

SPORTS & LEISURE

Sports Hall of Fame adds six inductees

Ceremony goes June 17

The fourth-annual Halton Hills Sports Museum Hall of Fame induction ceremony will take place at the John Elliott Theatre on Thursday, June 17.

This year's inductees include the Valk/Dixon/Armstrong (Frank Van de Valk, Walt Dixon and David Armstrong) auto drag racing team in the team category, hockey star Paul Robinson in the athlete category, and longtime soccer official Haddy Smedema and hockey coach/manager Harold Townsley in the builder category.

Tickets are \$40 each and are available by contacting Glenda Nixdorf at 905-873-1360. A reception will be held at 6 p.m. with the awards ceremony at 7 p.m.

Visit the website hism.ca for more information.

Valk/Dixon/Armstrong Racing



Miss Niagara presents the Stock Eliminator Trophy to (from left) David Armstrong, Walter Dixon and Frank Van de Valk following a 1960s race.

Interest in auto racing was at its prime during the late 1960s in Halton Hills and a three-man local team made its mark on drag strips across North America.

Consisting of driver Walt Dixon, owner Frank Van de Valk and the late master mechanic Dave Armstrong, Valk/Dixon/Armstrong Racing terrorized the track with their orange 1969 Cougar Eliminator, winning major races in Indianapolis and New York while also setting a National Hot Rod Association class-record time.

With a 428-horsepower Cobra engine meticulously tuned by Armstrong, the Cougar roared to about a dozen wins on the 1969 Ontario Stock Eliminator circuit, was fastest in class at the U.S. nationals in Indianapolis, took the overall championship at the New York Spring Nationals and established an NHRA class record clocking at the Can-Am Nationals in Winnipeg.

In 1965, Dixon owned and drove a '65 Chevelle named "White Knight" that won 24 out of 26 class championships through the year and raced to an A stock Canadian title.

Armstrong maintained and tuned 20 cars across the country for the Ford Canadian Racing Team, as well as a rail dragster.

Paul Robinson

A stocky left-winger who once scored 100 goals in a single Jr. C season, Paul Robinson also owns some impressive team-related stats.

The 61-year-old was a member of nine all-Ontario championship teams as a player and two more as a coach, winning the OHA Jr.C scoring title and MVP honours in 1967-68 by hitting the century mark in goals during regular season and playoffs.

Growing up in Georgetown, Robinson idolized Intermediate A Raider brothers Blake and Gerry Inglis and played for Gerry on back-to-back Ontario midget championship squads in 1964-65.

The 5-foot-7 sniper was invited to the training camp of the Jr. A Peterborough Petes twice and enjoyed a few successful seasons with his hometown Intermediate A Raiders before moving to Bowmanville in 1978, where he went on to be inducted into the Clarington Sports Hall of Fame as a coach.



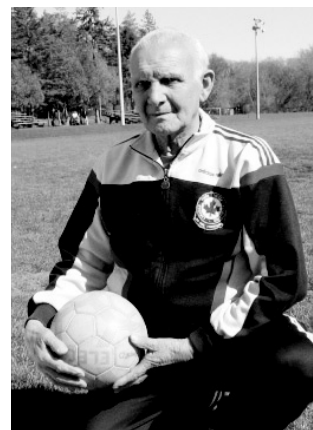
Haddy Smedema

From the time he arrived in Georgetown from the Netherlands in 1951, Haddy Smedema has been known as the "silent worker" behind the scenes in many soccer circles.

He was the founder, coach and player for the Georgetown Eagles' senior men's side that played at the Fairgrounds in the Central Ontario League.

The 76-year-old was president of the Georgetown Minor Soccer Association for four years during the 1970s when registration totaled over 1,000 boys and girls.

Smedema's organizational and administrative skills were also called upon by the prestigious North American Cup and Ontario Cup tournaments. He served as director of the North American event from 1976-80 and the provincial competition at the same time, receiving the Ontario Soccer Association's Man of the Year Award in 1982. Smedema remains active as a coach in the Georgetown women's league.



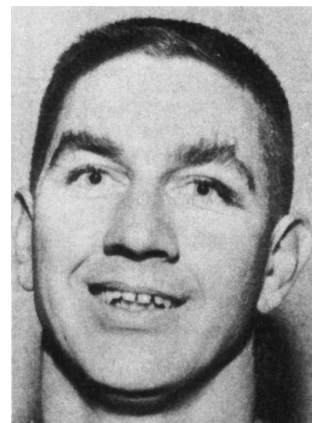
Harold Townsley

After a successful playing career on the ice and ball diamond, Harold Townsley spent the next five decades imparting his knowledge and skills to the youth of Acton.

Having turned 80 in February, Townsley qualifies for the Sports Hall of Fame as a builder.

The Stratford native shone as a left-winger on the Acton Jr. D teams of the late 1940s and played professionally for the Washington Lions of the Eastern Hockey League before the team folded in 1952. Townsley starred and was captain for Acton Intermediate Tanners' hockey teams as well as being a baseball catcher for the Acton Merchants in the Halton County loop.

A firefighter and later the Acton Arena manager was a coach and manager on youth teams in almost every age group in Acton and Erin until 2005, also serving as a referee and executive member, earning Acton's Citizen of the Year Award in 2000.



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