

## Sportsman of the Year: Peter O'Kane

The Boston Globe (Boston, MA)

December 24, 2000

Paul Harber, Globe Staff

With the Year 2000 nearly history, it's time for the eighth annual Harbies, our awards for outstanding sports performers of the past 12 months. Here are the first 50 of 100 for the new millennium.

1. SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR: Peter O'Kane of Randolph. For so many years he has supported the Eastern Football League Randolph Oilers. It isn't exactly a money-making operation, but it is an affair for the heart. Although the Oilers haven't won the EFL title since 1990, O'Kane continues to field a team that Randolph can be proud to call its own.

2. SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR: Paula Sullivan, athletic director at Stonehill College. Not only has she put together an outstanding Division 2 athletic program, but she did it the right way: without compromising academics. The school's athletes have the best academic record in the Northeast-10 Conference.

3. COLLEGE TEAM OF THE YEAR: Bridgewater State's baseball team, which advanced to the NCAA tournament again this year. Coach Rick Smith has continually put together one of the top teams in the nation, winning more than 70 percent of his games year in and year out.

4. HIGH SCHOOL TEAM OF THE YEAR: Norwood High School's 11-0 football team, one of the highest scoring teams in the state. It put more than 400 points on the board.

5. YOUTH SPORTS TEAM OF THE YEAR: The Easton Wildcats Jr. Midget Pop Warner team. Composed of boys 12 and 13, Easton won the state championship, finishing the regular season 8-0, then beating Sandwich, Foxborough, Walpole, and Worcester to annex the Massachusetts crown.

6. BEST BROTHER-SISTER ACT (on hardwood): To the Currys of Braintree. Jared Curry is a standout for the Holy Cross men's basketball team in Worcester, while his sister, Ali Curry, is the leader of Bryant College's women's team in Smithfield, R.I. Both teams are headed to successful seasons.

7. BEST BROTHER-SISTER ACT (on ice): To the Metcalfs of Pembroke. Peter Metcalf was a mainstay defenseman who skated for the University of Maine's national championship team last season and this year advanced to the NCAA Frozen Four. His sister, Erine Metcalf, skated for Northeastern University's national championship women's team.

8. GREAT DEBUT AWARD: To Bentley College freshman Bradford Warner of Hingham. The former South Shore Christian Academy swimmer broke a school and pool record in the 400-yard individual medley event with a 4:37.12 victory. The time was two full seconds faster than Andrew Sirpis's 1999 record of 4:39.27.

9. SPORTS TOWN OF THE YEAR: To the City of Quincy. The high schools might not have the best records, but the city offers so much for its youth and adults and had the guts to take a gamble with Quarry Hills, which will be a state-of-the-art recreational facility.

10. SHE'LL BE MISSED AWARD (college division): To Dee Dee Enabenter, the former award-winning softball coach at Bridgewater State, who has taken her talents to San Jose State in California. It will be another century before someone matches her records in women's softball in the region.

11. HE WILL BE MISSED AWARD: Brendan O'Neill, retiring Brockton High swim coach, not only has put together winning programs at the high school, but has been a wonderful role model for many youngsters growing up in the city. His dedication will be missed.

12. BEST PUBLICATION AWARD: To the Massachusetts High School Football Prospect Information Book, a 346-page compilation of the top football players in the state. It's compiled by Whitman-Hanson High School teacher Richard Davis and his students. Proceeds for this venture go to charity.

13. BEST SHOT AWARD: Abington trap shooter Nathan Elliot has been selected for the men's All-American trapshooting team. At the Grand American tournament, Elliot finished among the best in the country.

14. YOU'RE NEVER TOO LATE AWARD: To Carol Lanza of Plymouth, who won the 50-and-over age category at the International Union Duathlon World Championships in North Carolina. The competition consisted of a 10-K race, a 40-K bike ride and a 5-K run. She earned All-America honors.

15. BEST FATHER-DAUGHTER ACT: Bob and Katie Norton of Randolph. Katie was the best woman athlete ever to play for Suffolk University. The former Fontbonne star was a top volleyball, basketball and softball player. Her father, a successful coach at the high school level, took the reins of the women's softball team as coach.

16. GOLFER OF THE YEAR WHO CAN'T COMPETE: To Fordie Pitts of Scituate, who has been embroiled in a year-long controversy with the United States Golf Association over the group's determination that he should be considered a professional. Here's hoping the two sides come to an amicable resolution.

17. BRAINS AS WELL AS BRAWN AWARD: To Stonehill College of Easton, named the inaugural recipient of the Northeast-10 Conference's Academic Achievement Award, based on the grade point average of all student athletes relative to the average for the entire student body.

