

2007-2008 Brantford Sports Council

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The Frank Tomlin Memorial Award

This award is named in honour of the late Frank Tomlin, who passed away in 1976. Tomlin is remembered as a great sports fan that was passionate about his city and those who represented it. Gord Showler, who at the time of Frank’s death was a sponsor of Brantford’s Junior ‘B’ franchise, initiated the award.

Each year, the Frank Tomlin award recognizes an individual from Brantford who contribution to sport has had a great impact on this community. The winner of the award must be active in the sport for which they are nominated however work done in previous years is also taken into consideration. No individual can win the award in consecutive years but the award can be won by the same individual more than once.

2008 Frank Tomlin Award Winner – Peter Ham

Mike Beres’ badminton career began in grade 4 when his gym teacher taught the sport in class. From that point on, Beres’ new found love has made him one of Canada’s most prominent athletes.

Beres has had an illustrious career in the sport, from success in his youth to his successes this past year. His first major victory came at the age of 15, when he captured the Men’s Doubles Championship at the Pan-Am Junior Championships. His adult career took flight nine years later at the Pan American Championships, where he was a finalist in both the men’s singles and doubles competitions. Since that time, Beres has had great success on the international scene. In 2007, Mike had one of his greatest accomplishments to date, winning the gold in the men’s singles, men’s doubles, and mixed doubles categories at the Canadian Championships.

Award Namesake Profiles

Frank Bricker Memorial – Male Youth Leadership

During his time, Frank Bricker was a legend in the sport of boxing. Known by many in the ranks of Ontario Boxing as ‘Mr. Boxing’, Frank is best known in Brantford for his events in the development of the Summerhayes boys, the three boxing brothers who competed in national and international level competition. All 3 turned pro in 1970, and became the only set of three brothers to compete on the same card at Madison Square Garden, an accomplishment that can be attributed to Bricker’s work. Through his efforts, he put Brantford on the world boxing map for his ability to teach and train high caliber boxers.

2007 Winner – Tyler Padmore, St. John’s College

Phyllis Gretzky Memorial – Female Youth Leadership

Phyllis is likely the least famous member of Canada’s first family of hockey, but many will tell you that she was the most important one. It was her dedication to her family that allowed Wayne to have the kind of success that he did. She was the family stalwart who kept everything cool and collected throughout Wayne’s rise to stardom, doing whatever was necessary behind the scenes to make sure that everything was as normal as it could have been. Her quiet leadership was the glue that kept the foundation together.

2007 Winner – Meghan Blunt, Brantford Collegiate

George Churchill Memorial – Sports Volunteer of the Year

Had the category existed during his day, George Churchill would have found himself nominated for this award for decades. His tireless work with the track and field program here in Brantford allowed Brantford to become a hub for some of the best competitions in the sport. He was the man behind the organization and execution of just about every meet during the 60’s, 70’s, 80’s, and even in to the 90’s. He was also the coach of Brantford’s first track and field to make the Olympic Games, with Debbie Miller in 1968.

2007 Winner – Shawn Burtnick, Brantford Inter-City Soccer

Jimmy Wilkes Memorial– Team of the Year

When you talk about the sport of baseball in Brantford, the conversation will inevitably include the name Jimmy Wilkes. Wilkes has been a legend of baseball in this community ever since arriving to play with the Brantford Red Sox in 1953. He was involved with the league as a player, then as an umpire, for over 30 years. His quiet leadership helped the Red Sox to several championships, as well as with the development of many players throughout the Inter-County league as well as Brantford Minor Baseball.

2007 Winner – Brantford Bobcats Novice Girls Softball

John Macklin Memorial – Coach of the Year

Macklin began coaching and officiating track and field in Brantford in 1966, and continued through until 1994. During his time, he helped to coach many athletes from Brantford who would go on to national and international competition, including the likes of Liz Polyak, Kevin Sullivan and Rick Mannen. Along the way, he became a respected official on the international stage, officiating at almost every national and international meet in Canada during the 1970’s and 1980’s. On top of coaching and officiating, he also was the organizer of the Brant County Track and Field and Cross Country championships for many years.

2007 Winner – Todd Bannister, Brantford Minor Softball

George Jones Memorial – Lifetime Volunteerism

Jones will forever be remembered as the man who built the sport of rugby with his bare hands. George started the Brantford Harlequins rugby club in 1950, and used his own money to purchase the land on which to build the rugby club. During his 50+ years as a player and coach of the sport, George helped to develop decades of championship teams and high caliber athletes. His development of the sport locally was just part of his accomplishment, as he is directly responsible for most of the rugby clubs and school programs that can be found in southwestern Ontario. His tireless dedication to the sport is shown in every athlete who played for George, and his love for the game has built a sports legacy in our community.

2007 Winner – Gary Foy, Brant County Recreational Soccer