

57th
Annual

ATHLETE ^{OF} THE YEAR
AWARDS

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SPORT BC PRESIDENTS' AWARDS

PRESENTED BY SPORTS WITH BALLS

Founded in 1994, the Presidents' Awards promote and celebrate the spirit of volunteerism by giving member organizations an opportunity to acknowledge and thank an individual who has demonstrated outstanding dedication and commitment to their sport organization.

The 29th edition of the Presidents' Awards is proudly presented by Sports with Balls. This group of sport organizations includes Basketball BC, Baseball BC, Softball BC, BC Lacrosse, Volleyball BC, Tennis BC, BC Rugby, Ringette BC, and BC Soccer.

Badminton BC	MICHAEL KHOO	BC Women & Sport	BRENDA CHINN
Basketball BC	KEN OLYNYK	BC Wrestling	SUCHA MANN
BC Adaptive Snowsports	RUSSELL VIDA	Boxing BC	MEHRAN BAGHAIE
BC Archery	GREG BIRTWISTLE	Curl BC	NEIL CAMPBELL
BC Athletics	DAWN DRIVER	Field Hockey BC	COLBIN WONG
BC Blind Sports and Recreation	SEAN COWIE	Football BC	DREW KIGHTLEY
BC Diving	SVEN BATALLA	Gymnastics BC	GRAHAM DODD
BC Fencing	JOHN FRENCH	Judo BC	DONNA HANSEN
BC Freestyle	CARSON DORWARD	Karate BC	MICHAEL SCALES
BC Games Society	JAKE RUDOLPH	KidSport BC	PATTI HUNTER
BC Golf	BARBARA RAINEY	PacificSport Fraser Valley	STEPHANIE EBY
BC Hockey	RANDY HENDERSON	Rowing BC	DAVID MIEGE
BC Lacrosse	PENNI KING	Skate Canada BC/YT Section	JOANNE NICKEL
BC Netball	SABRINA VERSTEEG	Softball BC	LAVAUGHN LARSON
BC Seniors Games Society	GORDON OATES	SportAbility	JUDI CAMERON
BC Snowboard	STEVEN HILLS	Squash BC	TASHA DOUCAS
BC Soccer	STUART WRIGHT	SportMedBC	JOSEPH STERN
BC Sport Cheer	ALYSSA BRADFORD	Triathlon BC	PETER DENNY
BC Sports Hall	STAN WONG	Volleyball BC	BARTON LIM
BC Wheelchair Basketball	DARLENE ANTONIUK	Water Polo West	BOB NICOLS
BC Wheelchair Sports	KELLY SMITH		



Message from the Honourable Spencer Chandra Herbert
Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport



On behalf of Premier David Eby and the Government of British Columbia, a heartfelt congratulations to this year's Athlete of the Year nominees on this well-deserved honour.

I am inspired by the passion and commitment of tonight's nominees. You should be so proud of what you have accomplished and the impact you have had. The success of British Columbia's sport sector relies on the ongoing involvement and dedication of so many incredible people, like yourselves. We couldn't do it without the athletes, coaches, teams, and officials as well as the sport leaders and media members that truly make sport in this province top tier.

There is a lot to be proud of in our sport sector and this ceremony is an excellent way to celebrate that. This includes the Delivering on Diversity Award that acknowledges amazing work organizations are doing to open up opportunities for people with disabilities, women and newcomers. It's work that is contributing to our government's work to build a more welcoming and barrier-free sport sector in B.C.

A strong sport sector contributes to healthy, dynamic communities. It's why the Province is dedicated to supporting sport participation in every region of the province, investing \$50 million in amateur sport annually. Building a robust sport sector is a team effort, and we need a strong roster of committed and skilled players to achieve this goal.

Thank you also to Sport BC for hosting and organizing this event. This is an important and special occasion in recognizing the many players of a strong and thriving sport sector. To the nominees, thank you for all you've done throughout this past year. May tonight be full of many special memories and moments that will inspire and fuel dreams and ambitions for the coming year.

Sincerely,



Hon. Spencer Chandra Herbert,
Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport

Delivering on Diversity Award Description

The Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport established a new award to amplify the Province of British Columbia's commitment to diversity and inclusion. Congratulations to the recipient of the 4th Annual Delivering on Diversity Award to be announced this evening. BC Golf was the inaugural recipient in 2020, PacificSport Fraser Valley received it for 2022, and Volleyball BC received it for 2023.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND PRESIDENT/CEO

57TH ANNUAL ATHLETE OF THE YEAR AWARDS



Welcome from Sport BC

Welcome to the 57th Athlete of the Year Awards. Founded by Sport BC, these awards are Canada's longest-standing sport recognition event. Tonight, we celebrate 2024's outstanding athletes, dedicated coaches, devoted officials, and committed volunteers who have all seen exceptional success. We congratulate this year's Athlete of the Year Award finalists and Presidents' Award recipients on their memorable and meaningful achievements.

