

Welcome to the 50th Silver Fox Invitational
hosted by Saltfleet DHS & Glendale SS

Jan. 13-14, 2023

Presented by



2020 Silver Fox Champions
Hamilton Cathedral Gaels

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The Office of
MAYOR ANDREA HORWATH
CITY OF HAMILTON

50th Anniversary Silver Fox Invitational
January 13th & 14th, 2023

It gives me great pleasure to welcome all delegates and their families from 16 schools to the City of Hamilton for the 50th Anniversary Silver Fox Invitational.

I would like to extend the City's best wishes to the participants attending this exciting event. Congratulations to all for excelling in basketball and demonstrating great teamwork, which has helped bring you to this tournament.

While you are here, I hope you will make time to travel throughout our great city to take in some of the beautiful natural attractions, events, amazing restaurants and all the amenities Hamilton has to offer.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrea Horwath". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Andrea Horwath
Mayor



Hamilton

71 Main Street West • Hamilton, Ontario • L8P 4Y5

Director's Welcome

On behalf of the 50th Silver Fox Anniversary Committee, I wish to welcome back all participants after a two year absence. We are proud too again be hosting our event which has been a Hamilton Tradition of bringing together some of the finest high school programs from across the province.

It has been a focus of mine since becoming Director to include new programs which have never been a part of our history and this year we welcome A.Y. Jackson C.I. and Georgetown D.H.S. We believe we have once again put together a competitive field and look forward to the competition over 2 days.

At this time I want to announce this will be my last year as Director after having the privilege for the last 30years to carry on the great tradition started by Bob Knuckle, pictured at the bottom of the page. Bob or "Knuck" as we all called him, began the Fox in 1972 out of Sir Wilfred Laurier SS and Sherwood SS with a field of 8 teams, mostly local. He would set the standard for what would be the foundation of having some of the best programs and players compete for the Fox Title. Our history depicts just how successful his vision was and has been for 50 years. Knuck asked me to take over upon his retirement in 1992. At his memorial service which I was honoured to attend, he was described this way by various speakers, brother, husband, father, teacher, grandfather, musician, author, playwright, historian, traveler, conductor, researcher, shit disturber, card shark, outlaw. I know I could never be Knuck in all those areas of life but I could do my best to carry on his vision for the Silver Fox and I told him I would see it to it's 50th if life blessed me to do so. With the loving support of my wife Jane, we made it!!

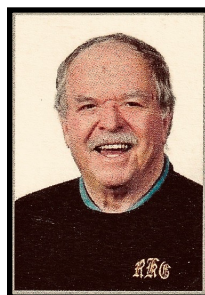
So here we have arrived later than planned but excited to see players, coach's and officials all gathered once again to enjoy this great game. The years under my direction have been challenging, rewarding and memorable. One year we were postponed by a storm storm , first time ever, and rebooked just 3 weeks later. Another year a leaky roof at Glendale had me climbing the backboard structure 15 feet above the floor to hang a tarp to deflect water to the baseline where a student volunteer kept mopping to allow play to resume and finish the event. A year where the Public Board went on a work refusal and so I reached out to the Catholic Boards and we put on the only all catholic Fox ever and for that I again say thanks to those schools and their staff for their support. In 1998 we hosted the largest Fox field with 32 teams which I was almost hung by my committee members, LOL!!!

There is not enough time or space to reflect completely about the last 30 years but I certainly need to say thank you to our many sponsors. From our former title sponsors like Assante Wealth Management under Mr. Don Bridgman to Tim Hortons and Nike Canada and then Teacher's Life, Leschuck/Weisz under former Glendale grad Jim Weisz an now Horizon Financial & Wealth Management under former Glendale grad Mr. Tim Morrison. The Hamilton Spectator has been a part of our event for all 50 years helping to promote and cover the tournament. Without the support of these community sponsors and so many others the Silver Fox would not have attained the reputation it has across the province. Other sponsors who have helped in numerous ways are the Kovljenic Family as sponsors of the Fair Play award in their son Ron's name. The Jim Thomas family, a former dear valuable contributor to the Fox who continue to support our awards, especially the Academic award for a graduating player. There are many others that are former players and long time friends of mine, like Gene Kay my former team mate, former players Dr. Serge Sanovic, Bobby Trajkovic, Branko Miskovic, Mo Kapor, Steve Dumbrell, friends like Tom Lazich, Chedo Sobot, Ron Foxcroft, Grant Korponicki, Joe Amorium and Roxanne of Aran Trohie's who have supplied our awards for 30 years. Last but not least are the post secondary schools like Mohawk College, McMaster University, Brock University, Niagara College and Redeemer University.

