



Life Members Bob Sayer and the late Tony Waiters to be honoured in 2021

Bob Sayer, honoured member of the Canada Soccer Hall of Fame, and Tony Waiters Coaching Excellence Award

Canada Soccer will honour two important contributors to the game in 2021 at the upcoming Annual Meeting of the Members: former Canada Soccer Vice-President Bob Sayer who will be inducted to the Canada Soccer Hall of Fame and the late Tony Waiters who will have his name added to the new Tony Waiters Coaching Excellence Award. Sayer will be inducted as a Builder as part of the Class of 2020 while the first recipient of the Tony Waiters Coaching Award will be selected in 2021.

Bob Sayer, honoured member of the Canada Soccer Hall of Fame

Bob Sayer has been honoured by the Canada Soccer Hall of Fame as part of the Class of 2020 joining previously-announced player inductees Karina LeBlanc and Brittany Timko Baxter. Sayer, a Canada Soccer Life Member and former Canada Soccer Vice-President from 1986 to 1992, becomes an honoured member in the Builders section and will be formally celebrated in 2021 at the Canada Soccer Awards Banquet as part of the Annual Meeting of the Members in Saint John, New Brunswick.

“This year, the Canada Soccer Hall of Fame honoured two Olympic medal winners and an important early champion that promoted women’s soccer and the creation of Canada Soccer’s Women’s National Team in the 1980s,” said Dr. Nick Bontis, Canada Soccer President. “Bob Sayer helped guide our vision for women’s soccer in Canada and part of his legacy has been the success of players like Karina LeBlanc and Brittany Timko Baxter, from winning a bronze medal at the London 2012 Olympic Games to each representing their country more than 100 times.”

Sayer of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia was a key advocate and supporter in the initiation and development of women's soccer at the national and international levels for Canada. Alongside founding and coaching the Lunenburg Lasers SC, he was part of the committee that hosted the 1982 Eastern Canadian Championship and 1983 National Championships for the Jubilee Trophy. From there, he continued to help promote the establishment of Canada Soccer's Women's National Team, which soon held its first national camp in July 1986 during Sayer's first year as the Canada Soccer Vice-President.

Mr. Sayer was in fact a Co-Chair at Canada Soccer's national conference for women's soccer that led to the adoption of policies for the Women's National Championship (Jubilee Trophy), the Women's National Team, and programs for the development of women's coaches and referees.

During Sayer's term as a member of the executive, Canada Soccer also competed at the 1986 FIFA World Cup Mexico™, supported the launch of the Canadian Soccer League in 1987, hosted the FIFA U-16 World Tournament Canada 1987, reached the Quarter-finals at the 1988 FIFA Women's Invitational Tournament, and participated in the first Concacaf Women's Championship in 1991. Sayer served as a member and Chair of the Canada Soccer Competitions Committee.

Sayer, who was head of delegation for Canada Soccer's Women's National Team's first international matches against USA in July 1986, traveled with Canada to several competitions including the 1986 FIFA World Cup™, the FIFA World Youth Championship Chile 1987 and the first Concacaf Gold Cup in 1991. He was also part of Canada Soccer's delegation at the FIFA Congress that approved the launch of the FIFA Women's World Cup™. He served as President of Soccer Nova Scotia from 1981 to 1984 and was the founding Chair of the Nova Scotia Professional Soccer Society which established the Nova Scotia Clippers as an expansion franchise in the Canadian Soccer League in 1991.

"It has been a thrilling ride and I am delighted to have been part of Canada Soccer's huge growth of the game for all ages for both men's and women's soccer," said Bob Sayer, Canada Soccer Hall of Fame Honoured Member. "I feel honoured to be recognised by the Canada Soccer Hall of Fame. I was fortunate enough to be able to contribute to the world's great game and its growth in Canada. From establishing a network of National Championships and National Teams to supporting the global drive for a FIFA Women's World

Cup to the establishment of the first Women's National Team, the Jubilee Trophy finals, and the development programs initiated for women's coaches and referees. We also had the FIFA U-16 World Tournament which established Canada as a respected host and we brought about a professional league that underlined the development of Canadian players.

"It has all been a pleasure and I look forward to watching the game grow even further with the hosting of the men's 2026 FIFA World Cup in Canada."

Tony Waiters Coaching Excellence Award

The Tony Waiters Coaching Excellence Award recognises a person's overall contribution to coaching in Canada for a minimum of 20 years. The award is named after the late Tony Waiters, a former Canada Soccer Head Coach that qualified the Men's National Team to both the 1984 Olympic Games and 1986 FIFA World Cup™ as well as won the first Concacaf Championship in 1985. The first recipient of the new award will be announced in 2021 at the Annual Meeting of the Members.

Waiters, who passed away in November 2020, is an honoured member of the Canada Soccer Hall of Fame and was named a Canada Soccer Life Member at the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Members. He served as Canada Soccer's Men's National Team and Olympic Team Head Coach for more than six years in two stints from December 1982 to February 1992 in both roles and until May 1992 as the Olympic/U-23 Coach. He was a recipient of the Aubrey Sanford Meritorious Service Award in 1996.

The Tony Waiters Coaching Excellence Award is an important addition to Canada Soccer's awards & recognition program as it is the first, coach-specific award that celebrates coaching and coach education over an extended period of time. Other Canada Soccer Awards are the Canada Soccer President's Award, the Aubrey Sanford Meritorious Service Award, the Ray Morgan Memorial Award (referees), the International Achievement Award (referees), the Brian Budd Award, and the Canada Soccer Award of Merit.

"Tony Waiters was a monumental figure in Canadian soccer and we are privileged to name our new coaching award in his honour, the Tony Waiters Coaching Excellence Award," said Dr. Nick Bontis, Canada Soccer President. "Mr. Waiters played an important role both as a coach of our National Teams as well as an instructor and coach educator. He had an incredible influence on our game, our players and our coaches."