Sport BC is grateful for the support and trust of many champions of sport. Thank you to the Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport; the Honourable Spencer Chandra Herbert, and to the Province of British Columbia for supporting the Athlete of the Year Awards and the 4th Annual Delivering on Diversity Award. We also deeply appreciate the sponsors and supporters who made tonight's Athlete of the Year Awards possible. We are grateful to our seventy-eight members and the entire sport sector, who have been significant contributors to the success of amateur sport in British Columbia. Sport BC acknowledges the families, friends, clubs, and communities whose support and encouragement help to foster everyone's successes.

On behalf of Sport BC congratulations again to the finalists and award recipients. We thank Scott Russell for emceeding our event; his continued support of the Athlete of the Year Awards is greatly appreciated. We would also like to thank Sport BC's Board of Directors for their leadership, vision, and counsel as we continue to collaborate as an organization and sector.

Lastly, thank you, our guests, for joining us this evening for our provincial celebration of the power of sport.



Sandi Swanigan
Sport BC, Chair



Rob Newman
President and CEO

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

57TH ANNUAL ATHLETE OF THE YEAR AWARDS



ATHLETE OF THE YEAR AWARDS EVENING HOST: Scott Russell

A Canadian Screen Award and Gemini Award-winning broadcaster and acclaimed author, CBC Sports Veteran for more than 25 years, Scott Russell has covered a multitude of high-profile sporting events including 16 Olympic Games, most recently covering the Tokyo 2020 and Beijing 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Games. With an unparalleled knowledge and enthusiasm for amateur sport, Scott serves on the CBC Sports Initiative on Women in Sport, the Canadian Olympic Committee's Education Committee, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport, the Public Policy Forum on Value-Based Sport, the Paralympic Foundation of Canada, and the International Centre for Olympic Studies at Western University. We are honoured to welcome back tonight's host... Scott Russell.

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SBC Insurance Advisor

VIOLA LU

SBC Insurance Administrative Co-ordinator

VOLUNTEERS

We are grateful to all of the volunteers who gave their time and energy into producing the Presidents' Awards and the 57th Annual Athlete of the Year Awards.

ATHLETE OF THE YEAR AWARDS' SELECTION COMMITTEE



Left to Right: Tom Mayenknecht, Sue Griffin, Jordan Abney, Judy Joseph-Black, Jason Beck, Bernie Pascall, Michelle McDonnell, Dan Riccio, Alison Noble, Karin Larsen

IN MEMORIAM

57TH ATHLETE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

We fondly remember those who dedicated their lives to sport and who passed away over the last few years. We are saddened by their absence, but are comforted knowing that they are forever in our hearts. We are grateful for their contribution to sport in our province and the legacy they have left for future generation.

BC Golf

Tom Champion
Nielson Green
Jordan Mason
Paul Monaghan
David Shaw
Brian Watt
Margaret Rogers

BC Soccer

William Azzi
Kenneth Paul Barbour
Kjeld Brodsgaard
Hans Clodius
Cardin Davis
Luciano Montagliani
Gordon Frank McLeod
Patrick Oliver Magee
Gale Russell
Werner Schwan
Darren Young

Cycling BC

Lindsay Burgess

BC Sports Hall of Fame

Koichi "Kaye" Kaminishi
Herman Kovits
Dick McClure
Bill Mitchell
Dave Ritchie
Dr. Jack Taunton
Trevor Whymark
Eleanor (Cave) Whyte

Gymnastics BC

Doug Odin

Judo BC

Mark Digney
Martin Kuramoto
Radomir (Bob) Orescanin

Softball BC

Andy Adamson
Pat Hardy

Triathlon BC

Michael Brown



DANIELLE ELLIS – Sitting Volleyball

Third time was the charm for White Rock's Danielle and her Canadian Paralympic teammates in Paris. After finishing seventh at the Rio Games and fourth in Tokyo, the Canadians took the bronze medal at the 2024 Paralympics with a 3-0 win over Brazil. Team captain Ellis notched 13 points in the bronze medal match. Earlier in the year Ellis led her teammates to the gold medal at the Dutch Tournament and a fifth-place effort the 2024 Super Six international tournament.



