

Niagara Falls Sports Wall of Fame Constitution

OBJECTIVE

To honour and perpetuate the names and deeds of those individuals and teams whose athletic abilities have brought fame to themselves and Niagara Falls, and of those individuals whose knowledge, interest in, and work for sport has resulted in a climate which benefited athletes and athletics.

CATEGORIES

Induction into the Niagara Falls Sports Wall of Fame is restricted to Niagara Falls athletes and builders of sport. Athletes, Teams, Builders and Sponsors must be nominated in order to be considered for induction.

a) Athletes - Open Category

Athletes to be considered for admission to the Sports Wall of Fame must have been outstanding in their athletic field of endeavour, or must have achieved better than average proficiency in a number of sports, even if not reaching the absolute top level in any one, in competition against peer athletes. This involves those competing on a strictly local level and those going on to district, provincial, national and international events, as well as those who enter professional sports.

Any athlete nominated to the Niagara Falls Sports Wall of Fame must have been retired from active participation in the sport(s) for which he/she is nominated for a period of not less than three years (dating from the end of the season of the sports(s) for which he/she has been nominated). An active athlete may be eligible for nomination if she/he has reached the age of fifty years. In the case of automatic nominees, these restrictions do not apply, as determined by the constitution.

b) Teams

"Teams" shall be eligible for recognition and shall be judged on merit and residency by the Era Committee. Recommendation shall be made by various Era Committees as per each nomination. A "team" for Wall of Fame purposes is defined as "any group of two or more athletes engaged in the same sport who work together as a unit in that sport". The team may be made up of members of the same sex or the sexes may be intermixed, providing the majority of the team were Niagara Falls residents and have reached the age of 14 years, at the time of their accomplishment. Any high school team must have won a minimum Ontario Federation of School Athletics Association (O.F.S.A.A.) championship to

be considered and the accomplishment must be of significance for the school. Significance is defined as having extreme importance for the school. A figure skating pair, tennis doubles, curling team, cross country running team, etc. are defined as teams for our purposes. A boxer and his manager do not constitute a team.

c) Builders

Builders are defined as officials (referees, umpires), individual sponsors, executive members, trainers, coaches, etc., whose work for sport over an extended period of time has been outstanding, whether it be in the organization of leagues and facilities, achieving a high degree of success in coaching teams and/or individuals, keeping a league or team active, providing services at a consistently high level over an extended period of time, etc. However, just because an individual has worked many years for a sport as a builder does not necessarily mean eligibility for the Sports Wall of Fame. His/her work over that period of time, or over most of it, must have been of a consistently high level with regard to services provided or results achieved.

d) Sponsors

The Sponsor Award is presented to a business, corporation or group in recognition of a minimum of five years significant contribution to sports in the City of Niagara Falls. Nominees are judged on merit by each era committee with no automatic induction.

DEFINITIONS:

Niagara Falls Athlete

For purposes of the Niagara Falls Sports Wall of Fame, a Niagara Falls athlete shall be:

- a) Anyone born in Niagara Falls who spends his/her formative years here and continues to reside in the City.
- b) Anyone who is not born here, but who comes to this City and resides for 15 years or more, proves his/her worth in an athletic sense in Niagara Falls. Said athlete may be considered even if he/she eventually moves away from this City.
- c) Anyone in a) or b) who, after a local amateur career, moves into professional, university or amateur sports elsewhere and who is deemed worthy of inclusion.

Niagara Falls Builder

For purposes of the Niagara Falls Sports Wall of Fame, a Niagara Falls Builder shall be as above in Sections a), b), and c).

The definition of Builder shall include all above sections - involving coaching, officiating, sponsoring, management/executive, training, even if not involved in an active, on the field role.

Number of Inductees

The total number of annual inductees to the Sports Wall of Fame shall be a maximum of nine (9) inductees including automatic inductees.

The Two Eras shall be: (1) Pre 1990; (2) 1991 - Present

AUTOMATIC SELECTION:

The following are eligible for automatic selection to the Sports Wall of Fame:

- a) Any Niagara Falls athlete or team who wins an Olympic or Paralympic medal (gold, silver, bronze).
- b) Any Niagara Falls athlete or team who finishes first, second or third in any international championship sanctioned by the I.A.F. (International Athletic Federation) and/or is considered acceptable by the Sports Wall of Fame Committee.
- c) Any Niagara Falls athlete who wins a Canadian championship in a non-team discipline, in an unrestricted age category, and sanctioned by a governing body affiliated with Sport Canada and/or is considered authentic by the Sports Wall of Fame Committee.
- d) Any Niagara Falls team who wins a Canadian Championship or Ontario Championship (during 1900 to 1950 only) sanctioned by a governing body affiliated with Sport Canada and is considered authentic by the Sports Wall of Fame Committee.

Athletes and teams must be nominated to be considered.

VALIDATION:

- a) The Niagara Falls athlete, team or builder must have been a resident of this City at the time of his/her feat to be considered qualified for "Automatic Selection".

An athlete who performs his/her feat while temporarily outside of Niagara Falls is considered to still be a resident of Niagara Falls, providing his/her "home" residence is still this City.