Thanks go to all and to those I may have missed I apologize. Certainly my gratitude goes to both the spectators who have come out over the years and to my committee members, a heart felt thanks for years of support.

Jim Weatherbee

1935



2019

Coach Ken Ormerod

1939 - 2000

There is not enough room on one page to cover the life of someone who had such an impact on so many young people during his lifetime.

I will state what was most important to Ken and that was first his family. His love for wife Patsy, son David, daughter Kim along with his parents, these were at the top of the list. He spoke proudly of Patsy's drive and devotion as a wife, mother, teacher and provider. He spoke with joy of David's and Kim's accomplishments as athletes and later as they became teachers, coach's, parents and have the opportunity to impact students for years to come. Ken passed shortly after the birth of his first two grandchildren, Tyler and Maddison but would be so proud of them today and their siblings Nolan and Kennedy, who all have a love for sports and learning.

On my personal note I was blessed to have Ken come into my life first as a teacher at Glendale SS in the 60's. He was my teacher for my first 2 years and then my coach for a memorable year as we would win the Public Board Grade 12 League Championship in 1968-69, the same year his son David was born, our good luck charm he said. His support of selecting me as the youngest member of that team left a lasting impression for a lifetime. I simply fell in love with the game because of him. I never forgot his words of encouragement nor his words that made me tremble, LOL!! I would recall his words and use his guidance as I got into coaching at Glendale years later. I would be fortunate enough to coach against him as he coached David at Scott Park, coach with him in all star games that David was involved in and then spend one year as an assistant at Hill Park along side my dear friend Flavio Bottosso who was also coached by Ken. It was a family affair over the years. I treasure the memories of the road trips, his challenge to me in recalling basketball history which I never beat him at, the talks over a soda about family and I remember his kindness to me during the time when I lost my own father as he made himself available whenever I asked or called.

We honour his memory and his many accomplishments as a coach by naming one of our Flight Championships in his name.

Rest in Peace Coach "O" knowing you are still loved and will not be forgotten.

Jim Weatherbee



Bob Croft

1946 - 2014

I first saw Bob out of curiosity as a young kid in 1965 when I first started playing for my elementary school and my dad took me to see this extraordinary tall boy being spoke of in the Hamilton Spectator playing at Hill Park SS. It would be the only basketball game my dad ever attended. We sat high in the bleachers looking down as this very tall young man standing about 6'10 did things I have never seen before. I was captivated and would follow his story through the paper until I graduated.

Bob was the 1st Canadian Basketball player to receive a D1 scholarship to play in the USA and that was at the University of Tennessee from 1966-1970. He was co-captain in his senior year and would happily boast to me he never lost to my favourite college and future H.O.F. player, "Pistol" Pete Maravich who attended L.S.U. Bob would be drafted by the Boston Celtics of the N.B.A. but went to the rival A.B.A. and the Dallas Chapparell's. He would later play with future N.B.A greats Dan Issel and Louis Dampier. The great H.O.F. coach Red Auerbach of the Celtics would offer Bob a contract at the end of his A.B.A. season with the Kentucky Colonels but Bob decided his time with the game was over and he returned home to begin his working life.

