

**JACK GATECLIFF, SPORTS JOURNALIST  
(1926-2000)**

In the spring of 1947, St. Catharines native Jack Gatecliff was hired as a sports writer for the St. Catharines Standard. It was his first and only job, and the beginning of a distinguished writing career that spanned six decades. Starting as the number two man in the sports department, Gatecliff began writing a column entitled Across Minor Sports Gate on 9 July 1947. In 1951, the column's heading was changed to Through the Sports Gate and it appeared as a regular feature in the Standard until the summer of 2000.

During his career, Gatecliff covered the ups and downs of the Junior A Teepees, Black Hawks, and Fincups from 1947 to 1977; he also played for the Falcons in the 1944-45 season. In 1955, he was promoted to Sports Editor and stayed on the job until 1991 when he retired. But he didn't stop writing. His column and special feature stories continued until just before his death on 5 September 2000. During his career, Gatecliff received numerous honours, including seventeen Western Ontario Newspaper Association Awards.

The man who loved sports and played with the 1944 Mann Cup champions, the St. Catharines Athletics, was inducted into the Ontario and Canadian Lacrosse Halls of Fame. In 1984, he was named the best American Hockey League writer and in 1990 he entered the St. Catharines Sports Hall of Fame. Five years later, the former St. Catharines Junior 'A' Falcon player was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in the Media Division. Former Standard Managing editor Murray Thompson summed up what many readers thought of Gatecliff: "His writing is perceptive, interesting, honest and kind - just like Jack". "Sports writing was a rare combination of a vocation and avocation rolled into one - a regular weekly cheque for a continuing hobby," said Jack Gatecliff in 1996.

*-Jack Gatecliff biography taken from St. Catharines Museum website*