- b) Provided the above and other restrictions are met, the Sports Wall of Fame Committee shall vote as to whether the credentials, research, etc., presented are factual proof of the feat. Approval must be made by at least 3/4 or 75% of the quorum of the Committee. If research is disputed and a 75% vote is not received, the same athlete/feat may be presented at a later meeting with more definitive information to support the nomination.
- c) If the nomination is for a deceased person, each case is to be decided by the Era Committee, on the merits of the person involved.
- d) Exceptions considered will be at the discretion of the Committee.

AWARDS:

Commemoration on the Sports Wall of Fame shall take place as follows:

- a) For each inductee (athlete, team or builder) a plaque with a photograph will be displayed on the Sports Wall of Fame. A condensed biography of individuals and teams awarded recognition will be placed on the plaques.
- b) Each athlete or builder inductee to the Sports Wall of Fame will receive a keeper plaque.
- c) The team photo and team member names shall be inscribed on a Sports Wall of Fame plaque. Team member names may be listed at the discretion of the Sports Wall of Fame Committee. Each team member will receive a Wall of Fame certificate.
- d) Sponsors will be recognized by the addition of a brass plate, engraved with the sponsor's name, to a special Sponsors Award Plaque and each sponsor will be given a framed certificate.

THE SPORTS WALL OF FAME ORGANIZATION (established in 1988)

- a) Sports Wall of Fame Committee

The Niagara Falls Sports Wall of Fame Committee shall consist of an Honorary Chairperson (present Mayor or alternate Council Member), Recreation Committee Chairperson (or alternate), Recreation & Culture staff member (1 non-voting) and 10-12 Niagara Falls volunteer members.

b) Membership

The original Sports Wall of Fame Committee was appointed by the Mayor and City Council. It is of the utmost importance that there be continuation of the aims and desires of the Wall. The Membership of the Committee will strive to include interested representatives from the following areas:

- Niagara Falls Recreation Committee
- Local organized sports group
- Brock University or Niagara College
- Local school board
- Previous Sports Wall of Fame inductees
- Community representatives with an athletic background
- 1 Staff member – Community Development Coordinator

Council to approve new appointments to the Committee

c) Funding

Funding for the Sports Wall of Fame is provided by City Council on a yearly basis.

d) Committee Chairperson

The Chairperson of the Sports Wall of Fame Committee shall be appointed by the Sports Wall of Fame Committee at the first meeting of the calendar year. Announcements regarding the Sports Wall of Fame are made by the Honorary Chairperson as presented to him/her by the Committee Chairperson and announced at City Council.

In the absence of the Chairperson, any Era Chairperson may fill in for the Committee Chairperson and assume all responsibilities for the Committee Chair in his/her absence.

e) Recreation and Culture Staff

The City's Recreation & Culture liaison will act as Secretary to the Committee, providing professional and administrative support.

f) Era Committees

There are two (2) Era Committees.

The Sports Wall of Fame Committee members will be divided into two (2) Era Committees of approximately five (5) members each, one of whom will be chairperson of each Era Committee. Each Era Committee shall handle a particular time period as follows:

Committee No. 1 – Review and consider selections from time period Pre 1990.

Committee No. 2 – Review and consider selections from time period 1991 - Present.

Each Era Committee shall set down its' own ground rules for discussion and name their Era Chairperson. The Committees will discuss and present the chosen inductees from their respective time periods following the criteria laid down in this constitution.

PATH TO INDUCTION ONTO NIAGARA FALLS SPORTS WALL OF FAME

a) Nominations

Nominations are made by the general public. The nominations are sent to the Recreation and Culture office, along with supporting evidence. The staff turns over all letters and documentation to the appropriate Era Committee for discussion. Nominations must be made in writing and must contain the most comprehensive data possible concerning the record and merits of each candidate. The chairperson of any era may request further investigation of any candidate being considered for election to the Wall of Fame. There will be a deadline for nominations each year.

In addition, any member of the Sports Wall of Fame Committee may make nominations, but any such nomination shall be handled as if coming from the general public, and must be submitted by the deadline date.

If the nomination does not meet the aforementioned criteria, then the nomination will be returned to the nominator.

b) Committees

Era Committees shall meet as required to discuss nominations and will judge each nomination by the documentation and guidelines set down elsewhere in this constitution.

c) Approval

Nominations approved by the above method shall be forwarded, along with the appropriate documentation to the Sports Wall of Fame Committee for approval.

The Chairperson of each Era Committee shall propose the name(s) his/her Committee has forwarded. After discussion and explanation of documentation, a vote may be taken on the nominee. Each nominee is handled separately.

Recommended inductees will be forwarded to Council in a report for final approval.

d) Nomination Form

Nominations shall be filed by the Era committees on a form designed and provided for that purpose (a copy attached to this constitution). The said form shall be properly and completely filled out and shall include all pertinent information on the nominee. Recreation and Culture staff shall have the right to return the form to the nominator if the form is incomplete and not detailed enough so a fair assessment can be made.

e) Meetings

General meetings will be held at the call of the Chair, and will include all members and Lifetime members.

Any Constitutional changes must be presented at a meeting and voted upon by Committee members at the next meeting.