JULIA HANES – Para Athletics (Seated Throws)

Julia toils as a resident doctor but still finds time to compete at the highest level of Paralympic Athletics. In 2024 Hanes, 29, held Canadian records for shot put, discus and javelin in her F33 class and at the 2024 Canadian championships she rewrote her national shot put record three times over a course of six throws. Vancouver's Hanes took gold in javelin at the World Para Athletics Grand Prix and finished sixth in shot put and eighth in javelin at the 2024 Paralympic Games.



MAGGIE MANNING – Para Ice Hockey

Maggie grew up in Salmon Arm playing stand up hockey and ringette and, while initially advancing to the Paralympic hockey ranks as a skater, she made the move to goaltender in 2022 and has never looked back. Manning, 25, recorded two shutout wins at the 2024 Women's World Challenge in Norway, her first international tournament with the Canadian women's para hockey team. Those wins against Great Britain and Team Pacific helped propel Team Canada to second place at the tournament.

MALE ATHLETE WITH A DISABILITY OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY BC AMATEUR SPORT FUND

NATHAN CLEMENT - Para Cycling

Nathan came into the 2024 UCI Road and Para-Cycling World Championships as defending champion in the T1 time trial from 2023. Not only did the 30-year-old West Vancouver cyclist defend his world title, he also won the road race at the prestigious event in Switzerland. A former Paralympic swimmer from the 2016 Games in Rio, Nathan also took home a silver medal in men's T1-2 time trial from the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris.



CODY FOURNIE - Para Athletics (Wheelchair Racing)

Cody made an impressive Paralympic debut in 2024, winning the men's T51 100 and 200-metre wheelchair sprints to secure double gold in Paris. His 19.63 clocking in the 100 was a Canadian and Paralympic record for his division. After many years on Canada's wheelchair rugby team, Victoria's Fournie switched to Para Athletics in 2022. Cody earned a silver medal in the 100 metres at the 2024 Para Athletics world championships in Kobe, finishing his season ranked No.1 in BC, Canada and internationally over 100 metres.



SEBASTIAN MASSABIE - Para Swimming

Sebastian splashed to a gold medal in world record time at the 2024 Paralympics, winning the S4 50-metre freestyle in 35.61 seconds to become the first Canadian to win a medal in the S4 class. At just 19, this Surrey swimmer also won gold in five events at the national championships, capping the year ranked world No.1 in the 50 freestyle and 50 butterfly and was named Swim BC's 2024 Male Swimmer of the Year.





KEVIN BOWIE - Wheelchair Rugby

Kevin is a World Wheelchair Rugby internationally certified referee who has been officiating in the sport for more than 20 years. He currently serves as the head official for Wheelchair Rugby in Canada and as the head official in BC, overseeing referee assignments, education and training. He was selected as a referee to the 2024 Paralympics in Paris after serving as a technical delegate at the Tokyo Paralympics.



BRIAN HEBERT - Beach Volleyball

Brian is both an international referee for beach volleyball and a national candidate in indoor volleyball. In 2024 his international assignments included officiating at major beach volleyball events in Brazil and Mexico. He became the first BC referee to officiate Olympic beach volleyball, overseeing matches at the spectacular beach volleyball venue at the 2024 Games in Paris. He played on Canada's national beach volleyball team from 2000 to 2006.



ANDRÉE MONTREUIL - Gymnastics

Born in Quebec, Andree has devoted a lifetime to the sport of gymnastics as an athlete, coach and judge. In 2003 she joined Gymnastics BC as technical director then moved to CEO in 2020. In her 50 years as a judge she has served on numerous provincial and national committees and served as mentor and educator to countless gymnasts, coaches, judges and administrators. She has officiated at many world championships and was Canada's exclusive WAG nomination as an official for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

MASTER ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY CANADA LIFE

canada **life**™

BETTY BRUSSEL - Swimming

Betty hails from New Westminster and swims out of the White Rock Wave Club. She turned 100 years old in 2024 but showed no sign of slowing down. She made headlines around the world when in a single day she broke three world records for her 100-104 age group - rewriting world marks for the 400-metre freestyle, 50M backstroke and 50M breaststroke. Brussel, who began swimming at age 60, was honoured as Swim BC's Masters Female Swimmer of 2024. Betty broke an incredible 12 world records in 2024 - one of which was her own - so in total she holds 11 world records in the 100-104 age group.