18. OH BROTHER AWARD: Steve and Geoffrey Dancey of Stoughton. Steve was an outstanding runner and captain of the Boston University track team. Younger brother, Geoffrey Dancey, has followed his example. He served as captain and was a standout for the Clark University soccer team.

19. FIELD HOCKEY TEAM OF THE YEAR (private school division): Thayer Academy of Braintree, which won the New England Class B Field Hockey Championship. Seeded sixth in the tournament, Thayer won three games by scores of 2-1 to annex the title. It is the first field hockey championship in the school's history.

20. FIELD HOCKEY TEAM OF THE YEAR (public school division): Although Walpole did not win its fourth consecutive state championship, the Porkers were unbeaten in Bay State League competition for the sixth season in a row. It has produced more college players than any other program in New England.

21. VROOM VROOM AWARD: To Steve Ribbe of Kingston. The stock car racer ranks fourth in the Pro Stock points standings at Thompson (Conn.) Speedway, historically one of the most competitive tracks in New England.
22. GOLD RECORD SETTER AWARD: To Katie Kenney of Norwood. As a sophomore at Middlebury College, Kenney led her team to a two-year record of 46-14. In both seasons, Middlebury advanced to the semifinals of the ECAC tournament. She is a setter and she has set school records for the most assists in a match and a season.
23. TENNIS PROMOTER OF THE YEAR: To Steve Gallagher of Duxbury, director of tennis at the Weymouth Club. He won the US Tennis Association's national Community Service Award for his entry-level tennis programs for youngsters.
24. BEST PRO PROSPECT AWARD: To Mark Rosen of Randolph, who is one of the best pitching prospects in New England. He is currently attending Salisbury School in Connecticut, where he is playing football and hockey in addition to baseball, which is his primary sport. Few youngsters his age can throw a 90-mile-an-hour fastball.
25. BEST PLACE TO DRAG RACE: On Wood Road in Braintree. No, not on Wood Road, but at the F1 go-cart park, where there are computerized indoor tracks.
26. FIELD HOCKEY PLAYER OF THE YEAR: To Dino Rizzo of Walpole, a junior forward for the University of Maryland field hockey team. She is a member of the US under-21 national team and played a big part in their impressive performance at the Junior Pan Am Games, winning a silver medal and a berth in the Junior World Cup.
27. SCHOOL WITH BEST TEAM OF GOALIES: Assumption College of Worcester has two great goalies from the region. Kristyn Bonnyman of Mansfield earned field hockey all-star honors and Heather McIntosh of Weymouth who tends the net for the soccer team, earned NE-10 plaudits as well. Both are among the league leaders.
28. DEFENSE NEVER RESTS (Football Division): To Tim Corr of Duxbury, who had a great season for the Westfield State College. The senior defensive end is one of the team captains and twice this season has been named to the New England Football Conference's weekly honor roll for his defensive contributions.
29. BEST SUMMER EVENING WITH FRIENDS: To the South Quincy Bocce Club, who get together every Wednesday night for their competitive bocce games. It isn't who wins or loses but the friendships players develop during these summer evenings.
30. STAND TALL AGAINST GIANTS AWARD: To the Middleborough Cobras, who have gone head-to-head battling the Marlborough Shamrocks, the New York Yankees of the Eastern Football League. They are one of the few teams to give the Shamrocks a battle every time they kick off.
31. FIELD HOCKEY FAMILY AWARD: To the McDavitt family of Walpole. From mom, Ellen, to aunt, Lauren Zysk, to daughters Tina (coach at Holy Cross), Kate (star at Harvard) and Jenn (All-Star at Walpole High), and cousin Kendra Zysk (All-Star at Walpole High), it's Field Hockey's First Family.
32. NEVER REFUSE A CHALLENGE AWARD: To members of the American Amputee Hockey Association team who practice at the Uline Rink in Milton. The players, many from the South Weekly region, consider their situations not a disability but a challenge.
33. ALL IN THE FAMILY AWARD: To the Burke family of Holbrook, who had five boys playing soccer at Holbrook High School this season. The Burke brothers are Mark, 17, Mike, 16, Ryan, 15, David, 13, and Pete, 12. They've played a lot of backyard soccer together, but this is the first time they played on the same field.

