

# History of Basketball in Mount Pearl

---

Basketball was first played in Mount Pearl at Mary Queen of the World school at the grammar school level and at the high school level. As Joe Wadden states; “There was basketball at Mary Queen of the World when I coached at St. Kevin's in the Goulds. We used to play Mary Queen of the World; that would be the only high school in Mount Pearl at the time, if I am not mistaken.” The expansion of basketball in Mount Pearl started with the development of both the Mount Pearl Senior High school (established in 1986) and O'Donel high school (established in 1985). With the construction of these facilities came the development of sports programs for the youth of Mount Pearl; basketball being one of them; “That's when it started really, was with the high schools. I don't think there was ever a Mount Pearl League. I can't remember there being one anyway”.

Joe Wadden also mentions two teams that really set the standard for high school basketball. He speaks of one team, a Team Honour Roll team, with such praise; “The Mount Pearl Senior High team from 1992-1995...They were phenomenal. Four or five of them played basketball in the states at college. As a matter of fact, Tim Beckett went to the states and played high school in Rhode Island as well as college ball. When the Mount Pearl Senior High team used to play us, if we got within 50 points that was good... and I'm not kidding That was a victory for us. The 2000 team at O'Donel was also a great team. They won 120 games in a row. The Mount Pearl Senior Team was phenomenal. John Coacker, Steve Beckett, Tim Beckett, the Sooleys...just phenomenal.” The Mount Pearl Minor Basketball Association manages and coordinates the local school teams now. Founded in 1997 The Mount Pearl Minor Basketball Association (MPMBA) provides a structured basketball program for the youth of Mount Pearl with the opportunity to develop Basketball skills in a recreational and fun environment. This program focuses on girls and boys from the ages of 5-15

The Mount Pearl Minor Basketball Association was founded on the following principles;

- To introduce the sport of basketball to school age children in a non-competitive environment, and to also offer competitive leagues to interested participants.
- To Maintain a league based on fair play and equal opportunity for all players, regardless of ability
- To encourage enjoyment of the game in a fun environment
- To provide an opportunity in a recreational and/or competitive program that is designed to assist in a development of basketball skills.

These principals are achieved through the combination of activities the program provides: games, practices, social events, clinics and competitions. It is the aim of the MPMBA that the children participating in the program will gain a positive experience from each aspect of the program while still having fun. The program consists of a 20 week session running from September to April. There is a practice and a game each week, with a banquet at the end of the session. The MPMBA offers their basketball program in four schools in the city of Mount Pearl; Newtown Elementary, St. Peter's Primary, Morris Academy, and Mount Pearl Intermediate. The MPMBA is expecting over 400 children to participate under the guidance of 60 volunteer coaches and managers. The Association has the support of the Mount Pearl Department of Parks and Recreation and is a member of the Mount Pearl Sport Alliance.

Sources:

The MPMBA website: <http://www.mountpearlbasketball.com>

Joe Wadden, an active member of the basketball community