GERALD POULTON - Squash

Gerald defeated fellow Canadian and top seed Howard Armitage in the final to win the World Squash Federation Masters Championship in the 80-plus division, becoming the first Canadian to win that championship's age category. A former University of Victoria chemistry professor, he also took gold in men's 80-plus at the Pan Am Masters Championship after also winning the 75 and 85-plus divisions at the Canadian championships.



DIANE SILZER - Speed Skating

Short and long track were all fast track for Diane, who began 2024 as F60 world record holder in four short track distances. Skating out of Burnaby Speedskating Club, she won short track gold in the 500-metre F60 final at the World Masters Winter Games in Italy, and also took silver medals in the 1,000 and 1,500-metre events. She was fourth in the long track 500, 1,000 and 3,000 metre events at the Games and ended the year ranked No.2 internationally in F60 short track and No.4 in long track.



HIGH SCHOOL FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY TOA CONSULTING



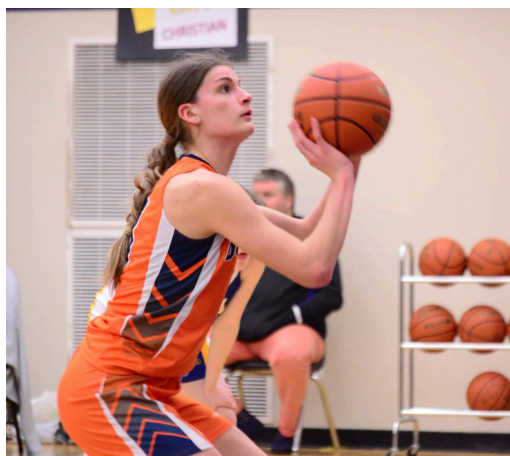
AGNIA KRAKOVSKA (Maple Ridge Secondary) - Wrestling

Just two years after taking up the sport of wrestling this Maple Ridge Secondary student emerged as a force in 2024, winning her weight class and leading her school team to second place at the BC School Sports provincial championships. Agnia went on to win the 53-kilo class at the U19 national championships and also finished first at the U17 Pan-American championships. She capped her 2024 season with a victory at the US National Freakshow Wrestling Tournament in Las Vegas.



TALIA PHANGURA (North Surrey Secondary) - Athletics

Talia, from North Surrey Secondary, dominated the junior girls' throws at the 2024 BC High School Track and Field Championships in Nanaimo, winning the shot put, hammer and discus events. She went on finish first in all three disciplines at the BC provincial championship jamboree and was also best in shot put and hammer at the 2024 Canadian Youth Legion Championships.



MIAH SCHUURMAN (Unity Christian School) - Basketball & Volleyball

Led Chilliwack's Unity Christian School Flames to an 85-73 win over Victoria's Pacific Christian in the final of the Provincial A Girls basketball championships. Miah, a 5'11" guard/forward, scored 42 points and 21 rebounds in the final to earn tournament and championship MVP honours. On the volleyball court, she was also named a first team all-star as the Flames took first place in the provincial A girls volleyball tournament.

HIGH SCHOOL MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY BC SPORTS HALL OF FAME



COLE BUDGEN (Vernon Secondary) – Basketball, Football & Golf

Quarterback and team captain Cole led his Vernon Secondary School Panthers to a second consecutive BC high school football AA championship final. Defending champion Vernon came just short of a repeat title in a 17-14 loss to Windsor, but Cole was named league MVP and Interconference Player of the Year. He was also team captain of his school's varsity basketball team and was also a member of the Panthers' golf squad.



MICHEALJEET GREWAL (WJ Mouat Secondary) – Wrestling

In 2024 Michealjeet dominated the high school and national wrestling ranks in his weight class, leading WJ Mouat to team and combined titles at the BC School Sports Provincial Championships while also winning his 90-kilo weight class. He also was best in both freestyle and Greco Roman disciplines at the 2024 national championships and won the 92-kilo final at the U17 Pan American Championships in the Dominican Republic. He capped his season with a fifth-place finish at the U17 world championships.



EMMETT WARD (Windsor Secondary) – Basketball, Football, Rugby & Track and Field

His Windsor Wolves were down 14-0 at the end of the first half but quarterback Ward ignited a second-half rally that ended with the Wolves defeating Vernon Panthers 17-14 in the final of the BC high school AA football championships. Emmet, named MVP of the championship final and AA Offensive Player of the Year, was also a member of Windsor's basketball team that took the 2024 North Shore basketball championship. He also finished first in high jump at the North Shore track and field championships.





