

Yorkton Sports Hall of Fame will induct new members in September

After eight years of inactivity, two teams and five individuals will be inducted into the Yorkton Sports Hall of Fame and Museum (YSHF&M) on Sep. 24. The organization was reactivated and revitalized two years ago, leading to the first inductions since 2014.

The following individuals will join the Yorkton Sports Hall of Fame:

- Ian Gordon: Athlete, hockey
- Susanne Mitchell: Builder, taekwondo
- Vic Kreklewetz: Athlete, hockey (inducted posthumously)
- Larry Renton: Builder, slo-pitch (inducted posthumously)
- Randy Atkinson: Media

The two teams to be inducted are the 1964 Yorkton Collegiate Institute Gridders eight-man high school football team and the 2005-2006 Yorkton Junior A Terriers hockey team.

The inductions will take place at the Gallagher Centre on Saturday, Sep. 24, starting at 5 pm. There will be a reception with appetizers and a no-host bar, followed by the inductions at 6.30 pm. Tickets will go on sale in early August.

The YSHF&M display on the second floor of the Gallagher Centre will also be available for viewing. Showcases contain some of the nearly 300 historic artifacts that have been collected by the organization over the years, and portraits of all previous inductees are on display.

In view of the many community activities expected to resume this fall after the Covid-related hiatus, the YSHF&M board decided to host an early-evening event rather than a formal dinner, board chair Dick DeRyk explained.

“We also know that the teams being inducted may use the occasion for reunions, allowing them more time to get together, in the case of the YCI Gridders after nearly 58 years and for the Terriers after 16 years,” he added.

Potential inductees must be nominated by members of the community, who provided detailed information to the YSHF&M nominations committee, chaired this year by Don Pfeifer. The committee then applied a widely-used and accepted scoring system to evaluate the nominees and determine their eligibility for the Hall of Fame.

Following are highlights of the accomplishments of this year's inductees.

Ian Gordon: Athlete, hockey

- Accomplished career in hockey as a goaltender from minor hockey in Yorkton through to the Western Hockey League and the German Elite league;
- Western Hockey League goalie 1992-95 setting records with Swift Current Broncos while winning the league championship;
- MVP with Swift Current and Saskatoon Blades;
- From 1997 to 2000 played in the American Hockey league;
- From 2000 to 2013 played in the Elite League in Germany, setting many records;
- Goalie coach with Seattle Thunderbirds and presently regional director for goaltending with Hockey Alberta.

Susanne Mitchell: Builder, taekwondo

- One of Canada's top certified international referees for taekwondo;
- From 2005 to present, chair of the Saskatchewan Taekwondo referee committee;
- Refereed in numerous provincial and national competitions across Canada as well as many international competitions throughout the world including the PanAmerican and British Commonwealth Games, World Military Games and Olympic selection tournaments;
- Voted best referee in numerous international competitions throughout the world.

Vic Kreklewetz: Athlete, hockey, inducted posthumously

- An elite hockey player at the junior and senior levels from age 17 until his untimely death at the age of 33;
- Starred in the Saskatchewan Junior League from 1945 to 1950 with the Moose Jaw Warriors and the Flin Flon Bombers;
- From 1951 to 1961 he intermittingly played and coached the Yorkton Senior Terriers while also playing and coaching various teams in the British Elite League in England and Scotland;
- Often the top scorer of his team, he was named by Ice Hockey World to the British allstar team in 1952;
- Played against the national teams from Canada, USSR, Switzerland, Italy and Czechoslovakia;
- Honored by Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, for his role in staging and playing in the Royal Command ice hockey game played at Wembley stadium in December of 1952.

Larry Renton: Builder, slo-pitch, inducted posthumously

- Prime organizer and promoter of the Yorkton Slo-pitch League when it moved from 10 teams to an average of 45 teams and over 1000 players per year in the 1980s;

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- Instrumental in the development, organization and construction of the York Lake Slo-pitch diamonds which in the 1980s made the league the only one in western Canada which operated its own facilities;
- League President from 1979 to 1986 and Secretary-Treasurer thereafter for more than 10 years;
- Instrumental in bringing provincial and western Canada national tournaments to Yorkton;
- Regional representative for slo-pitch on the council of Saskatchewan Sport representing Zone 4;
- Served as the provincial representative on the slo-pitch national association.

Randy Atkinson: Media

- Involved in broadcasting the play-by-play of many sporting competitions locally, provincially, and nationally for 36 years from 1986 to 2022;
- Over those years spent countless hours researching, interviewing and taping athletes and coaches regarding their accomplishments at a local, provincial and national level;
- Contributed significantly to the promotion of sport and sporting personnel in Yorkton and area by serving as master of ceremonies at sporting events over the last 36 years, including acting as MC for most of the Yorkton Sports Hall of Fame and Museum induction ceremonies since the organization's inception in 1994.

1964 Yorkton Collegiate Institute (YCI) Gridders eight-man high school football team: Team, football

- With no minor football programs and no opportunity to participate in club football in Yorkton at the time, this is one of the very few teams that has met the qualifications for the induction of high school teams into the YSHF&M;
- Won the 1964 Eight-Man Provincial High School Football Championship on Nov 14, 1964;
- Went undefeated in all league games and all five provincial play-off games, scoring 309 points while allowing 19 points;
- Coached by Ed Magis.

2005-2006 Yorkton Junior A Terriers: Team, hockey

- Tied for regular season championship in the Saskatchewan Junior A Hockey League;
- Won the Sherwood Division championship;
- Won the Credential Cup provincial championship;
- Won the Anavet Cup as champions of Saskatchewan and Manitoba by defeating the Winnipeg South Blues;
- Participated in the five-team 2006 Royal Bank Cup national junior A championship in Brampton, ON as the prairie representative;
- Won the silver medal after losing the championship game to Burnaby Express.
- Coached by Ed Zawatsky.

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