



## **CLIFF LUMSDON**

1931 – 1991

Cliff Lumsdon was one of the world's greatest long distance swimmers. Growing up in New Toronto, he joined the Lakeshore Swim Club at the age of six and was coached by legendary swim coach Gus Ryder. He turned professional at age sixteen but later regretted his decision because losing his amateur status disqualified him from competing at the Summer Olympics in 1948.

Lumsdon's natural talent and hard work paid off in 1949, when Lumsdon claimed his first men's world marathon swimming championship. He bested a field of 70 swimmers in the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) 15-mile swim with a time of 7 hours and 55 minutes. That same year, he was honoured with the Lou Marsh Trophy as Canada's Athlete of the Year. He went on to win 4 more marathons at the CNE, including a 32-mile race along the Lake Ontario waterfront where he was the only one of 29 starters to complete the full course. Lumsdon won the Atlantic City 26-mile event in 1956 and became the second man to conquer the Juan de Fuca Strait in British Columbia.

Post-retirement, he continued to be involved in swimming. He coached his daughter, Kim Lumsdon, for her swim across Lake Ontario and assisted a number of long-distance swimmers including Cindy Nicholas, one of the world's top marathon swimmers.

Lumsdon received many honours. He was inducted into the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame in 1976, and the Ontario Sports Hall of Fame and the Ontario Aquatic Hall of Fame in 1993. In 2013, he was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame. Solo Swims of Ontario created an award in his name for marathon swimming. He was made a Member of the Order of Canada in 1982. In 1988, Cliff Lumsdon Park, located along the lakefront of New Toronto, was named in his honour.

*Inducted into the Etobicoke Hall of Fame in 1986*