AMY LEE - Golf

Amy was a runaway winner at the 2024 BC Junior Girls Championships, taking the title with an 18-shot victory over her nearest rival. She also fired a first round 67 to tie the course record en route to winning the BC Women's Amateur Championship. She also took the Pacific Northwest Golf Association Championship and ended 2024 named the PPGA Junior Girls Player of the Year and the No.1-ranked junior female golfer in BC.



BROOKLYN LEE-MCMEEKEN - Gymnastics

A trampoline specialist from Pitt Meadows, Brooklyn was named Gymnastics Canada Junior Athlete of the Year after winning double mini gold at the 2024 Pan Am, Junior Elite Canada and Junior National Championships. She also won gold on trampoline at Junior Elite Canada and earned a silver medal at junior nationals. In 2023 she won double mini gold in the 13-14 division at the World Age Group Championships.



CHLOE PRIMERANO - Ice Hockey

Chloe set a tournament record for points by a defender (8 goals, 8 assists) at the 2024 Women's U18 Hockey World Championships, where Canada defeated Finland 8-1 to take the bronze medal. She was also named the championship MVP and Best Defender. North Vancouver's Primerano, who opted for accelerated high school graduation to attend University of Minnesota, scored 11 points in her first 16 collegiate games. At age 17 she was also the youngest player named to Team Canada's national squad for the Rivalry Series.

JUNIOR MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY SPORT BURNABY



ISAAC BOEHMER - Soccer

Isaac stood his ground in the final of the Telus Canadian Championships, where his Vancouver Whitecaps prevailed 4-2 in penalty kicks over Toronto FC after the final match was deadlocked 0-0 after regulation time. The Whitecaps goalkeeper was awarded the George Gross Memorial Trophy as tournament MVP and was also named the tournament's Best Young Canadian Player. The win was the team's third consecutive win in the Canadian championship.



LOWAN LE BRIS - Judo

Lowan was just 16 when he won gold in the men's senior 66k division at the national championships, the youngest athlete to win a senior Canadian championship title. The Surrey judoka also won his U18 division at nationals and also enjoyed international success in 2024, winning gold in the cadet division at the Danish Open while also posting victories at the Pacific International and Pan American championships.



NICK ZHANG - Fencing

At age 17 Nick qualified for the 2024 Olympics with a dramatic overtime win in the epee final at the Pan Am Qualifier, becoming the youngest male epee fencer from Canada to qualify for the Games. He also won gold at the Junior Canada Cup and finished 14th at the 2024 Junior World Championships. Zhang, who began fencing at age 11 at the Richmond Dynamo Club, was also recruited by Harvard University to compete at the NCAA level.



**LAURA BROWN - Cycling**

Laura turned to coaching in 2018 after a successful cycling career that included winning women's team pursuit bronze at the 2016 Olympics and silver and bronze at the 2014 world championships. North Vancouver's Brown, 38, coached the Canadian men's track cycling team to a 7th place finish in team pursuit at the 2024 Paris Olympics, the first time a Canadian men's team had qualified for the event at the Games.

**KAREN KOS - Ice Hockey**

A power-skating coach who has coached minor hockey for 20 seasons, Karen was honoured with BC Hockey's Ernie Gare Award as Coach of the Year after leading her North Shore Winterhawks U13 squad to victory in league play and the BC Hockey Championship. The team then qualified to compete at the prestigious Quebec International Pee Wee Tournament, marking the first time a female team from BC and Western Canada competed at the event.

**DORINA STAN - Gymnastics**

A longtime coach with North Vancouver's Flicka Gymnastics, Dorina guided Flicka standout Shallon Olsen to a successful 2024 season that included gold in the vault at Elite Canada and the Canadian championships. Olsen also reached the vault final at the 2024 Olympics in Paris and contributed to Canada's fifth-place finish in the women's team event at the Games, matching the best ever performance by a Canadian women's team in Olympic gymnastics.

MALE COACH OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY TD BANK GROUP



DYLAN ARMSTRONG – Athletics

Dylan was nine years old when joined the Kamloops Track and Field Club – 35 years later his name is synonymous with coaching and athletic excellence. In 2024 protégé Ethan Katzberg, gold medalist from the 2023 World Track and Field Championships, took Olympic gold in men’s hammer throw, marking the first Olympic hammer throw medal earned by a Canadian since Duncan Gillis took silver in 1912. Armstrong’s athletic resume includes Olympic and world championship bronze medals in shot put.