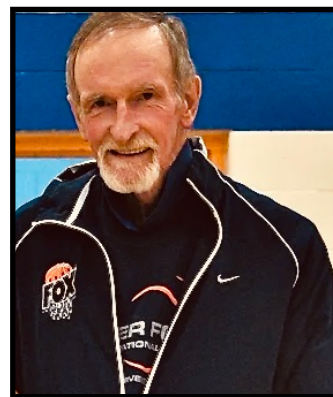
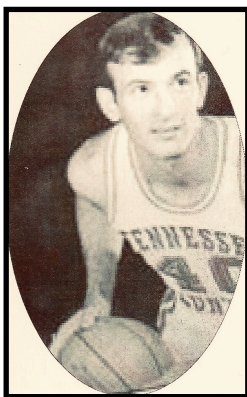
I would not come across him for the next 30 years until I became an assistant coach with David Ormerod at Saltfleet in 2002. Dave informed me when I joined that he had a special young man returning to school from a year of attending and playing in high school in California where his dad lived. That young man was Keenan Jeppesen. One day after a practice Bob walked into the gym and I immediately went to say hello and ask him what brought him by. He would smile and say he was there to pick up his nephew, Keenan!!! With that we would start a friendship that evolved into him joining my committee. He would give his opinion of All Star selections, his insights into the games and players and keep us entertained with stories of his time in the USA. He became a assistant coach at A.C.M.T. and under his guidance helped develop the young men towards 3 OFSAA "A" Championships. Some of those young men went onto have successful post and professional careers.

Bob is a legend in Hamilton Basketball circles both for his accomplishments and his passion for the game.

We are proud to present our M.V.P. award in his name.

Rest in Peace Bob until we get to talk hoops once again.

Jim Weatherbee



1944 - James Murray Thomas - 2019

“In the Paint”

It is always hard to find the words to describe a friend at a time of loss. My friend and a friend to so many in both Basketball and cycling communities across the province left a lasting impression with everyone he came into contact with.

Jim Thomas was a pioneer when it came to promoting player talents in high school to post secondary coach's on both side of the border. Remember this was being done long before the present social media opportunities of today. Jim would visit hundreds of high school gyms to watch players compete in league and tournament games. He would type up a report on each player he felt had the potential to play at the next level and compile this into a report for a minimal cost so post secondary coach's had a record of info in their recruiting. This took enormous time and effort and personal finance's to achieve. Players would search Jim out to talk about their game and what they could do better. Jim was honest with every young man, telling them what they needed to hear and not always what they wanted to hear.

Later he would start up a media post called “In the Paint” which drew loads of attention and support by coach's near and far. His reports were taken seriously by players, parents coach's and recruiters.

Jim involvement with the Silver Fox began back in the mid 90's when I first met him at Mac while watching his beloved Marauders. We struck up a conversation and a instant friendship because of the game of basketball. I asked him shortly after another conversation to come on board as a committee member to help select teams to play in the tournament. He simply made the Fox better in a competitive manner and allowed us to showcase the top talent in high schools across the province and in some years from other provinces.

We would have hour long phone calls talking ball and life. His love for the game and people of all ages was infectious. His laugh and whoop as his Marauders played on court still ring in my ears whenever I'm at a game. His guidance to all young men he came in contact with showed his compassion and support no matter the circumstances that the young man was faced with.

I miss him at this time of year especially around the Fox but just as important I miss him mostly as a dear friend. I was honoured to be one guest to speak at his funeral and cherish the moment to speak about him.

Rest in Peace my friend.

Jim Weatherbee



Radivoj "Ron" Kowljenic

1972 - 2005

Basketball is a game that requires teamwork, strength, skill, grace, determination, selflessness and criticism. It requires a coach with leadership and players who can take instruction and criticism. It needs an opponent to run your offence and defence against to measure your success. The game can't be played alone in order to get better, just like in life, you give and receive support along the way.

In many ways raw attributes of a good player resemble those of a good friend, spouse, brother and sister, colleague or employer. It is a sport where mistakes happen in the blink of an eye and both player and team mates must respond quickly in a positive manner too over come the problem.

Ron made a tremendous effort to learn the fundamentals of the game and then applied a great work ethic to get better. You would find him in the gym early and staying later after his classes. He never tired of the challenge or his love for the game. He loved it like he loved life. He was always having fun, smiling, remaining positive and wanting badly to play at the next level in post secondary. Ron believed his sport mimicked life, you put in the effort and work and success will come your way.

