

2002 Hall of Fame Inductee Gordon R. Cooper – Rifle

Gordon was born on April 1, 1930 in McGill Nevada. He was married to Vonda G. (Larson) Cooper in 1951. They had two children; Gordon Steven Cooper was born in 1957 followed by Shawn Roger Cooper in 1959. His education began at White Pine County High School in Ely, Nevada in 1948. Gordon was later awarded a B.A. Degree at the University of Denver in 1952. He played football and baseball. He was All Conference in football and baseball for 3 years. He was second string All-American in his senior year in football and set an NCAA pass reception record for 106 catches over three years ending in 1952.

In 1952, Gordon was drafted in the 7th round by The Detroit Lions. He played three exhibition games and then was drafted into the U.S. Army. Gordon spent 18 months in Germany, returning to The University of Denver in 1955 to secure his Master's Degree and then on to receive his M.A. Degree in 1956.

In the fall of 1956, he started coaching and teaching at Rifle High School, Rifle, Colorado. He coached football, baseball, and track. During that time, he had one Track State Championship (1963) one Football State Championship (1973) and one tie for Football State Championship (1961), two State Championships in baseball (1981 and 1985). He also coached wrestling for a few years having four individual State Champions. Gordon was voted AA Coach of the Year in baseball (1981, 1984 and 1986.) In 1999 Gordon was inducted into the Colorado High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame and in 1987, Gordon retired from Rifle High School.