

Caledon Sports Hall of Fame ready to welcome attendees to the 2026 Induction Ceremony

By Jim Stewart

Barrie Shepley had just completed the Caledon Agriculture Board meeting when we snuck in a wide-ranging phone call on a Saturday afternoon.

It's a busy time of the year for Shepley who's preparing to host the Caledon Sport Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony for the third consecutive time. The Chair of the CSHOF acknowledged the interesting challenges involved in recognizing over one hundred years of sports in Caledon and the ridiculously amazing achievements. There's a lot of great people to recognize and, for such a small community, so many have done brilliant things.

The indefatigable Chair noted that it's an honor to dig into the files to see the careers and contributions of these deserving athletes and builders.

Shepley was honored to be enshrined by the Selection Committee during the 2025 ceremony and admitted it was a moving experience.

Part of my jam is getting people active and I've been inspired by these people, by their stories and remarkable achievements to think that we've attended the same community religious services and shopped at the same grocery store. It's that connection that I felt.

Shepley saw the need to recognize area residents who had contributed mightily to athletics in the Town of Caledon: Ten years ago, I wondered why we didn't have a Sports Hall of Fame in Caledon. I spoke with some Councillors who were very supportive and saw the importance of celebrating its athletes, coaches, convenors, media, and even league executives who spent decades organizing sports for kids. When the Caledon East Complex was completed, the Town gave us a place to house the Hall of Fame and it felt good to know that kids would pass through the Complex, that they would be inspired by the stories, the achievements, and the exhibits that celebrated the athletes and builders.

The engaging Emcee reflected with a high degree of amusement when asked about the most memorable moment from the last two ceremonies.

The highlight of the night in 2025 was seeing the 1967 Ontario Champion Bolton Kinsmen on stage. Those guys were in their 70s, they were enjoying themselves, and many hadn't seen each other for forty-five years. A few of them even had their team jackets on. I keep getting great history lessons from inductees like them.

The Kinsmen reps offered some hilarious anecdotes about their rollicking lifestyle as hockey players in the 60s that brought the house down last January. Shepley noted the entertaining quality and poignancy of the speeches that have been delivered on stage over the last two events.

The reality is many of the inductees have been in front of media so they have experienced and mature media voices. Each speech has been amazingly different. So much thought has gone into the speeches as the inductees reflected on decades as pencil met paper. The stories lift me six inches off the ground they're filled with personal moments, about sacrifice and achievement. The speeches are such an important part of the event and it's great to see the audience take in these enjoyable moments. We want to get to the point where people really want to hear these stories and talk about the Induction Ceremony in such a way that we have them saying 'I can't miss this supper.'

Shepley made his case convincingly for residents and sponsors to attend this year's banquet.

?You spend a little to attend, but it's another way of keep people active. It's an investment in the community. All of the parents who have had their kids in sports talk about it as the best investment they ever made. Sports connected the kids to their community and to their schools. Attending the Induction Ceremony is that kind of connection, too. The best part of attending is discovering that these great things have happened in our town. I'm not sure we brag enough about our athletic achievements ?it might be a Canadian thing. So often we don't recognize the things we do in our home town. We have these great athletes at high schools like Hall and Mayfield and so many elementary school athletes have done amazing things. Hall is just across the street from the Hall of Fame and the Wolfpack Football team just won the Metro Bowl.?

In addition to celebrating current achievements by prospective Hall of Famers, Shepley offered a glimpse of the future or ?Phase 3? as he calls it when the Induction Ceremony has become ?the pinnacle?the community's night of sports achievement and everybody wants to attend this ceremony. We'd like to build it to honor Athletes of the Year from the high schools. We want to build the event in the coming years to include a contribution to a local charity and grow it so it becomes something like the annual Conn Smythe Dinner. We want it to be the event where we're inspired by people who have done wonderful things in and for the Town.?

To purchase tickets for the Third Annual Caledon Sport Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, contact events@caledon.ca or visit Caledon.ca/CSHOF.

The Ceremony will take place on Wednesday, January 28 in the Banquet Hall of the Caledon East Community Complex from 7 to 9 PM. Dress Code is Business Casual and doors open at 6:30 PM.

This year's inductees are Keith Beavers (Swimming), Helena Kavalaar (Fastball), Ashley Lawrence (Soccer), Tess Routliffe (Swimming), Jade Scognamillo (Swimming), Bruce Wanless (Lacrosse), George Gardiner (Horse Racing), Chris Humeniuk (Golf), and the 2013 Lady Wanderers Youth Soccer Team.