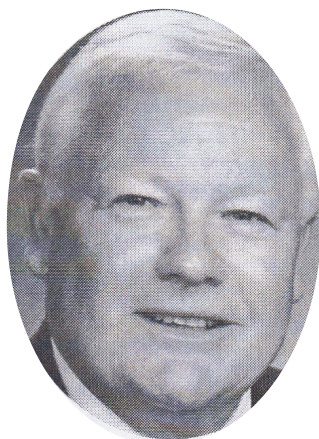


## Jim McLean



Nearly 50 years after he made his last jump shot and hit his final forehand winner, Jim McLean is still very active – and still excelling – in sports.

Only now the 71-year-old McLean competes in Senior Olympics near his homes in North Weymouth, Mass., and in Naples, Fla., where he and his wife Helen hibernate to every year from December to March.

In fact, in 2005 McLean won three gold medals at the Collier County Senior Olympics in Florida, and later that year captured gold in four more events in the South of Boston Senior Games in Quincy, Mass. The following year, he won seven gold medals in Quincy.

But for anyone who saw Jim McLean play sports as a youngster, his recent success shouldn't come as a surprise.

Born in The Bronx, N.Y., McLean moved to Norwalk with his family and grew up in the Harbor View section of South Norwalk. He attended St. Joseph School and got his first taste of athletic competition on the St. Joe's basketball team where he played center for coach Joe DeFlorio and helped the team win the Catholic School League title. McLean and most of his teammates on that squad went on to play for the VFW Post 603 team in the Norwalk City League and captured another championship in 1953.

After his graduation from St. Joseph's in '52, McLean enrolled at Fairfield Prep where he continued his basketball career. But after one season,

he transferred to Norwalk High School and it was there that Jim McLean really made his mark on the hardwood.

He made an immediate impact on the NHS basketball program, setting a new single-game scoring record as a junior with 39 points, and he didn't even play the second half. That school record would stand for nine years before a player named Calvin Murphy came along and broke it as a sophomore in 1963-64.

"He didn't just break the record," McLean says, "he shattered it."

But it was McLean's senior year and the 1956 season was really historic. Connie Carpenter, who had played with McLean at St. Joe's, also transferred from Prep to Norwalk the year before. Jim Romanello was another St. Joseph basketball alum, and that trio, together with fellow seniors Earl Stabell and Jack Pape and junior Dave Spears, helped lead NHS to its best basketball season ever.

The Green and White compiled a sparking record of 17-3 in that 1955-56 season, which included a 14-game winning streak and a record 112 points in one game. What's more, Norwalk finished a perfect 12-0 in the County Conference to capture its first league championship.

McLean, one of the co-captains, certainly had a big part in the team's success that winter, averaging 14 points a game to finish third in scoring behind only Romanello (16.0) and Spears (15.8).

The sharp-shooting McLean scored in double figures in 15 of the team's 20-games, recording 17 or more points eight times and 20 or more three times, including a season-high 29 against Greenwich. Norwalk made it all the way to the state quarterfinals that season before getting upset 60-57 at the New Haven Arena by a Fairfield Prep team that included many of McLean's former teammates.

But basketball wasn't the only sport McLean excelled in. He was also co-captain of the NHS tennis team and earned All-County honors after winning the No. 2 singles crown and reaching the state semifinals.

McLean also played soccer and ran cross country while in high school, and was even part of a volleyball team coach Tom Scarso put together that won a two-day tournament to capture the County Conference title.

The versatile McLean was also an accomplished swimmer in the summer. In 1953 he won the City of Norwalk Junior Championship at Calf Pasture, while he also won several swimming and tennis titles at the Harbor View Beach Club.

Following his graduation from Norwalk High, McLean went to Providence College where he was captain of the Friars' New England-ranked tennis team and also played basketball as a freshman. In fact, he teamed up with future hall of famer Lenny Wilkens to form the starting backcourt on the 1956-57 Providence freshmen basketball team that finished 27-0. McLean's teammates at Providence also included Hartford native Johnny Egan, another future NBA player, and Ray Flynn, who would become mayor of Boston.

A former Student Council treasurer while at Norwalk High, McLean went on to enjoy a successful career in real estate development. He served as Chief Operating Officer at Lucasfilm, Ltd., in San Rafael, Calif., and a year later became vice president of retail leasing and marketing at Universal Studios in Hollywood where he played a key role in the development of the "City Walk" project.

He also spearheaded similar projects in Dallas and Nashville before eventually making his way back to the northeast. His long list of accomplishments include his work on the famous Quincy Market in Boston, where he oversaw the conversion of three abandoned warehouses into what today is a bustling festival marketplace.

Now retired, McLean is still an active member of over 50 organizations and boards, and has served as president of the Providence College National Alumni Association, on the board of directors for the Springfield and Quincy Rotary clubs and Chamber of Commerce, and a member of the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame marketing committee.

McLean and his wife Helen have five children and 13 grandchildren.