



Vancouver Whitecaps FC named KidSport Community Champion

Organization to be honoured at Sport BC's 56th Annual Athlete of the Year Awards on March 7, 2024

VANCOUVER, BC - January 30, 2024 — Sport BC and KidSport BC are pleased to announce Vancouver Whitecaps FC as this year's recipient of the KidSport Community Champion Award, which will be presented at Sport BC's 56th Annual Athlete of the Year Awards on Thursday, March 7 at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver.

"We are honoured and humbled to receive this award from Sport BC and KidSport BC," said Axel Schuster, Whitecaps FC chief executive officer. "Making a positive impact in our community is the highest priority at our club. We would like to extend a big thank you to our fans who supported our partners at Kidsport by purchasing 50/50 tickets throughout the season."

The KidSport Community Champion award is presented to an individual or organization that has made a significant and meaningful contribution to KidSport. Past recipients include former BC Lions players Tommy Europe (2014) and Paul McCallum (2013), Olympians Jon Montgomery (2019), Evan Dunfee (2018), Kelsey Serwa (2015) and Mike Janyk (2012), Richmond hotel manager, Sanjeet Sadana (2020), and most recently, TSN reporter and long-time KidSport ambassador, Farhan Lalji.

The Vancouver Whitecaps FC purpose is to unite and inspire its communities. Whitecaps FC is one of the longest standing professional soccer clubs in North America, having originally been founded in 1974. The club is committed to harnessing the power of soccer to strengthen and elevate communities. They are passionate about creating opportunities for children and youth to experience the magic of soccer, whether at BC Place or in their own communities.

Whitecaps FC's support for KidSport has been instrumental in helping to meet the growing need from families who are facing financial barriers to sport. After being given the opportunity to host the 50/50 draw for a few matches during the 2022 season, Whitecaps FC named KidSport as the charity partner for their 50/50 program for 2023, which led to more than \$180,000 raised to help fund grants for kids across BC. Following that success, the club has invited KidSport back for the 2024 season to continue growing the program to help



even more kids. In addition, the club has donated proceeds from its Bottles for Boots program to KidSport, which encourages fans to return their beverage containers to a Return-It Express location.

“The Athlete of the Year Awards is a true celebration of sport in our province,” says Sport BC’s President and CEO, Rob Newman. “We are incredibly grateful to the Vancouver Whitecaps FC organization for their dedication to supporting children and youth in our communities and for their partnership with our KidSport program. We look forward to celebrating their contributions and the other finalists and award recipients at our upcoming Athlete of the Year Awards on March 7.”

“The opportunity to partner with Vancouver Whitecaps FC has been a game changer for us,” says KidSport BC’s Director, Angela Crowther. “Not only does the 50/50 partnership help us grow awareness about our program, but it also gives us the opportunity to raise much-needed funds to help meet the growing demand for support we are seeing in communities across the province. We are truly grateful for their partnership and support.”

Tickets for Sport BC’s 56th Annual Athlete of the Year Awards are available through Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/o/sport-bc-33750214235>

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About KidSport

The KidSport program aims to remove financial barriers to sport participation by providing grants to help cover the costs of registration fees. This program is intended to help increase participation numbers for Sport BC members and their local clubs by helping under-resourced children and youth access a season of sport. KidSport is a Registered Canadian Amateur Athletics Association (“RCAA”) with charitable status and can issue tax receipts to donors. Learn more at kidsportcanada.ca/british-columbia or follow us @KidSportBC.

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. Sport BC supports our 75 member organizations through our signature programs KidSport BC, BC Amateur Sport Fund, and ProMOTION Plus, and through our services Sport BC Insurance, and Payroll and Group Benefits. Learn more at sportbc.com or follow us @SportBC.



Media Contact - Athlete of the Year Awards

Allison Mailer

Sport BC Vice President, Operations

allison.mailer@sportbc.com

778-839-8576

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Fairmont Hotel Vancouver

#SportBC56thAOY

Media Contact – KidSport

Angela Crowther

Director, KidSport BC

angela.crowther@sportbc.com

604-839-3551