950s, Jutila might well have achieved even more notoriety within his particular sporting field. "When I came to Canada, I was in the best condition of my life... but I was here five years before I got Canadian citizenship and could represent the country."



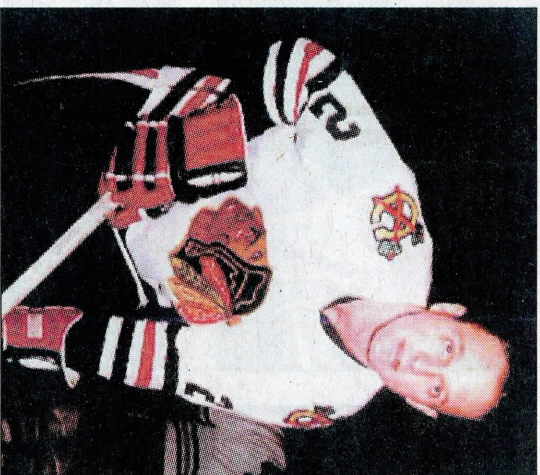
JUTILA



MOHNS



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Doug Mohns, NHL veteran.

SUPPLIED

A member of the Sport Academy of Finland in his youth, Jutila remained active in virtually all sports, although wrestling, track and field, swimming, skiing and soccer were among the more prominent.

A construction worker and carpenter through his first few years in Sudbury, Jutila transferred his passion for sports to his new home, when he joined the Sampo Athletic Club. Jutila remains a proud Sudburian to this day, still calling northern Ontario home.

## Doug Mohns

While most will credit the great Bobby Orr with revolutionizing the role of the NHL defenceman, Capreol native Doug Mohns was

certainly no slouch when it came to creating offence from the back end.

According to the affable veteran of 22 NHL seasons, jumping into the play seemed only natural. "I started out playing left wing... when I started playing defense, a little of that forward in me came into play."

"I always loved to carry the puck and I was always a fast skater anyways — that was one of my fortes," noted Mohns. "That's what kept me in the league for 22 years, I can guarantee that."

In fact, Mohns reached the 20-goal plateau on no less than five separate occasions, suiting up in seven NHL all-star games between 1954 and 1972. Born and raised in Capreol, Mohns first donned the skates at the age of two, but he was into his teens before a hockey career started to become a possibility.

"I started playing with the (Sudbury) juvenile team, and I won the most valuable player award. The Bruins saw me play, so that's when it all started." Mohns went on to capture a pair of Memorial Cups as a member of the Barrie Flyers before hooking up with fellow Sudburian Jerry Topazzini in Boston.

After retiring from the NHL, Mohns remained in New England, ascending to VP of Human Resources with the New England Rehabilitation Hospital before retiring just outside of Boston several years ago.

## Joe Derochie

It was the golden age of water sports in Sudbury, and Joe Derochie was one of several who benefitted greatly.

"In the forties and fifties, the Sudbury Canoe Club had a tremendous group of

### The Sudbury Sports Hall of Fame 2009 Inductees: (Name, sport, category)

Mary Collinson — basketball, builder	Bev McIver — hockey, builder
Joe Derochie — paddling, player	Doug Mohns — hockey, player
Lucio Fabris — badminton, player	Roy Pella — track and field, player
Matti Jutila — wrestling, player	Brian Savage — hockey, player
Mitch Lalonde — basketball, builder	Ron Wallingford — long distance runner, builder

paddlers, Don Stringer being the leader."

From 1956 to 1961, Joe Derochie racked up a collection of five gold medals, two silvers and two bronze medals in single blade competition while attending successive Canadian championships.

In 1958, Derochie was a member of the national team, which competed at the World Championships in Prague.

He reached the pinnacle of his sport just a couple of years later, as a member of the contingent that represented Canada at the Olympic Games in Rome.

Such was the strength of local paddling that no less than four of the six Canadian team members resided and trained in Sudbury. Of course, it was a much different time for elite athletes back then, Derochie explained.

"In our era, we were our coaches, our own psychological advisors — we didn't have all the good stuff the youngsters have today." A fairly natural athlete with wide-ranging interest, Derochie acknowledged simply following in the family footsteps when it came to his introduction to canoeing.

"My brother Dave, was already a pretty successful paddler and he suggested I try it. I was successful at it, and of course when it becomes easy for you, you want to keep achieving and you have a heck of a lot of fun at it."

"Back in the 50s, you only had a select number of sports you could do. Today kids have a great variety of activities they can participate in," added Derochie.

Currently residing in Vernon, B.C., Derochie remains an avid cross-country and downhill ski enthusiast, as well as a mountain bike rider.