

## Murphy, Stemmler, Kitchen & Galbraith enter Sports Hall of Fame



**By Brock Weir**

Aurora's Sports Hall of Fame is four members stronger.

NHL coaches Mike Murphy, Mike Kitchen, skier Karen Stemmler and late figure skating coach Sheldon Galbraith were announced as the Hall of Fame's Class of 2016 at Town Hall on Tuesday night.

Their induction, which celebrates their accomplishments on and off the ice and snow, as well as their contributions to the community, will be recognized with an induction ceremony and dinner at St. Andrew's College in November.

Ms. Stemmler's induction is a family affair, following the induction of her brother, Olympic skier Brian, in the Class of 2014.

"I was completely thrilled and honoured when I received the news about being inducted into the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame with not only my amazing brother, but so many other talented athletes from Aurora," said Ms. Stemmler in a statement.

She was raised in Aurora, where she competed in figure skating at the provincial level until she was 17, before she took up ski racing, taking home the Junior Canadian Ski Championships at Lake Louise.

"Stemmler went on to represent Canada internationally for five years and had numerous top five finishes on the World Cup Downhill circuit," said the Hall of Fame. "A career highlight was competing at the 1984 Olympic Winter Games in Sarajevo."

Her work continued following her retirement from the sport in 1988, branching out into volunteering, fundraising and motivational speaking to skiers across the continent, including her home club, Georgian Peaks.

She is recognized in the Athlete category.

Joining her being inducted as an Athlete, as well as Coach and Sport Builder, is Mike Murphy, a resident of Aurora for nearly 20 years.

"I am truly honoured and humbled," he said of the news. "It is a great honour and a great privilege to be recognized and I want to thank the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame."

Team Captain of the Los Angeles Kings for six consecutive seasons, with three further seasons as assistant coach, he became Head Coach for the team for four seasons beginning in 1987.

"He has been only the second person to rise to this position after being both player and captain of the team," said the Hall. "In addition to the L.A. Kings, Murphy played or coached for the Omaha Knights, St. Louis Blues, New York Rangers, Vancouver

Canucks, Toronto Maple Leafs and the Ottawa Senators. Throughout his NHL career, he scored 556 points in 831 games.

He is also being lauded for the founding of the Murphy Hockey School, which gives budding hockey stars a boost in Canada's game. He now serves as Senior Vice President of Operations with the NHL.

Now, his shared Leafs history with Mike Kitchen extends to the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame. Kitch, a Newmarket native, is being recognized for his numerous contributions to local hockey, including a stint as a member of the Aurora Tigers.

A long-time resident of Aurora, he played Junior A Hockey with the Toronto Marlboros, winning the Memorial Cup in 1975. Playing for eight years in the NHL, he became an assistant coach of the Newmarket Saints before spring-boarding back to the NHL coaching the Leafs, Blues, Florida Panthers, and the Chicago Blackhawks.

The Blackhawks took home the Stanley Cup in 2013 and 2015 and, in turn, Kitch was able to bring the Cup back home to York Region with him.

"I am really honoured to be a part of the 2016 Aurora Sports Hall of Fame inductees, along with Mike Murphy, Karen Stemmler, and Sheldon Galbraith," he said.

Mr. Galbraith's induction into the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame is a posthumous one, following the death of the famed figure skating coach in April of 2015.

"The family was surprised and delighted at the news that the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame is recognizing our father with his induction into the Hall," said his daughter, Jeannie Branston. "It is an honour and he was a resident who loved his community."

Born in Manitoba in 1922, Mr. Galbraith left behind a legacy in the sport of figure skating for his contributions as a coach and pioneer of the sport, both in Canada and on the international stage," said the Hall. "Throughout his career, he coached athletes like Barbara Ann Scott, as well as many national and international skaters and medalists."

This year's four inductees demonstrate the depth, talent and importance sport has played in Aurora, according to Ron Weese, President of the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame.

"We are elated with this year's slate of Inductees to the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame," added Michael Roy, Chair of the Induction Committee. "Not only are they highly distinguished in their athletic careers; more importantly they are outstanding people and longstanding citizens of Aurora. They have brought notoriety to our community as athletes, citizens and have helped others in their areas through volunteerism and giving of themselves. They are role models and the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame is fortunate and proud that they are Aurorans. It will be an honour to recognize and celebrate their achievements,"