34. ASSISTED LIVING AWARD: To Anne Marie Sheridan of Canton, an All-American field hockey player at Bentley College. Sheridan set the all-time NCAA Division 2 single-season record for assists this season, dishing out 21 as the Falcons advanced to the national championship final for the second year in a row.
35. LIVING A DREAM AWARD: To Nicole Girard of Abington. She always enjoyed football, but, as a woman, never got a chance to play. Until this fall, when she started playing for the New England Storm of the Women's Professional Football league. Girard plays offensive tackle and is one of the Twin Towers.
36. LIFE ON THE RUN AWARD: To coach Karen Boen and the members of the Stonehill cross-country team, who just three years ago was in last place of the Northeast-10 Conference. This year they went all the way to the New England Division 2 championship and competed in the NCAA Championship in California.
37. GUTS AWARD: To the West Bridgewater High School football team. Outnumbered and outmatched, and finishing the season winless, this team played every game as if it was for the Division 6 Super Bowl. Their never-say-die attitude was championship caliber.
38. NEVER GIVE UP AWARD: To skater Ian Macadam of Braintree, who finished .01 of a percentage point away from competing in the US Figure Skating Championships at the Fleet Center next month. He works out seven days a week in his bid to someday be one of the best figure skaters in the world.
39. WORLD IS HIS CUP: To Tom Noone of Abington and his 13-year-old mount Fresco. This October in Washington they won the American dressage championship. They work out daily at Longmeadow Farm in Scituate, practicing for the World Cup, which will be held next April in Brazil.
40. EAST IS EAST AWARD: To the East Bridgewater High School basketball program. Coach Steve Fernandez has turned around this program. In the last eight years, EB has qualified for five state tournaments, a feat not accomplished since the 1960s. Last year the Vikings made it to the quarterfinals for the first time in 40 years.
41. GOOD GUY AWARD: To Guy Enoch, coach of the Hingham High School girls' soccer team, which won the Patriot League title for the first time since 1984. He is an inspiring coach whose dedication and passion to the sport has allowed players to tap their individual potential while teaching the importance of playing as a team.
42. COMEBACK AWARD: To Brandeis University men's soccer, coached by Mike Coven of Duxbury. Coming off his first losing season in 28 years, Coven's Judges won 11 of last 14 games to earn a berth in the ECAC Division 3 post-season tournament. Mark Stagno of Hanover led the team in scoring with 6 goals and 17 points.
43. BEST FOOT FORWARD AWARD: To Chris Bagley of Holbrook, the star soccer player for Saint Anselm College. He was the Northeast-10 Conference Player of the Year and set all sorts of scoring records. He is the all-time leading scorer, and he will be playing his senior season next year.
44. BLOODLINES AWARD: To Todd Themistocles of Hanover. His brother, Tom, left all sorts of records when he finished his football career at Wesleyan College. Younger brother Todd finished his career in fine style. His best game was a 37-13 victory over Trinity, when he caught 11 passes for 147 yards and three touchdowns.
45. LINEMAN IN BLUE HAWAII AWARD: To Marc Colombo of Bridgewater, Mike Cook of Walpole, and Paul Zukauskas of Weymouth. Because of their play on Boston College's offensive line, the Eagles are playing in the Aloha Bowl in Hawaii this holiday season. They deserve the vacation. Life is hard in the trenches.

46. HE WILL BE MISSED AWARD: To the late Chet Downie of Plymouth. For more than a half a century, Mr. Downie was a friend of the youth of Plymouth. He guided many youngsters, helping them through the difficult transition to adulthood. If you grew up in Plymouth, you knew Chet Downie.

47. BEST FOOT FORWARD AWARD: To Joe LeMar of Brockton, who competed in the 2000 Paralympics in Sydney. LeMar earned the right by finishing first in the men's 400 meter and second in the 800 meter run at the Paralympic Trials in June. The Paralympics are for physically challenged athletes.

48. SWIMS LIKE A FISH AWARD: To Katie McCann of Walpole. She was a three-time state champion in the 200-meter individual medley and last summer qualified for the Olympic Trials with a New England record breaking 2:21.38 time in the IM. She'll be swimming at Boston College next year on an athletic scholarship.

49. TRIPLE THREAT AWARD: To Shaun Fitzgibbon of Mansfield, who as captain was the team leader for the Babson men's soccer team. He was also their leading scorer as well as a team tutor, helping his teammates with their academics. Fitzgibbon has been named to Babson's Who's Who in America's Colleges for his achievements.

50. BEST CARR OF THE YEAR AWARD: To Chris Carr of Hanover. The Bridgewater State receiver scored three TDs, lifting the Bears to 27- 24 victory over Salve Regina in the New England Football Conference championship game. He had 13 touchdown grabs this season. He was also the place kicker, finishing with 117 points.