

King unveils inaugural Sports Hall of Fame

Members of the community gathered to celebrate local athletic excellence during the unveiling of the Sports Hall of Fame exhibition at the Zancor Centre. Attendees had the opportunity to meet Mike Kitchen and Jim Elder and hear a special message recorded by Rosie MacLennan. The unveiling honours the inaugural class of inductees: Jim Elder, Mike Kitchen, Rosie MacLennan and Suzanne Morrow (Francis). Inductees were presented with a jacket to mark the occasion, and the exhibition will feature a fresh new look that includes biography panels showcasing each of their stories. "We celebrate four individuals who have made a lasting impact on the cultural and athletic fabric of King, forging new trails for future generations," noted Mayor Steve Pellegrini. "This unveiling not only honours their outstanding achievements but also highlights the power of sport. With its unveiling, this exhibition reminds us that sport is about more than results; it's about community, commitment and the people who inspire us to be better. I am thrilled that Jim, Mike, Rosie and Suzanne's stories will live on display for all of King to enjoy. Their resilience, discipline, leadership and work ethic are a testament to their perseverance within their respective fields. Their values transcend sport itself, helping to build a stronger community in King. It was a pleasure to meet Mike Kitchen at the unveiling of the Township of King's new Sports Hall of Fame at the Zancor Centre. As a proud Schomberg native and inductee in the Coaching Category, Mike's NHL playing and championship-winning coaching career is a significant source of pride for our community," said Councillor David Boyd. The inaugural inductees were initially introduced during the 2026 Mayor's Cultural Gala, and with the official unveiling of the exhibition, their legacies will be cemented in King Township history, inspiring the next generation of local athletes. Established in 2025 with the opening of Zancor Centre, the King Township Sports Hall of Fame highlights the rich sporting history of the local community and honours those who have made a lasting impact on their chosen sporting discipline in various capacities. New inductees will be welcomed biennially during the Mayor's Cultural Gala, with their achievements celebrated through the Sports Hall of Fame exhibition.

James "Jim" Elder (Builder Award): Jim is one of Canada's most accomplished equestrians, having competed in six Olympic Games between 1956 and 1984 and winning both gold and bronze medals for Canada. A key figure in elevating Canadian show jumping on the world stage, he was part of the legendary trio with James Day and Thomas Gayford that secured major international victories in the late 1960s and 1970s. Elder spent decades contributing to equestrian sport in King Township and the surrounding area, recognized locally as one of the region's most notable Olympians. His legacy is cemented through numerous honours, including induction into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame and his appointment as an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Mike Kitchen (Coach Award): Mike Kitchen is a Canadian former NHL defenceman and long-time coach. He began his hockey journey with the Schomberg Red Wings before advancing to Junior A and winning the 1975 Memorial Cup. He went on to play for the Colorado Rockies and New Jersey Devils before beginning a coaching career that included roles with the Toronto Maple Leafs, St. Louis Blues, Florida Panthers, and the Chicago Blackhawks, where he helped win the 2013 and 2015 Stanley Cups. Known for his defensive expertise and leadership, Kitchen has coached in more than 2,400 NHL games, making him one of the league's most experienced bench coaches.

Rosie MacLennan (Athlete Award): Born in King Township, Rosie MacLennan is a two-time Olympic trampoline champion and the first athlete in her sport to win back-to-back Olympic gold medals at London 2012 and Rio 2016. She has also earned multiple World Championship titles and Pan American Games gold medals, making her one of Canada's most successful gymnasts. Known for her high difficulty routines and exceptional consistency, MacLennan has represented Canada at four Olympic Games and served as Team Canada's flag bearer at Rio 2016.

Suzanne Morrow (Francis) (Legacy Award): Suzanne Morrow (Francis) was a Canadian figure skater who won the bronze medal in pairs at the 1948 Winter Olympics alongside Wallace Diestelmeyer. The pair also made history at those Games by performing the first one-handed death spiral in Olympic competition. In addition to her pairs success, she excelled in singles, placing 14th in 1948 and 6th in 1952 at the Winter Olympics. After retiring from competition, she became a prominent judge and official and, in 1988, was the first woman to take the Olympic Judge's Oath at the Calgary Winter Games.