

Michael O'Toole

1970 - Hockey



As a sophomore, Mike O'Toole immediately assumed a position of prominence on the Stoneham High hockey team. Coach Dick Burns quickly realized that the defenseman's considerable all-around skills merited a regular position on the defense of a veteran SHS sextet. The head coach and his experienced players gained confidence anytime the sophomore took the ice. As the season progressed, Mike's ice time increased as did the trust of his coach regardless of the situation.

Mike's primary focus was always taking care of business in the defensive zone, primarily clearing out opposition in front of the net and neutralizing the most dangerous offensive players. Performing these tasks, he was unmatched in his overall ability.

Prior to the 1968-69 campaign, much was expected of Mike O'Toole due to his varsity debut. The Stoneham Independent reported, "He will be a standout at defense". Much will depend on him. (O'Toole) resembles Greg Wright (SHS Hall of Fame '05) in his skating and playing methods and he could well develop into another outstanding blue liner." The prediction of stardom proved accurate. Mike's overall game, passing, puck handling, and shooting skills progressed significantly. As a junior, O'Toole played a leading role on a team that finished (11-3-1) and advanced to the state tournament.

The return of a core group of veteran players his senior season was a reason for optimism. With earlier knee problems, Mike suffered another knee injury in a preseason jamboree. He refused to let the injury keep him off the ice. Playing on two bad knees, he continued to maintain a high level of play. The senior captain led his team (a 14-3-1 record) to the first Middlesex League Championship in Stoneham history. The Spartans, a team built on defense, led by their "stay-at-home" foundation Michael O'Toole, and goaltending of Sheridan and Geragosian, allowed less than two goals a game. Mike garnered numerous individual accolades including Boston Globe All-Scholastic and Middlesex all-star recognition.

Mike is a former Stoneham policeman and currently resides in Woodsville, New Hampshire.