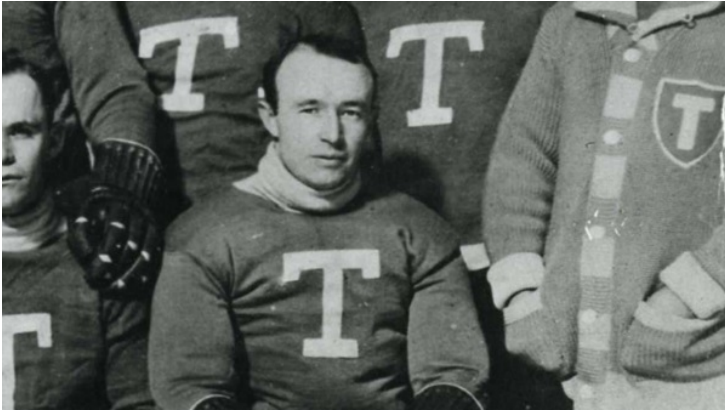# Holmes, Elder, Stronach named to Aurora Sports Hall of Fame

 ("Hap" Holmes, pictured here as a member of the Toronto Blueshirts in 1914, is one of the inaugural inductees in the Aurora Sport Hall of Fame)

By Brock Weir

Early hockey star Harold ?Hap? Holmes, Olympic basketball player Carolin Bouchard, and business magnate Frank Stronach are among the first inductees in Aurora's inaugural Sport Hall of Fame.

An ?overwhelming? number of people across their community put forward nominations of their local sporting heroes, coaches, and ?builders? as the first inductees for the Sports Hall of Fame. With the nominations in, the first corners of the envelope were lifted Tuesday as the 2013 inductees were made public.

Joining Holmes, Stronach, and Bouchard are fellow Olympians James ?Jim? Elder and Brian Stemmle, top ranked Canadian tennis champ Robert Bedard, as well as late softball coach Norman Stunden.

The inductees will be honoured in a special induction ceremony dinner, which will be held Wednesday, November 6 at St. Andrew's College.
After the nomination window closed in August, the inductees were formally selected at the end of the month.

?The Induction Committee build selection criteria and put a process in place to ensure the selection was done in an unbiased and objective manner through the efforts of volunteer community members who served anonymously on the selection panel,? said Kate Collins, Induction Committee Chair, in a statement. ?We are proud to announce such a worthy slate of members for our first induction.?

Aurora Sports Hall of Fame chair Ron Weese told The Auroran the selection and induction process was built around best practices and examples taken from other communities, but they were grounded in one common principle.

?The most important thing was involvement in Aurora,? he said. ?They had to be people who lived in Aurora or participated in Aurora. Beyond that, it was a matter of taking the contribution they made to both their sport as well as to Aurora in each of the categories (athlete, coach, and builder).

?The athlete category was based all upon their athletic prowess and what they did. For coaches, it had to do with their coaching and mentoring, and of course with builders and contributors, it had to be a combination of philanthropy, contributions to building sport organizations, or building anything that had to do with sport infrastructure or how we operate sport.?

Arguably one of Aurora's first true hockey stars, Harold ?Hap? Holmes posthumously enters the Aurora Hockey Hall of Fame. Born in Aurora in 1892, Holmes has the distinction of winning the coveted Stanley Cup for four different teams.

Beginning his professional career with the Toronto Blueshirts in the 1912 ? 1913 season in the National Hockey Association, his stint with the Blueshirts led to his first Stanley Cup win. While playing with the Seattle Metropolitans, the team scored their first and only Stanley Cup win. Back to Toronto with the Toronto Arenas, he eventually did a second stint in Seattle, then Victoria and Detroit before retiring at the end of the 1929 season.

From her breakout beginnings on the courts of Aurora High School, British Columbia native and Aurora resident Carolin Bouchard rose through the ranks to take on the world. She served as a member of the Canadian National Basketball Team at both the Pan Am Games and after earning a place on the Canada Women's Squad in the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, Australia.

Far removed from the basketball courts, Canada was well-represented in the equestrian ring by inductee Jim Elder. While Elder has six Olympics under his belt, he earned a gold medal at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City as a team jumper. Over a decade earlier, he came away with a Bronze at the 1956 Olympics in Stockholm, that time as a member of Canada's Three-Day Event Team. A member of the Order of Canada, Mr. Elder contributed locally as the operator of Elderberry Hill Farm, a premiere host for grand prix show jumping.

During the 1950s and 60s, Robert Bedard was at the top of the heap in the Canadian tennis circuit. A champion of the Canadian Open and a veteran of Canada's Davis Cup team, and Wimbledon, he then turned his focus to education. A resident of Aurora since 1972, he taught and coached at St. Andrew's College from 1972-1982.

On the cooler side of sports, Brian Stemmle made a name for himself on the slopes in downhill and Super-G. The Aurora native competed as a member of Team Canada in Olympiads held in Calgary, Albertville, Lillehammer, and Nagano. He won a gold medal in the Pan American Winter Games in 1994.

Following his death last September, Norman Stunden was remembered by the many local athletes he touched as a consummate coach in softball for over 24 years. He was a founder of the Aurora Glenville Dairy Team, served as first coach of the Aurora Diggers, leading them to multiple championships, and the Aurora Ladies Softball Team.

Finally, Magna founder Frank Stronach, who has lent his name and resources to innumerable community projects in Aurora and the surrounding area, will be inducted as a sport builder and contributor for his ?philanthropy, leadership, and community service.? His citation singles out his work to develop the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, the creation of the Magna Golf Club, and the use of his land by the Aurora Youth Soccer Club.

Following the induction ceremony, there will be a temporary display of plaques and memorabilia related to each of the inductees installed in the Skylight Gallery at Aurora Town Hall. As Aurora tackles its Cultural Master Plan, a more permanent way to honour the athletes is hoped to be found, whether it is a standalone building or space within a local sporting facility, said Mr. Weese.

?The intent is to make sure it is done in a highly dignified manner and that is a true celebration of the accomplishments of people, so people can sit back, look at it, and be able to relate the story to the person,? he said.