



Minnesota Hockey Coaches Association

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MHCA ANNOUNCES HALL OF FAME CLASS FOR 2011

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Five people will be inducted into the Minnesota Hockey Coaches Association Hall of Fame and four others will be honored for their contributions and accomplishments when the MHCA holds its annual banquet during the Minnesota Boys State Hockey Tournament, March 10, 2011. The banquet will be held at the St. Paul RiverCentre following the second game of afternoon session of the boys Class AA tournament.

Being inducted into the Hall of Fame are Bob Frerker (Rochester), George Karn (South St. Paul), Cliff Kauppi (Grand Rapids), Ron Sellnow (Hopkins) and Lou Nanne (Edina).

Individual awards will be given to Jeff Whisler (Cliff Thompson Award), Wally O'Dell (Oscar Almquist Award), Steve Youngmans (Dave Peterson Award) and Sheldon Weston (Bruce Johnson Award).

MHCA 2010-11 Hall of Fame

Bob Frerker (Rochester John Marshall)—A long-time youth hockey coach in Rochester, Frerker took over as the head coach at Rochester John Marshall following the retirement of Gene Sack. Frerker took the Rockets to back-to-back state tournament appearances in 1988 and 1989, leading them to the championship game in 1989.

George Karn (South St. Paul)—Following his graduation from Hamline in 1951, Karn played with the Minneapolis Millers and several amateur and semi-pro teams in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa. He coached at Cretin, South St. Paul and St. Agnes high schools along with a number of amateur teams. He also served as a referee in the Western Hockey League, Central Pro Hockey League, the Western Collegiate Hockey Association and the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, as well as in 14 Minnesota state high school hockey tournaments. He coaches South St. Paul to state tournament berths in 1953, 1954, 1955 and 1957 and is a member of Hamline University's Hall of Fame. Karn passed away in 2000.

Cliff Kauppi (Grand Rapids)—A members of the Grand Rapids Sports Hall of Fame and recipient of the "Founding Father" award from the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame, Kauppi has earned the title of "Father of Grand Rapids Hockey." He began his lifelong career as a teacher and coach in 1936 and his career spanned six decades. He helped build numerous outdoor hockey rinks and was instrumental in establishing the IRA Civic Center in Grand Rapids. Following World War II, he founded and coached the high school team in Grand Rapids until 1955. He stepped away at that time to focus on the Mite and Squirt programs, believing that Grand Rapids' future was dependent upon the youth system. The seeds he planted grew into one of the most storied programs in the history of Minnesota high school hockey.

Ron Sellnow (Hopkins)—Sellnow has been one of the most tireless workers on behalf of Minnesota high school hockey. He has served the game at the high school level as a long-time assistant coach at Hopkins Lindberg, in Minnesota/USA Hockey Select programs and as an administrator for Section 6 and the state tournament. He was inducted into the Minnesota State High School League Hall of Fame earlier this year.

Lou Nanne (Edina)—A television analyst for the Minnesota State High School hockey tournament, Nanne's name is synonymous with the event. An 11-year NHL veteran and a former University of Minnesota standout, he served as coach and general manager of the Minnesota North Stars following his playing career. He has served as a great supporter of Minnesota High School hockey and its players.

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MHCA Awards

Cliff Thompson Award—Jeff Whisler (Hill-Murray/Mahtomedi, Class of 2005)

The Cliff Thompson Award is given in memory of the legendary Eveleth coach, who is the only man to take a team to four consecutive state hockey championships (1948-51). The list of his former players reads as a “who’s who” in Minnesota hockey. The winners of this award are listed in the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame.

The 2010-11 recipient of the Cliff Thompson Award is Jeff Whisler. Currently the athletics director at Mahtomedi, Whisler took Hill-Murray to the 1991 state title, the final year of the one-class tournament. He put together an 82-22-2 record with the Pioneers in four seasons and also took them to a state runner-up finish in 1988. He took over the head coaching job at Mahtomedi for the 1992-93 season and led the Zephyrs to three state tournament appearances, including a Class A runner-up finish in 1994.

Oscar Almquist Award—Wally O’Dell

The Oscar Almquist Award is given annually to a non-coach who has contributed to the success of high school hockey by advancing opportunities for players and coaches.

This year’s Oscar Almquist Award winner is Wally O’Dell. A pioneer, O’Dell organized the Select Program for Minnesota hockey and was the driving force for the program for years. In addition, he was very active in amateur hockey in the state of Minnesota.

Dave Peterson Award—Steve “Moose” Younghans (St. Paul Johnson)

The Dave Peterson Award is awarded to a high school hockey coach whose efforts have helped strengthen the bond between youth and high school hockey.

Steve “Moose” Younghans is this year’s Dave Peterson Award winner. Younghans has worked tirelessly to keep St. Paul Johnson hockey alive by working closely with his youth hockey association. He coached both the bantam and varsity high school teams in the same season.

Bruce Johnson Award—Sheldon Weston (Monticello)

The Bruce Johnson Award is awarded annually to the board member who has made extraordinary contributions to the MHCA.

Sheldon Weston is the recipient of this year’s Bruce Johnson Award. Weston has long served as a section representative in addition to helping the MHCA and high school hockey in numerous capacities.