



PRESS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MINNESOTA'S JOHN MAYASICH NAMED WCHA 1950s PLAYER OF THE DECADE PRESENTED BY ANDERSON'S PURE MAPLE SYRUP

Iron Range legend left a mark on the WCHA that still resonates today

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. – Dec. 10, 2020 – No player in college hockey history dominated quite like Minnesota's **John Mayasich**, who has been named the Western Collegiate Hockey Association's Player of the Decade for the 1950s.

As a Golden Gopher, Mayasich was a three-time All-American and the WCHA's only three-time league scoring champion. The Eveleth, Minn., native's 144 career goals still stand as the league record 65 years after his final collegiate game. His 298 career points rank fourth in WCHA annals and top Minnesota's career scoring list. He remains the first – and only – player in the history of the star-studded Golden Gopher program to have his jersey retired.

In 111 career games as a collegian, Mayasich averaged 2.68 points, 1.29 goals and 1.38 assists per game. Those numbers would produce 91 points, 44 goals and 47 assists in today's 34-game NCAA regular season.

After leading Eveleth High School to four-straight state championships as a prep, Mayasich's hockey talents were already widely known when he arrived at the University of Minnesota as a freshman in 1951. The legend only grew during his time on campus.

Mayasich was Minnesota's leading scorer in each of his four years with the program and still holds the Minnesota record for career goals while his 154 career assists stood as the school record until 1992 and currently rank 11th all-time in the WCHA.

The Iron Ranger is also in the Minnesota record books for most goals and most points in a single game. As a senior captain, Mayasich scored an amazing six goals against Winnipeg on Dec. 10, 1954 in a 14-1 Minnesota victory and tallied eight points against Michigan a little more than a month later on Jan. 14, 1955 in a 10-4 Gopher win. Those numbers rank tied for third and tied for seventh, respectively, in WCHA history.

Mayasich earned All-America and All-WCHA honors four times during his career at Minnesota – earning first team All-America honors in 1953 and 1954 and first team All-WCHA honors in 1953, 1954 and 1955. He led the Gophers to back-to-back trips to the NCAA national championship game in the school's first two appearances in the national tournament in 1953 and 1954.

Following his collegiate career, Mayasich was a member of two U.S. Olympic teams as well as several national squads. In 1956, he joined fellow Gophers **Wendell Anderson, Gene Campbell, Dick Dougherty, Dick Meredith, Jack Petroske** and Gopher head coach **John Mariucci** in traveling to the Winter Olympics in Cortina, Italy where their U.S. team surprised the world by taking a silver medal. Against Canada, which had won seven of the eight gold medals up to that point, Mayasich tallied a hat trick in an unbelievable 4-1 U.S. victory.

Mayasich was also one of three Gophers on the United States Olympic "Team of Destiny" in 1960 along with Meredith and fellow WCHA 1950 All-Decade Team member goaltender **Jack McCartan**.

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While Canada, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Sweden were the top four teams heading into the Olympics, the U.S. squad topped all four countries en route to its first Olympic gold medal. The Squaw Valley, Calif., Games saw the Americans win all seven of their games, which included handing the mighty Soviets their first Olympic loss.

Mayasich's eight national team appearances are the most in U.S. history. He tops all players with WCHA ties in goals [14] and points scored [22] as an Olympian is tied for the lead in career Olympic assists among former league players with eight.

To cap off his many accolades, Mayasich was inducted in the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame in 1976 and was named to the All-Time West Team for the 100th Anniversary of college hockey in 1997. In 2002, he was named to the WCHA's Top 50 Players in 50 Years list.

Mayasich is the first of seven Player of the Decade honorees that will be announced by the WCHA during the 2020-21 season. The WCHA is also honoring an outstanding coach and selecting an All-Decade Team for each decade as the league celebrates 70 Years of Excellence.

For more on the 1950s and the rest of the WCHA's history, visit wcha.com.

Other Top Players of the 1950s

John Matchefts, F, Michigan [1951-53]: Three-time NCAA champion with the Wolverines [1951, 1952, 1953] ... NCAA Tournament MOP in 1953 ... All-WCHA in 1952-53 ... Scored 131 points on 57 goals and 74 assists. **Ken Yackel, D, Minnesota [1952-56]:** Three-time All-American [First Team in 1954 and 1955, Second Team in 1956] ... Three-time All-WCHA First Team selection [1954, 1955, 1956] ... Inducted into the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame in 1986 ... Scored 148 points on 70 goals and 78 assists in 112 career games. **Ben Cherski, F, North Dakota [1951-55]:** Two-time All-American and two-time All-WCHA [1952-53/1953-54] ... Inducted into the University of North Dakota Hall of Fame in 1978 ... Still holds the WCHA record for goals by a freshman with 38 in 1951-52. **Bill "Red" Hay, Colorado College [1956-58]:** Two-time All-American and All-WCHA ... Led Colorado College to the 1957 NCAA title ... Led the WCHA in scoring with 48 points [16g-32a] in 1957-58.

Celebrating 70 Years of Excellence

The WCHA will celebrate 70 Years of Excellence throughout the 2020-21 season. The league will name all-decade teams and players and coaches of the decade for each of its seven decades. The teams and individuals will be selected by a panel of current and former WCHA staffers and media members who have or are currently covering the WCHA. More than 200 nominees were submitted for consideration by the 21 schools that have called the WCHA home since 1951.

About Anderson's Pure Maple Syrup

Anderson's Maple Syrup Inc. is proud to continue its 90-year tradition of producing, processing, and packaging consistently high-quality pure maple syrup, organic pure maple syrup, and other maple products. For more information, visit Anderson's Pure Maple Syrup.

The Western Collegiate Hockey Association, among the most historic, tradition-rich and successful conferences in all of collegiate athletics, is marking its 69th season of men's competition in 2020-21. The 10-team NCAA Division I conference consists of the University of Alabama in Huntsville [Chargers], the University of Alaska Anchorage [Seawolves], the University of Alaska [Nanooks], Bemidji State University [Beavers], Bowling Green State University [Falcons], Ferris State University [Bulldogs], Lake Superior State University [Lakers], Michigan Technological University [Huskies], Minnesota State University [Mavericks] and Northern Michigan University [Wildcats]. For more information, visit wcha.com.

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