

Canadian Wrestling Champion

Constable W.L. McIntyre

*Researched and written by John Burchill,
Vice President, Winnipeg Police Museum and Historical Society*

In our salute to the Canada Summer Games, set to kick off in Winnipeg on July 28, 2017, the Winnipeg Police Association and the Winnipeg Police Museum look back at one of its members who was the Canadian wrestling champion in two divisions from 1927-1930, a gold medal winner in the inaugural Commonwealth Games, and who had the chance to represent Canada at the 1928 Olympics.



In 1920 the Winnipeg City Police Athletic Association, the forerunner to the Winnipeg Police Association, was born. As police officers were not allowed to form a trade union the Association supported its members in other ways focusing on athletics, amusements and pastimes for its members.

In its early years, the Association promoted many sporting events and even became one of the provinces' main sponsors of high-profile wrestling competitions. However, they not only organized the events, but they also produced several outstanding wrestlers including William Lloyd (W.L.) McIntyre.

During his career, McIntyre won the Manitoba and Canadian wrestling championships in 1927, 1928, 1929 and 1930 in the light-heavyweight class. He was also the Manitoba heavyweight champion in 1927, 1928 and 1929. In 1930 he won the light-heavyweight class at the inaugural Commonwealth Games (then called the British Empire Games) held in Hamilton.

At the peak of his success, McIntyre was selected to represent Manitoba at the 1928 Canadian Olympic trials in Montreal. He advanced to the finals and beat George Rumble, who had represented Canada at the 1924 Olympics, to win first place in the light-heavyweight division. However, he was not selected to travel with the Canadian team to Amsterdam for the Olympics due to the budget. No one represented Canada in the light-heavyweight division that year.

Instead, the Canadian Olympic committee sent Earl McCready to present Canada in the heavyweight division. McCready was unopposed at the Olympic trials in Montreal. He had previously won the Canadian heavyweight championships in 1926 and 1927 as well as the NCAA title while attending Oklahoma A&M in 1928. At the NCAA finals, he won by a fall in 19 seconds, still a record for an NCAA Tournament. As such McCready was a likely



contender to win an Olympic medal, even though he went unopposed at the Olympic trials.

There was general disappointment that McIntyre was not selected. However, the position of the Olympic Boxing and Wrestling Selection Committee was they only wanted to send people they felt could beat the best of the other nations with the budget they had. It is unknown why they felt McIntyre could not beat the best the other nations had to offer in his weight class considering his victory over George Rumble, however, three of the five wrestlers they did send came home with medals – still the best showing by a Canadian wrestling team in Olympic history.

In the end, McCready did not win a medal at the 1928 Olympics, tying for 6th place. As McIntyre was also the Manitoba Heavyweight champion in 1928 it would have been an interesting match if he had contended for the heavyweight spot in Montreal considering McCready went unopposed. Nevertheless, McCready, who went on to have a 28-year career as a professional wrestler, would have outweighed McIntyre by a good 40 pounds and McIntyre's odds were better placed at winning the light-heavyweight class.

Notwithstanding his obvious disappointment, McIntyre came back in 1929 and 1930 to win the Canadian light-heavyweight championships and in 1930 he won the gold medal at the inaugural British Empire Games (now called the Commonwealth Games), defeating Edgar Bacon who had previously represented Great Britain at the 1908, 1912, 1920 and 1924 Olympics in both the Middleweight and Welterweight divisions.

It is unfortunate that McIntyre defeated two previous Olympic contenders during his career but never got the chance to go to the Olympics himself due to budget pressures that perhaps foreshadowed the Great Depression.

McIntyre was already considered for the P.E.I Hall of Fame, perhaps a fitting candidate for the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame as well?

William Lloyd (W.L.). McIntyre was born in Prince Edward Island in 1900. He joined the Winnipeg Police Force on August 1, 1922, and retired on December 31, 1956, after 34 years of service. He died on August 3, 1975, at the age of 75.

Picture of W.L. McIntyre taken after the Empire Games appeared in the September 1930 edition of the Canadian Police Bulletin



Cst. McIntyre's Canadian and Empire Games medals courtesy of his son Vince McIntyre of Prince Edward Island

