

# Lura Hoit

Title: Coach & Contributor to Women's Athletics

Year: 1940-1968



Lura Hoit athlete, coach, teacher and mentor was an early pioneer in the evolution of female athletes and their role in the world of competitive sports. She was a student at Hampden Academy, a graduate of Eastern State Normal School in Castine and of Sargent College at Boston University in the late 1920's. She later received a master's degree from the University of Maine. Numerous newspaper articles extolled her talent as an extraordinary basketball star for Hampden Academy and heaped praise on her when she scored fifty points in two games. She continued this skill during her undergraduate years. She was also the Maine Women's Singles Tennis Champion of 1931-32.

After a 13-year teaching career from Milo to Hampden, Miss Hoit arrived at Brewer High School. She began by teaching girls' and boys' physical education in 1940 as the boys' teacher had been drafted. She won the respect of the boys when she studied different military services and set up obstacles courses for the boys to go through just like soldiers in boot camp.

Miss Hoit was an outstanding coach. She coached Brewer's first Girls' Interscholastic Softball Team to undefeated seasons in 1947, 1948 and 1950! Her softball teams were Penobscot Valley Conference Champions four years in a row from 1947 to 1950. This legacy continued as Brewer remained a contender for the next two decades.

While at Brewer she literally changed the face of how females could participate in sports. When she arrived, basketball was the only sport for girls. In 1942, Miss Hoit set up the Girls Athletic Association at Brewer High School offering intramurals in archery, volleyball, badminton, tennis, gymnastics, bowling,

track and field, hiking and softball. Over her twenty-eight years at BHS, hundreds of girls had athletic experiences that were previously unavailable to them.

The year 1963 was the inauguration of the Olympic Sportsday for Maine's high school girls. The best way to sum up Brewer's impact under the direction of Coach Hoit was the Sportsday of 1968 when 500 girls competed and "Brewer Cleaned Up" while setting multiple records. Honors came in the high jump, hurdles, 440 pursuit relays, the running long jump, the broad jump etc. One of her biggest thrills was to see her student Darleen Ford break the state record for the high jump. Another highlight for Miss Hoit came from her student, Wanda Kirkpatrick, who qualified in the women's track and field for the National Junior Olympics in Knoxville Tenn.

Lura Hoit served as President of the Maine Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance from 1953-54 and was honored by this organization with their Distinguished Service Award in 1968. She was inducted into the Maine Coaches Roll of Honor. At a time when athletics was not valued for girls, she found a way to instill in them the passion for athletic participation. She was on the cusp of change and no doubt planted the idea in many future mothers that both girls and boys had the same desire and skills to be successful athletes. Lura Hoit truly brought outstanding recognition and esteem to Brewer High School and its athletes.

Miss Hoit passed away in January of 1993 at the age of 84.