IGOR GANTSEVICH – Fencing

Since Igor established the Dynamo Fencing Club in Richmond his program has become one of the largest and most successful in North America. In 2024 his Dynamo athletes achieved success on many levels, including Dylan French earning a silver medal at the national championships and bronze at the Vancouver World Cup while Nick Zhang won gold in men’s epee at the nationals and Pan Am Qualifier to qualify for the Olympics. During the year Dynamo competitors won 31 medals, including nine gold, at the cadet, junior and senior levels.



RICHARD IKEDA – Gymnastics

A longtime member of the Canadian men’s national team, Richard has also enjoyed coaching success with his Abbotsford Twisters athletes. In 2024 he coached Zachary Clay to a silver medal in pommel at the national championships, a result that propelled Clay to the Canadian Olympic team where in Paris the men’s gymnastics team made history by qualifying for the final. The Twisters juniors also took gold in the team event at the national championships and Abbotsford finished third in the Open team event.



MALINDI ELMORE

Malindi Elmore, who was honoured at last year's Awards as the Master Athlete of the Year and competed at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games in the women's marathon last summer, used her platform in the weeks leading up to her departure for the Olympics to help raise more than \$26,000 for KidSport.

The three-time Olympian and mom of two, teamed up with the local KidSport chapter where she lives in Kelowna to host a special advanced screening of CBC's "Running a Revolution", which documents women's struggle for equality in the marathon event, and Malindi's inspiring journey to Paris 2024. Proceeds from ticket sales for the event were donated to KidSport. Funds were also raised through an online silent auction, sales of exclusive 'Run Malindi Run' t-shirts, and online donations.

In true Olympic fashion, Malindi exceeded her original \$24,000 fundraising goal, raising \$26,700 for KidSport, which will fund a season of sport for approximately 90 kids. "2024 was another record year for the KidSport program in BC," says Angela Crowther, KidSport BC's Director. "We distributed more than \$3.6 million to fund sport for 10,695 kids last year, which is nearly double what our totals were just two years ago. Having ambassadors like Malindi on our side to help rally their community to raise funds for KidSport is such a gift."



So ALL Kids Can Play!



DARYL THOMPSON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

PRESENTED BY BC GAMES SOCIETY



LESLIE BUCHANAN

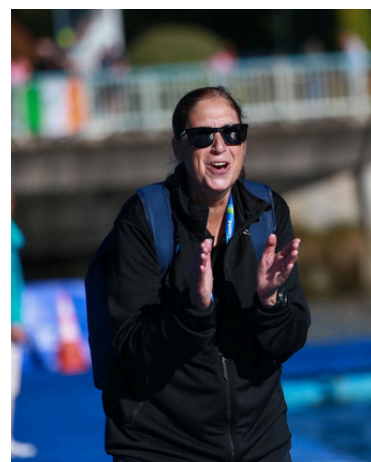
There is no doubt Leslie has truly done every job associated with triathlon, from initial basic volunteer tasks in the mid 1980s to coaching and refereeing, to serving as an Olympic technical delegate to her current role as an executive board member with World Triathlon. The sport has benefitted mightily from her input but she is quick to note her life has been enriched because of her involvement in sport.

“Sports were just a part of our lives as a family,” she says of growing up and dabbling in a variety of sports, particularly track and field. “I never wanted to do anything else. It made sense that when my competitive – and I use that term loosely – career was over that I would continue in some way in sports with coaching and officiating. I am very lucky that I have had the opportunity to go as far as I have in sport, including officiating at five Olympic Games.”

Leslie’s impact on the sport is considerable. At the provincial level, she has been a member of Triathlon BC for decades and as a board member she oversaw the development of the sport at the community and provincial level. Internationally, she helped create the first Triathlon Competition Rulebook and was a key driver in the move to lobby the International Olympic Committee to include triathlon in the Games – a successful effort that saw the sport make its debut at the 2000 Games in Sydney.

Her resume includes a myriad of other responsibilities in the sport. Leslie has served on World Triathlon’s medical and anti-doping, national coaches and technical committees. She served as triathlon co-technical delegate at the 2012 London Olympics and race referee at the 2016 Summer Paralympic Games.

Through the decades she also worked as an English teacher in West Vancouver and after class she could be found coaching basketball, field hockey and track and field.



KATIE GORDON**IN HER FOOTSTEPS
HONOUREE**

Katie made history as the first female firefighter for the City of Prince George in 2015, breaking barriers in a traditionally male-dominated profession and inspiring young women to pursue their ambitions in fields they might have once thought unattainable.

