

## Howard "Doc" Gordon

**Over a quarter century of service to the Stoneham Public Schools - Teacher, Coach, Mentor and Innovator**



For nearly a quarter century Howard R. "Doc" Gordon was an inspirational presence leading Spartan athletes as head coach of three SHS teams: football, baseball and most prominently, ice hockey.

A native of Ipswich, he attended Mass. State College, now UMass Amherst. Gordon was a coach and biology teacher at Walpole High School before arriving at Stoneham High School in 1928.

Doc was head football coach until 1938 and led the baseball squad through the 1949 season. He was also one of the founders of the Stoneham High School Winter Carnival and the Blue and White SHS Athletic Booster Club.

Although a man of considerable accomplishment through his influence on many aspects of life at SHS and to the Stoneham community, it is unquestionably his passion for ice hockey that he will be most remembered.

Gordon guided Stoneham High School teams in the Greater Boston Interscholastic (GBI) league, the country's first high school hockey circuit, arguably the nation's best during his tenure from 1928-1952. His Spartan squads were perennial contenders and captured league titles in 1936, 1937, 1945 and 1952. The 1936 and 1937 teams were led by inaugural SHS Hall of Fame forward Cliff Thompson while SHS Hall of Fame goalie Don Whiston backstopped the 1945 squad.

A consummate student of the game, Gordon is acknowledged as the coach that brought the five-man offensive attack to ice hockey. Prior to Gordon in the 1930's defensemen would only make an occasional rush into the offensive zone. Doc revolutionized the game by bringing his defensemen up to the offensive blue line thus creating a fundamental alignment of the game that has evolved to the present day.

Gordon spent his later years in Florida and returned for the dedication of the Stoneham Arena in his honor in 1974. He was elected to the Mass. State High School Coaches Hall of Fame in 1973.