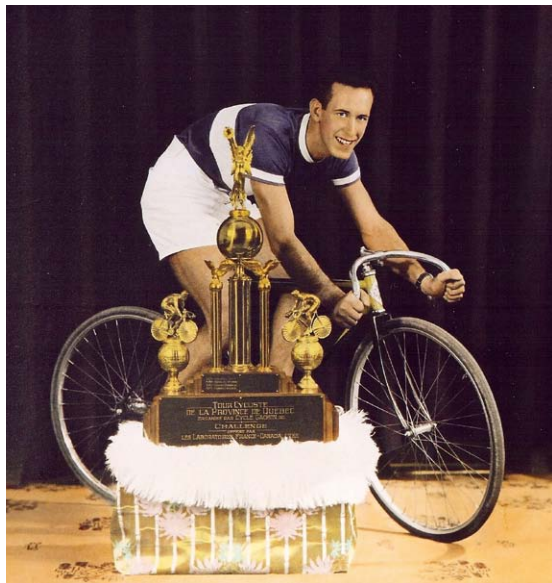


The Suit Still Fits

Featuring Lorne “Ace” Atkinson

Athlete Article



Lorne Atkinson spent a lifetime involved with bicycles both as a competitive cyclist at the international level, and as a tireless builder of the sport he loves. He voluntarily trained and coached more cyclists in BC than any other person involved in the sport, many of whom have gone on to national and international success.

Born in south Vancouver in 1921, Lorne developed an interest in cycling through his father who had been a professional bike racer in Scotland, and had continued his involvement with the sport in B. C. as a coach. Lorne, or “Ace” as the local papers dubbed him, took up racing and soon established himself as a top-ranked cyclist.

From 1948 to 1954, Lorne represented Canada at several international competitions. He competed at the 1948 Olympic Games in London in the 1,000 Metre Time Trial, 1,000 Metre Team Pursuit, and 200 Kilometre Road Race. As well as competing at the 1950 British Empire Games, Lorne was also the Canadian cycling team’s manager and coach. He placed 5th in the 10-mile track championship – Canada’s best cycling performance.

Lorne served on the committee that established the China Creek cycling track for the 1954 British Empire Games. He helped organize the cycling events, was team captain, and placed 4th in the 10-mile track event; once again Canada’s best showing. Lorne went on to coach the 1967 Pan Am Games cycle track team, and the B. C. cycle track team at the 1982 Canadian Championships. Through the years he has coached and trained countless cyclists, many of whom represented Canada at the national and international level.

During a difficult period in the development of the sport: from the late 1950’s through the early 1960’s, Lorne worked hard to ensure the survival of competitive cycling in B. C. He organized races at the China Creek bowl, as well as a number of popular events including the Penticton to Vancouver Three-Day Bicycle Race, The Kelowna to Vancouver Bicycle Road Race, and the annual 25 Mile Handicap Road Race. From 1978 to 1988 Lorne organized and ran weekly Time Trials for those competing in the Veterans and Newcomers categories.

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In 1962, Lorne became President of the Vancouver Bicycle Club, and was made a Life Member two years later. He also served as Director of the bicycle Association of B. C. in 1981. In 1972, Lorne helped save the China Creek track from the bulldozer, and from 1973 to 1976, he was a member of the C-Trac Society, which operated China Creek Bowl.

Legendary in cycling circles, Lorne constantly made himself available to cyclists of all levels, giving advice and training tips. In addition, he took it upon himself to research and document the history of cycling in BC. Lorne was an active member of the Vancouver Velo Vets and could be found at his bicycle store “Ace Cycles” on Broadway tinkering with bikes.