

Oilers' Gretzky three-time winner of Lou Marsh award

By Garth Woolsey Toronto Star

The Great One, Wayne Gretzky, yesterday became only the second person to be named a three-time winner of the Lou Marsh Award as Canadian athlete of the year.

The 25-year-old centre, who led Edmonton Oilers to their second consecutive Stanley Cup championship last May, also won the award in 1982 and '83. Figure skater Barbara Ann Scott in the only other triple winner—in 1945, '47 and '48.

Gretzky, who has set 38 National Hock-

ey League records, collects awards the way some people squirrel away stamps.

In the 1984-85 season, No. 99 won the Hart Trophy —“awarded to the player adjudged most valuable to his team” — for the unprecedented sixth time in a row.

The native of Brantford also won the Art Ross Trophy, given to the leading scorer during the regular season, for the fifth consecutive season. He had 208 points on 73 goals and an NHL record 135 assists.

As the Oilers swept to playoff victory with 15 wins in 18 games, Gretzky also

won the Conn Smythe Trophy as most valuable playoff player. During those 18 games, he had 17 goals and 30 assists and tied or set five NHL Records.

With the Oilers in St. Louis for a game against the Blues last night, Gretzky was not taking calls at his hotel. But he did release this statement through the club's public relations office:

“I am very pleased to be singled out as Canada's top athlete, especially when you consider the entire great athlete's who have won before.”

Since the Lou Marsh Trophy, named after the onetime sports editor of The Star, was awarded in 1936, six hockey players have been recipients —Maurice Richard (1957), Bobby Orr (1970), Phil Esposito (1972), Bobby Clarke (1975), Guy Lafleur (1977) and Gretzky.

Any Canadian athlete — male or female, amateur or professional —is eligible to be nominated.

Defenceman Paul Coffey, a teammate of Gretzky's, sprinter Ben Johnson and distance runner Lynn Williams received

honourable mention for their accomplishments in '85. Speedskater Gaetan Boucher won the Marsh in 1984.

Under the chairmanship of Jake Gaudaur, who is also chairman of Canada's Sports Hall of Fame, the selection committee was composed of sports editor Paul Warnick and columnist Milt Dunnell from The Star, sports editor Paul Palango from the Globe and Mail, assistant sports editor Bill Lankhof from the Toronto Sun and Ross Hopkins, sports editor of Canadian Press.