

Ev Staples (deceased)

Ev Staples is a very remarkable man. With very limited formal coaching experience, he established a junior badminton club in the small mining town of Creighton Mines in Northern Ontario, and developed a very successful junior enterprise.

For many years, Ev would transport a bus load of his protégés to southern Ontario to participate in the Ontario Junior Championships. And participate they did! They won over 40 titles distributed in the three age groups, and often dominated the championships.

It is important to note that Ev Staples funded the entire program himself including the racquets and shuttles at the club, and the travel and accommodation expenses of the juniors participating in the tournaments.

Unfortunately for Ev, it was a one way street in that the championships were always held in the south, so that his juniors always had to travel. This did not seem to please them but the annual cost to Ev was great.

Several of Ev's senior players were selected to represent Ontario at the National Junior Championships and won national awards. Two players stand out: Lucio Fabris and Ed Hreljac. Lucio won three national junior titles. Later in 1976, he and Creighton Mines partner, Lillian Cozzarini, won the Ontario Senior Mixed Doubles title. Also, Canadian National Coach, John Gilbert, was a protégée of Ev.

The influence of Ev Staples in the Creighton Mines community went far beyond the training of junior badminton champions. Indeed he taught sportsmanship and good citizenship. Not only did he "take kids off the streets" but also he laid down the rules for membership in the club. They were tough and there was zero tolerance. He was a taskmaster, but objective and very fair.

As an example of his objectivity and fairness, on one occasion he was called upon to cast the deciding vote between his own daughter and another Ontario player to be selected to the provincial team. Without hesitation, he chose the other player on the basis of his appraisal of their achievements.

Ev Staples is a fine example and model for all coaches in the development of juniors and fine young citizens. He was honoured for his achievements by the Province of Ontario with an Ontario Special Achievement Award in 1971