Ron worked to become a great team mate, improve his skills, took interest in others, listened to his parents, teachers and coach's to become a responsible adult.

Ron played for Coach Weatherbee at Glendale, then went to St. Mary's University in Nova Scotia. He would briefly appear in the National Championship game under the then banner of the C.I.A.U. in his first year. He would return home to be closer to his family and attended Mac to play under Coach Joe Raso. He would graduate with his BA in Commerce and move on to his working career in business. He would continue his love for the game playing for the local Serbian Men's program travelling across North America for tournaments.

In February 2004 Ron was diagnosed with cancer at the age of 32. He remained optimistic and strong throughout this difficult time until his passing on July 31st 2005. He made his mark on life and found what he loved by putting his efforts into actions everyday. He laughed, loved, worked hard and enjoyed life to the utmost.

We hope you all live well, love often, smile daily and enjoy life with a passion.

Yours Truly

The Kowljenic Family



Ron Kovljenic Fair Play Nominees

London A. B. Lucas SS - Ben Teevan

Toronto A. Y. Jackson CI - Jedidiah Johnson

Peterborough Adam Scott CVI - Ian Nukkala

Ancaster Bishop Tonnos CSS - Gavin McEwen

Hamilton Cathedral CSS - Ruben Kalonji

Kingston Frontenac SS - Kevin Ross

Georgetown DHS - Lewis Fleming

Windsor Holy Names CHS - Michael Jaworski

Oakville Iroquois Ridge HS - Andrew Armstrong

Sarnia Northern CI - Jaxon Bore

Toronto Oakwood CI - Stevie Phillip

Stoney Creek Saltfleet DHS - Tyson Gooden

St. Catharines St. Francis - Jack Ciocca

Kitchener St. Mary's CSS - Evan Antolcic

Sault Ste. Marie St. Mary's College - Matthew Malcolm

Hamilton St. Thomas More CSS - Nathan Sheppard

We thank the Kovljenic Family for their continued support of the Fair Play Award in
Ron's Memory



Kovljenic Fair Play
Award Winner 2020
Owen Vernon - STM

Jim Thomas Academic Nominees

London A.B. Lucas SS - Gavin Feng

Toronto A. Y. Jackson CI - Lucas Prekovic

Peterborough Adam Scott CVI - Kohl Millitz

Ancaster Bishop Tonnos CSS - Matthew Atem

Hamilton Cathedral CSS - Daveh Rose

Kingston Frontenac SS - Jordan Buick

Georgetown DHS - Jacob Sadler

Oakville Iroquois Ridge HS - Ronak Dhindsa

Sarnia Northern CI - Arman Bhullar

Toronto Oakwood CI - Jermaine Harvey-Hyatt

Stoney Creek Saltfleet DHS - Andrew Mashie

St. Catharines St. Francis CSS - Anthony Heyes

Kitchener St. Mary's HS - Isaiah Blake

Sault Ste Marie St. Mary's College - Reese Martin

Hamilton St. Thomas More CSS - Sebastian Reyes

We thanks the family of Jim Thomas for funding the Academic Award in memory of their brother Jim and for the support of the All Star Awards in his name.



2020 Jim Thomas Academic Award
Jadon Skinner - A.B. Lucas



Jim Lyle 1927 - 2020



The Jim Lyle Team Leadership Award Presented by the Hamilton Board of Officials

No stopping this court whistle-blower

'I'm 74, so I'm not sure how many more games I can do,' says the 50-year veteran of basketball officiating



Mike Hanley

It was Jan. 7, 1952, when Jim Lyle made his debut as a basketball referee.

"I can't remember what I had for breakfast today," he says, with a laugh. "But I have a clear memory of that day. I was scared to death."

He recalls the game being played in the basement of the old First United Church, at Wellington and King streets. The gym was small and the out-of-bounds lines were defined by a brick wall.

The game was between Melrose and First United, two powerhouse midget teams in the city-wide church league.

He remembers many of the players from both teams, he remembers collecting \$1.50 for his efforts, and he remembers the post-game assessment from the First United coach.