Katie's commitment to creating pathways for women extends into her love for sports as well, where she has been a powerful advocate for change in northern rugby. When faced with the absence of a women's rugby team in Prince George, Katie revived the sport and inspired numerous women to join.

Katie has dedicated countless hours in schools, local clubs, and on boards advocating for the future of female athletes and leaders in northern communities, to make sure they are seen, heard, and have access to empowering programs. Katie exemplifies what it means to lead by example, inspiring young women to break barriers, pursue their passions, and achieve their goals.

MARY MORICE**IN HER FOOTSTEPS
HONOUREE**

Mary has been a dedicated GymBC member and an active contributor to the gymnastics community for over 35 years. Her primary role as a Recreational Coach has spanned multiple clubs across the province, and she has served as the Gymnastics for All Chair on the GymBC Board of Directors. Additionally, Mary has been instrumental as a GymBC Learning Facilitator, delivering National Coaching Certification Programs that shape the next generation of gymnastics coaches in British Columbia.

Throughout her career, Mary has championed recreational gymnastics opportunities, working with participants of all ages and abilities. Her passion for inclusive programming is evident through her long-time support for Interclub and Gymnaestrada, both of which offer gymnastics experiences for all. She is currently volunteering her time to support the 2025 Western Gymnaestrada.

KATIE MIYAZAKI**BOBBIE STEEN LEGACY
AWARD RECIPIENT**

Katie has focused much of her career on breaking down barriers and creating opportunities specifically for girls and women in traditionally male-dominated sports, such as football. In her role at Football Canada as Manager of Athlete Development, Katie led the creation and organization of Canada's first-ever Women & Girls Football Conference. Katie has also been an active member of Football Canada's Women's Development Committee, where she drives initiatives designed to build equitable access to football at all levels, particularly for girls and women.

Katie's career exemplifies a sustained, innovative approach to advancing gender equity in sport. Her future plans in sport promise to build on this legacy, continuing to open doors for girls and women and ensuring that their presence and voices are integral to the future of physical activity, sport, and recreation.

TEAM OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY GAMEDAY INSURANCE



UBC THUNDERBIRDS WOMEN'S SOCCER

The T-Birds came into the 2024 season as defending U Sports champions and capped their campaign with a 1-0 victory over Laval in the U Sports championship final to end what was a remarkable season. UBC went 14-0 through regular league play then notched another four playoff wins to record the first perfect season in Canada West history. The team also notched a Canada West record 42 points in a single season while tying the Canada West record for most shutouts.



UVIC VIKES WOMEN'S FIELD HOCKEY

Dynasty is not a word given lightly in sport but the Vikes women's field hockey team deserved the label in 2024 by winning a sixth consecutive U Sports Women's Field Hockey National Championship. A goal by veteran forward Ami Kleinschmidt secured the 1-0 victory over York in the national final as UVic came away as champion without conceding a single goal in post-season play. The win was the team's 17th national championship



TEAM CANADA NATIONAL JUNIOR SQUASH TEAM

BC players Ocean Ma, Spring Ma, Maria Min and Hermione Cao made history at the 2024 World Junior Team Squash Championships in Houston, winning a bronze medal to become the first Canadian team to win a medal at the championships. In addition, all four athletes, who had joined a year earlier to win gold at the Canada Games, were ranked in the top four of Squash Canada's national junior girls' rankings.



ZACHARY CLAY

A fractured tibia and snapped anterior cruciate ligament suffered in 2015 might have ended Zachary's career. But determination, patience, perseverance, and hard work eventually put the Chilliwack gymnast back in the upper echelon of Canadian men's gymnastics. He recovered to win the Canadian all-around championship in 2017 and qualified for the all-around final at the 2017 World Championships. By 2023 his tenacity was matched with longevity as at the age of 28 he competed in all six events at the World Championships, helping his Canadian team qualify for the 2024 Olympic Games. A year later, at age 29, Zachary and his Canadian Olympic teammates made history in Paris as the first Canadian men's gymnastics team to qualify for the Olympic final.

Congratulations Zachary Clay, Sport BC's Harry Jerome Comeback Award Recipient.



IHOR VERYS

Ihor Verys knew he was in for the challenge of a lifetime when he received his invitation to take part in the 2024 Barkley Marathons. The invitation-only ultrarunning event is infamous for many reasons – few participants ever finish the 100-mile event and those who have a chance to complete the five-loop journey must do so in under 60 hours.

