

Veltman looks forward to lacrosse hall of fame journey

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

It didn't take Jim Veltman long to get inducted into the National Lacrosse League hall of fame.

After retiring from active duty with the Toronto Rock just last season, the 42-year-old Stouffville resident was informed Tuesday of his induction into the hall of fame's 2009 class along with Dallas Eliuk, an assistant coach with the Portland Lumberjax.

A 16-year veteran, Veltman said he was originally informed of the honour bestowed upon him one week ago by interim league commissioner George Daniel.

It caught him by surprise. But it was welcomed.

"When you think hall of fame, you think it's for people who have been removed from the game for a while. But whenever you're recognized for a lifelong achievement it's an honour."

Veltman began his playing career with the Buffalo Bandits in 1992 and captained the club to league championships in 1992, 1993 and 1996.

In 1998, Veltman moved to the expansion Ontario Raiders, which a year later became the Rock.

Serving as the Rock's captain, Veltman played an integral role in helping the club win league titles in

1999, 2000, 2002, 2003 and 2005.

Known in league circles as "Scoop", the Brampton native also holds the all-time league record in gathering loose balls with 2,417.

During his playing career, Veltman reached the championship game 10 times and played in the playoffs 14 of 16 seasons.

He was named the league's most valuable player in 2004 and won the sportsmanship award in 2002.

While elated with the news, it doesn't represent the highlight to his storied playing career.

With lacrosse being a team sport in nature, he revealed winning the league championships with the

Rock and Bandits represent the pinnacle.

"In my mind individual achievements aren't as great as team achievements," he said. "But to be recognized within this league is welcomed."

Veltman and Eliuk will be honoured during the hall of fame induction ceremony as part of the National Lacrosse League's All-Star Weekend festivities in Denver, Colo., March 7.

A teacher at Agincourt Collegiate in Scarborough, Veltman is looking forward to making the trip to Denver.

"Denver is a nice spot to be in

during that time of the year and to bring my family along will make it even better," he said.

The class of 2009 will be the fourth group to be welcomed into the league's hall of fame.

Veltman began this season with the Rock as an assistant coach under fellow Stouffville resident Glenn Clark.

But when Clark and the rest of the coaching staff were relieved of their duties Jan. 20, Veltman was retained by the club and currently serves as an advisor.

Clark and Veltman coach their sons' Markham minor lacrosse squad.

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