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10 facts you may not know about the Georgetown Soccer Club

EAMONN MAHER
emaher@theifp.ca

With the Georgetown Soccer Club marking its 50th anniversary this year, it has grown to become the largest youth sport organization in Halton Hills with close to 3,000 players and volunteers involved.

The club has put a special spin on its Opening Weekend, May 26-27, for its golden anniversary, which is only fitting since the GSC recently earned Gold Excellence status from the Ontario Soccer Association.

On the opening day for house leagues on Saturday, May 26 at Trafalgar Sports Park, free pizza and juice will be distributed to players, with several inflatables and freestyle soccer jugglers on hand for entertainment.

On May 27, a five-on-five youth rep soccer tournament will take place along with an adult charity tournament.

Following is a top-10 list of facts you may not know about the GSC:

. For the opening season in 1968, player registration was a whopping \$1. There were no rep teams and all games were played at Cedarvale Park, which had yet to have lights installed for night matches. There were approximately 250 boys signed up in the inaugural season, which quickly grew to 900 when registration for girls opened in 1972 (more on that below).

"A suggestion was made (in 1971) at the annual general meeting to increase the registration fee to \$4 and some of the executive threat-



Ontario Soccer Association

The Georgetown Soccer Club was recently presented with the Ontario Soccer Association's Gold Excellence Award. From left are: Wayne McNeil of the Respect Group, Bobby Pascaly of SportsEngine, GSC vice president (rep) Gary Collins, GSC past president Alice Strachan, Dr. Stephen Norris and OSA president Ron Smale.

ened to quit because they felt it was too much for the children to play," said Colin Wilde, who became president in 1970 for a three-year stretch.

"The referees weren't paid, there were no field rental costs and all the teams reused uniforms returned from the previous season. We weren't cheap, just reasonable."

Wilde's wife June served as the club's registrar for the first 17 years of its existence.

. **The GSC is the largest summer employer of youth** in Halton Hills. Positions include refs, skills instructors, summer camp staff and field staff amounting to part-time employment for about 100 local youth. For summer camp details visit <http://georgetownsoccerclub.com/Default.asp?id=summer-camp&l=1>.

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. Among the challenges in the early years was the club's relationship with the town and a general lack of knowledge of the sport by many Canadians at the time.

"We asked for some topsoil to be laid at Cedarvale and a couple of days later I got a call from the rep director telling me to come down to the park to have a look at this," recalled Wilde, who came to Canada in 1965 from Lancashire, England.

"There were five tons of aggregate, gravel, spread all over Cedarvale. We had to ring up 650 children to get them to come down to the park and we spent hours picking all the stones up with buckets."

. **The GSC's youngest players**

are three and the oldest is 30.

The under-three program was introduced last summer as an addition to the under-four beginner tot and parent program, which is a fun introduction to soccer. For more details visit <http://georgetownsoccerclub.com/Default.asp?id=leap-program&l=1>.

. **Girls were initially not welcomed into the club.** And when Wilde ushered in a 10-team girls' league with 150 players in 1972, not everyone was overjoyed.

"We had one instance where a boy threw his jacket on the floor because the badge on it looked similar to that on the girls' jackets and he didn't want to play when the girls played."

. **The GSC boasts 300 volun-**

teers to run its programs. There is one full-time employee, Susan Wintjes, who has been with the club for more than 20 years, and two part-timers.

. Finding volunteers in the GSC's formative years was another issue.

"Nobody wanted to serve on the board and we'd try to have a meeting and nobody would show up," said former club president Haddy Smedema, who took over the operations alongside the late Bob Marshall.

"We coached, refereed, worked on the field, everything. I hardly got to watch my own kids play."

. Having grown to become the third-largest organization within the Peel Halton Soccer Association behind Oakville and Burlington, the GSC has supported local and global charities over the years including JumpStart, Ride to Conquer Cancer and the Georgetown Hospital Foundation.

Its homegrown Chance to Play charity, headed up by local resident Anita Bergsma, encourages opening day attendees to bring "gently used" soccer jerseys, shorts, socks, shoes, shin guards, soccer balls and other equipment to Trafalgar Sports Park on May 26, which will in turn be distributed to communities in need across Canada and developing countries.

. **The GSC uses 29 fields** in Georgetown and two in Acton.

. A semi-merger between the GSC and the Acton Soccer Club sees the U-12 and older divisions play together. The Acton club is also celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

HALTON HILLS SPORTS MUSEUM

2018 Hall of Fame Induction Gala



Join us at the Induction Gala.

6:00 pm - Reception

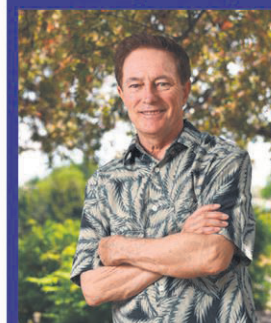
7:00pm - Induction Ceremony • 9:00 pm Congratulatory Reception

Tickets for the Gala ceremony can be reserved through Glenda Nixdorf at 905-873-1360 or info.hhsm@bell.net



Date: Thursday, June 21, 2018
Location: The John Elliott Theatre

Keynote Speaker -
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Sandy Hawley, without a doubt, is one of the greatest race-riders ever produced in Canada. Hawley, a brilliant athlete and ambassador for the sport of Thoroughbred racing, has set new standards for jockeys. In the high stakes environment of racing, Hawley has distinguished himself with his clean living, fierce competitiveness and an uncanny way with horses. He currently ranks eighth among jockeys in career wins, and has been called the crown prince of the "Sport of Kings".

Career Highlights:

Among the highlights of Sandy's career are 31,455 mounts, 6,449 wins, 4,825 seconds, 4,158 thirds, and \$88,666,071 in purse earnings.