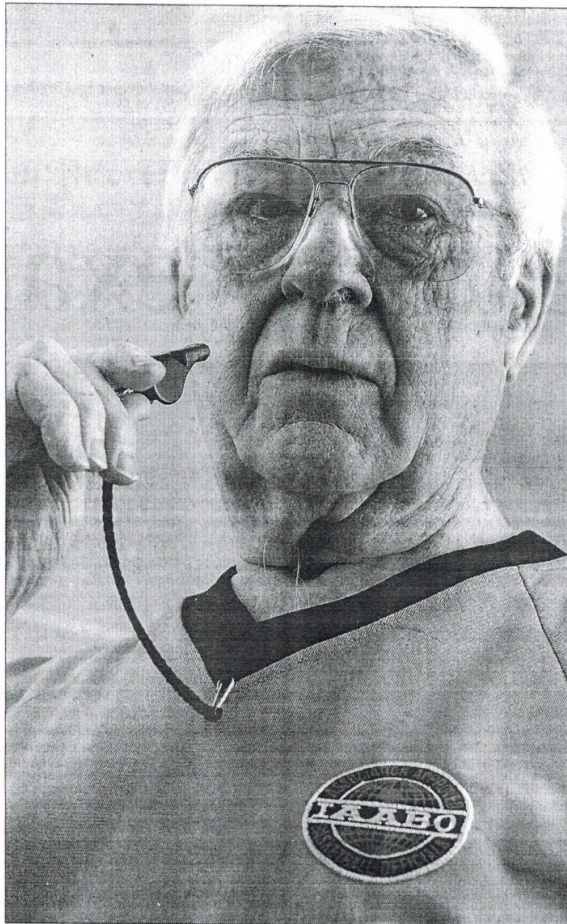
"He let me know how stupid I was."

Lyle must have got smart real fast because he's still on the job. He worked a game Monday night, exactly 50 years after his debut.

"I'm 74, so I'm not sure how many more games I can do. But I still enjoy it, especially the camaraderie."

Lyle played basketball in the church leagues and later while attending the Hamilton Technical Institute.

"Most of the guys played hockey but skates were expensive and my parents had more important things to do with their money. I owned sneakers and shorts so basketball became



GARY YOKOYAMA, THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

Retired Stelco Hilton Works superintendent Jim Lyle says refereeing basketball games is 'a wonderful opportunity to spend time with good kids.'

my game."

He continued to play in senior leagues until 1951 when he was invited to join the men in stripes.

"I was very fortunate, Kitch McPherson was my mentor."

McPherson, who died in 1998, was among the world's best. He worked

the 1959 Pan-Am Games and all seven matches when the Russian national team made its first tour of the United States in the early 1960s.

McPherson was the first Canadian member of the International Association of Approved Basketball Officials and founded the Ontario Referees Association.

"He made us an affiliate of the international association," Lyle says. "He wanted us to be the best and he knew we would have access to their clinics and teaching materials."

Lyle is vice-president of the Hamilton board and they now have 160 referees, including 32 women.

He says referees must attend a series of classroom sessions every year and pass a written exam. They also attend a workshop where they referee simulated games. And senior officials sit in on real games, grading the younger referees on their floor work.

"It's one thing to know the rules, but it's another thing to know how to apply them."

He says basketball has enjoyed a growth spurt the past few years and the quality of coaching and players has snowballed, especially among women.

"We had an OFSAA tournament here last month and the girls were fantastic. Some of them could play with the boys."

Lyle married in 1949 and all three of their children had a fling with basketball. He was a purchasing agent with a small machine company before joining Stelco in 1967 as a buyer. He was superintendent of purchasing for Hilton Works when he retired in 1991.

A wonky back forced him to reduce his basketball schedule this year but he expects to referee a few more games before the season closes.

"It's a wonderful opportunity to spend time with good kids. That's not a fringe benefit you can put in your pocket, but it certainly makes your heart swell."

Maybe you know an interesting personality in the world of sports. Call me at 905-526-3299 or e-mail mhanley@hamiltonspectator.com



2020 Jim Lyle Team
Leadership Award winner
Trevor Morris
Cathedral CSS