

HALL OF FAME INDUCTION WEEKEND A REMINDER OF WHY WE LOVE THE GAME

👤 Ryan Cowley 📅 November 7, 2015



2015 Hockey Hall of Fame class Photo credit: Ryan Cowley

TORONTO — It was a surreal feeling. Having lived in Toronto and raised in nearby Ottawa, I had visited the **Hockey Hall of Fame** more times than I can count. Never before, however, have I been in this capacity. Both as a writer and as a lifelong hockey fan, it was a thrill to cover the Hall's Induction Weekend festivities.

The weekend kicked off on Friday when those induction were on hand to receive their induction rings in addition to giving their thoughts on how they feel about being inducted and where they were when they first heard the news.



HHOF Chairman
Lanny McDonald
with Sergei
Fedorov
Image credit: Ryan
Cowley

Unlike last year when **Rob Blake** was inducted, 2015's class of players do not include any former **Los Angeles Kings**. Nonetheless, the first weekend of November reminds us not of egos, salaries or fluctuating revenue but of where the passion of playing the game started and how those childhood memories evolved into dream professions followed by the overwhelming humility that comes with entering hockey's greatest shrine; an honour bestowed upon only a select few.

This year's inductees included one of the greatest defensemen of all-time in **Nicklas Lidstrom**, the charismatic **Sergei Fedorov** and **Chris Pronger**, one of the most feared blueliners to ever the play in the NHL Of course, while the latter two both played for the Kings' crosstown rival, it was Pronger who generated a plethora of derision during his time with the **Anaheim Ducks**; and helping the club win a **Stanley Cup** in 2007 certainly didn't help matters.



Other inductees included an overdue **Phil Housley**, who was arguably the greatest U.S.-born defenseman to ever grace an NHL rink.

In 1495 career games, Housley notched 1232 points (338 goals, 894 assists). suiting up for nine different teams with his longest stint being eight years with the team that drafted him, the Buffalo Sabres.

Another inductee this year is **Angela Ruggiero** who was instrumental in strengthening the women's hockey scene overall but especially in the United States.

Born in Panorama City, California, Ruggiero played most of her hockey in the northeastern United States, playing at the prep school level for **Choate Rosemary Hall** in Wallingford, Connecticut. Ruggiero then played for **Harvard University** for four years en route to earning a B.A. in government. Ruggiero is also quite decorated as an Olympian, winning gold at the **1998 Winter Games** in Nagano before claiming two silvers and a bronze over the course of the next three Olympics.

*HHOF Chairman
Lanny McDonald
with Niklas
Lidstrom
Image credit: Ryan
Cowley*

*HHOF Chairman
Lanny McDonald
with Chris Pronger
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Peter Karmanos, Jr., owner of the **Carolina Hurricanes**, is part of this year's class in the builder's category as is hockey-lifer **Bill Hay** who won a Stanley Cup (in 1961 with the **Chicago Black Hawks**) as a player and later, the President and CEO of the **Calgary Flames** and Chairman of the Hockey Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame festivities have only begun but the tone is already set for this to be just another special weekend for the NHL but for the game of hockey overall.

On Sunday, the Hockey Hall of Fame will be holding their annual **Canada vs. the World Alumni Game** at the **Air Canada Centre** while on Monday evening, the weekend's flagship event, the official induction ceremony, takes place.

It promises to be a wonderful weekend.

*Grand Hall, Hockey Hall of Fame
Photo credit: Ryan Cowley*