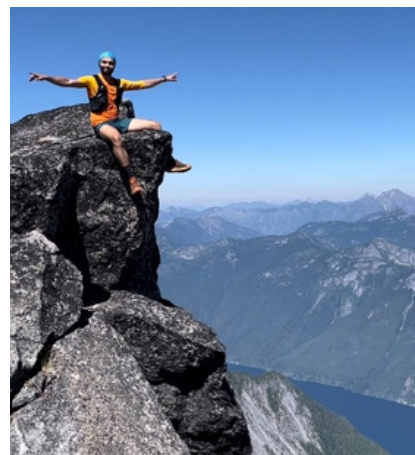
There are also navigational challenges – there is no set trail so runners must make their way through brush and fen, up severe inclines and steep descents, without the help of GPS or phone guidance systems. It is no wonder Barkley is revered and reviled in the hearts and minds of all those who have taken part in the mysterious race in rural Tennessee.

Ihor accomplished the near-impossible – finishing the gruelling test in 58 hours, 44 minutes and 59 seconds to become the first Canadian to finish, and win, the event.

Ihor dabbled in half marathons, then marathons, and discovered the world of ultrarunning after Covid-19 necessitated a move to the safer solitude of running trails.

“On the trails I met some likeminded people who told me there were distances longer than marathons,” Ihor says. “That’s how I discovered the world of ultrarunning – where you can go for hundreds of miles, over multiple days and nights. Then I got to wondering are they special people or can I be one of them? So I dove down that wormhole to explore all the beauties of ultrarunning.”

A second-place finish at the 2023 Bigs Backyard Ultra World Championships and victory in the Canadian Death Race likely earned Ihor a coveted and elusive invitation to the 2024 Barkley Marathons.





AMAR DHESI - Wrestling

A Vancouver police officer away from the wrestling mat, Amar qualified for the Paris Olympics after overwhelming his Cuban opponent 11-0 in his 125k final at the Pan Am qualifier. He would go on to finish ninth in Paris, improving upon his 13th-place effort in his Olympic debut in Tokyo. He also took fifth at the world championships. A former world junior champion in 2014, he has continued to compete at the highest level although his wrestling career has at times been hampered by knee injuries.



RAYMOND HUANG - Archery

In 2024 Raymond enjoyed considerable success in his Barebow discipline – a form of archery that does not allow for sights or stabilizers or other accessories fixed to the bow. He recorded several wins, including victories at the Lancaster Classic, the SoCal Showdown, the Pan American Championships and the BC Championships, He also finished second at the 2024 Archery World's Classic.



ETHAN KATZBERG - Athletics

He entered the hammer throw circle at the 2024 Paris Olympics as 2023 world champion and left its confines as the youngest athlete to ever win Olympic gold in hammer throw. Ethan was just 22 when he made his Olympic debut a winning one, unleashing a toss of 84.12 metres on his first throw – a mark no rival could better. The win made Nanaimo's Katzberg Canada's first Olympic hammer thrower to win a medal since 1912. He was selected Team Canada's co-Closing Ceremony flagbearer with swimmer Summer McIntosh.

SENIOR FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

PRESENTED BY UNDER ARMOUR



CAILIEGH FILMER – Rowing

Earned a silver medal as a member of the Canadian women's eight at the 2024 Olympics in Paris. Caileigh was also part of Canada's women's eight crew that took the gold medal at the Lucerne Rowing World Cup. A gold medallist in women's pair with Piper Battersby at the 2023 Canadian championships, Filmer returned a year later to the national event to again take top spot in the discipline, this time with Alexis Cronk.



SHALLON OLSEN – Gymnastics

At the 2024 Paris Olympics Surrey's Shallon joined a small and distinguished group of international gymnasts who have qualified for an event final at three consecutive Olympics. A finalist in vault at the Rio and Tokyo Games, the Canadian team veteran also qualified for the vault final in Paris while helping the Canadian women's team qualify for the team final, the first time in 12 years the Canadian women have made the Olympic final eight. Olsen also took gold in her specialty at both Elite Canada and the Canadian championships.



CAMRYN ROGERS – Athletics

In 2024 Camryn became Canada's first women's Olympic track and field gold medallist in 96 years, and just the third ever in history, joining high jump heroine Ethel Catherwood and the Canadian women's relay team who both won Olympic gold at the 1928 Games in Amsterdam. In Paris Richmond's Rogers secured gold in the women's hammer throw with a 76.97-metre toss, adding Olympic champion to a list of laurels that also included her winning the 2023 World Championship.



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