

Sport BC Announces 54th Annual Athlete of the Year Awards

EMBARGOED

For Immediate Release – March 25, 2021 – (Vancouver, BC)

Sport BC celebrated the 54th Annual Athlete of the Year Awards virtually on **Thursday, March 25, 2021**. The event was hosted by CBC's Scott Russell recognizing the province's best in amateur sport including athletes, coaches, teams, and officials for outstanding performances in their sport over the 2019 season. Each finalist was nominated by their Provincial or Multi-Sport Organization, High School, College, or University. The Selection Committee, led by long-serving Chair Bernie Pascall, included a diverse group of highly experienced British Columbia sport leaders and media members.

"While our celebration was delayed, the Virtual Athlete of the Year Awards was a true celebration of sport in our province, the recipients represent an exceptional 2019 in BC sport and we would like to thank everyone for their patience in announcing our winners. We congratulate all of our finalists and the organizations they represent", shares Sport BC's President and CEO, Rob Newman. "We were proud to celebrate the winners. The last year has been challenging for everyone and it confirmed the importance of Sport in our lives; I personally would like to thank our members for everything they have done over the last year."

"Sport BC's Athlete of the Year Awards play an integral role in celebrating the outstanding achievements of B.C. athletes, coaches, officials and organizations," said Minister Mark, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. "I was honoured to present the first Delivering on Diversity Award this year to recognize the important work being done in advancing equity, inclusion, and accessibility in sport. This award, along with all of the other awards, underscores the talent, strength and commitment of B.C.'s sport community. Congratulations to all of the nominees. Your accomplishment and contribution to sport are truly inspiring."

Sport BC congratulates all the Athlete of the Year Awards' Recipients:

Athlete with a Disability

Nathan Reich (Victoria) Athletics

College Athlete of the Year

Rachel Beauchamp (Douglas) – Basketball

Female Coach of the Year

Lynn Kanuka (Surrey) – Athletics

Male Coach of the Year

Chris MacDonald (Vancouver) - Golf

High School Female Athlete of the Year

Jasmet Nijjar (Queen Elizabeth) – Athletics

High School Male Athlete of the Year

Uyi Ologhola (Holy Cross) – Basketball, Football

Junior Female Athlete of the Year

Camryn Rogers (Richmond) - Athletics

Team of the Year

UBC Women (Vancouver) – Volleyball

Junior Male Athlete of the Year

Carter Woods (Cumberland) – Mountain Biking

University Athlete of the Year

Kiera Van Ryk (UBC) - Volleyball

Senior Female Athlete of the Year

Rachel Cliff (Vancouver) – Athletics

Senior Male Athlete of the Year

Scott Tupper (Vancouver) – Field Hockey

Master Athlete of the Year

Cathy Zeglinski (Whistler) – Mountain Biking

Official of the Year

Jeff Thomson (Vancouver) - Gymnastics

An additional six awards were presented including the Best of BC, KidSport BC Community Champion, Harry Jerome Comeback, Daryl Thompson Lifetime Achievement Award and In Her Footsteps Honourees.

Best of BC Senior - Athlete of the Year

Vasek Pospisil (Vernon) – Tennis

The **Best of BC Award**, supported by the Province of British Columbia, is presented to an individual or team thought to have represented British Columbia, nationally or internationally, in either a professional or amateur sport.

KidSport Community Champion

[Sanjeet Sadana](#) (Richmond)

The **KidSport Community Champion**, supported by [the Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers](#), is presented to an individual who has made a significant and meaningful contribution to KidSport.

Harry Jerome Comeback Award

Stephane Tanguay

The **Harry Jerome Comeback Award** is presented to an individual who succeeded in their sport after suffering a significant and unique setback.

Daryl Thompson Lifetime Achievement Award

Dianne Barker (Kamloops) - Curling

The **Daryl Thompson Lifetime Achievement Award**, sponsored by the BC Games Society, is presented to an individual who has contributed their time in an extraordinary way to sport over a long period of time and/or has made a major contribution to amateur sport in British Columbia. The award is named after the late Daryl Thompson an inspiring former Chair of Sport BC.

ProMOTION Plus

The recipients have demonstrated their commitment to being role models and mentors of young women; they have opened doors to increase accessibility and promote opportunities for participation. They have strived, struggled, fallen, picked themselves up and continued – because they know the benefits and love what it means to be deeply involved in sport and physical activity.

In Her Footsteps . . . Celebrating BC Women in Sport

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| 2019 | Debbie Cheong (Delta) – Osteofit |
| 2019 | Loreen Barnett (North Vancouver) – Triathlon |
| 2020 | Diana Barkley (Whiterock) – Figure Skating |
| 2020 | Dr. Patricia Vertinsky (Vancouver) – Sport Researcher |

Bobbie Steen Foundation Legacy Award

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| 2019 | Emma Courtney (North Vancouver) – Outdoor Recreation |
| 2020 | Meghan Hebert (Whistler) – Snowboard |

About Sport BC

Sport BC believes in the power of sport and is committed to building stronger communities through positive sport experiences. Our goal is to enhance and support sport participation in British Columbia ensuring everyone has the opportunity to thrive. Through our KidSport BC, BC Amateur Sport Fund, and ProMOTION Plus along with our services Sport BC Insurance, and Payroll and Group Benefits; Sport BC supports our sixty plus member organizations. Keep up to date @SportBC

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Thursday, March 25, 2021
<http://sportbc.com>