

The Springwater Sports Heritage Hall of Fame has announced their inductees for 2018. This is the third group to be part of the Hall of Fame. In 2014 the inaugural Induction Ceremony consisted of eleven Athletes, seven Builders and four Teams. In 2016 there were two Athletes, four Builders and three Teams.

The class of 2018 includes three athletes, three builders and three teams. The late **Homer Barrett** (Hockey Fastball), **Tom VanNatter** (Hockey) and **Frankie Edgecombe** (Volleyball, Ball Hockey, and Hockey) are the three latest athletes that will be inducted into the Hall of Fame on September 14th at the Barrie Country Club. The Builders include the late **John Brown, Donald Stoddart** and **Harold McMaster** for their outstanding contribution, service and dedication to sport. The three Teams entering the Hall of Fame include the **1950 Minesing Softball Team**, the **1976/77 Dutcher & Corbett Elmvale Peewee Hockey Team** and the **1982 Elmvale Angels Ladies Softball Team**.

In this week's column, I am going to start with the Athletes. The Builders and Teams will be recognized in a later edition.

Homer Barrett, who passed away on August 28, 1977, was born (1934) and raised in Elmvale. Homer Barrett Park in Elmvale is named after this gentleman who won numerous championships on the diamond and on the ice. Homer was a steady ball player but hockey was his game. He scored over 1,000 goals in his career and was "The Gordie Howe" of our area without the fists and elbows. His 1,000th goal was recognized on a Hockey Night in Canada broadcast. Homer's nickname was "Ace" because of his scoring ability.

In 1970, Homer was voted the top Elmvale & District sportsman of the decade for his achievements in the 1960's. In hockey, he played for Elmvale, Midland, Stayner and Penetang. In 1998, the Midland Junior "C" team that won the 1953-54 OHA Championship, with Homer playing a big part, was inducted into the Midland Sports Hall of Fame.

Homer also won the Callahan Cup with Stayner Royals in the Central Ontario Hockey League, Central Ontario Hockey League finalist with the Elmvale Harvesters, captain of the Elmvale Intermediate "C" Western Ontario Hockey League Champions (1967-68), was finalist with Elmvale in the OHA Intermediate "B" playoffs, MVP in 1970-71 and 1971-72 with the Elmvale Intermediate hockey team, reached the OHA Intermediate "C" finals with Penetang, won 1959 and 1962 championships with the Elmvale Merchants in the Georgian Bay Fastball League, won 1958 Barrie Senior Fastball championship with Barrie, won Barrie

Major Fastball championships in 1964 & 65 with the Elmvale Merchants as well as OASA finalist in 1964. That 1964 team was inducted into the Springwater Sports Hall of Fame in 2016.

Homer played for other communities in our area but Elmvale was home. He passed away at 42 and according to veteran fastball catcher Lou Belcourt, **“He still played into his late thirties and also coached minor hockey until his health denied many youth the opportunity to be mentored by a true sportsman.”**

“Elmvale and area sports fans were witness to many rewarding victories in 1977, but they also suffered one of the greatest losses in the history of Elmvale sports. The loss came on Sunday, August 28, 1977 when the town was stunned by the death of Homer Barrett. Homer was an outstanding athlete and a true gentleman.” (Chapters 2000 Edition)

Frankie Edgecombe, 27 years of age when inducted on September 14, is the youngest athlete ever to be recognized by the Springwater Hall of Fame. Frankie started his sports career with Elmvale Minor Hockey with a Novice championship, Silver Stick championship and finalist title plus a Peewee Georgian Bay championship.

Frankie moved on to Ball Hockey winning several provincial titles (2003, 2004, and 2010) and a gold medal with Team Canada in 2013. His success in ball hockey was with Penetang starting in 2001 and Frankie won the Ontario Ball Hockey championship with the Penetang Blazers Men’s team and was named a tournament all-star. His biggest ball hockey highlight came in 2013 when he was asked to play with Team Canada and the team won the gold medal.

Frankie became involved in volleyball in public school, moved to the Barrie Elites and then starred at Nipissing University. He was a Provincial and National champion with Nipissing being named to the tournament all-star team and MVP on several occasions. He played volleyball for nine years, being the team captain many times. Frankie was praised by former coaches and teammates for having great respect for others.

In 2013, Frankie played volleyball for Nipissing winning a National Championship, was MVP of the tournament, was CCAA player of the month (February & March) and topped it off being named the CCAA Athlete of the Year and Nipissing University Player of the Year. North Bay recognized the Nipissing Volleyball team as North Bay’s Team of the Year.

“Frankie is the ideal student-athlete. He’s the top academic achiever on our team, and one of the most humble athletes I’ve coached, even with all the awards he’s won this year. He is well-respected by his teammates and more impressively by his opponents; not only for his talents as a volleyball player, but also for his leadership skills, sportsmanship and class.” (Nipissing volleyball head coach Eric Young)

Tom Van Natter, who will also be entering the Springwater Hall of Fame with the Elmvale 1976-77 OMHA Peewee Champions, excelled at hockey from 1970 to 1989.

He was a Silver Stick champion in 1977, Provincial Champion Show Down Minor Hockey in 1978. In 1979, Tom tried to play Triple A Midget hockey in Niagara Falls but the OMHA ruled he was playing out of his assigned district and he returned home to play with the Penetang Kings of the Junior “C” league at the age of fifteen.

In the 1980-81 season, Tom played for the Thornhill Thunderbirds in the Junior “B” loop and was drafted by the Ontario Hockey League Belleville Bulls. He played for Belleville in the 1981-82 season and during the 1982-83 season was traded to the Sudbury Wolves. He then moved to the North York Rangers Junior “A” team winning the Canadian Centennial Cup.

Tom then played for the Kingston Canadians of the OHL during the 1983-84 season before moving to the Orillia Travelways and returning to the Centennial Cup again, settling for second place.

Tom then moved on to university hockey playing for St. Mary’s (1984-85), York University (1985-88) winning three OUA Championships, two CIS Canadian finalists and one CIS Canadian Championship. He finished his hockey career and Master’s Degree in Physical Education at Ohio University during the 1988-89 season. He finished with five Ontario championships and two Nationals titles.

In 2003, Tom turned to coaching teams in the Barrie Minor Hockey Association until 2014.

Congratulations to all three new athlete members being inducted into the Springwater Sports Heritage Hall of Fame!