

MEDIA RELEASE
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Howie Meeker named to Special Olympics BC Hall of Fame

Hockey legend and longtime Special Olympics supporter being inducted as a Builder (Local)

After more than 40 years of generously giving his time and influential support to help Special Olympics throughout Canada, B.C., and Campbell River, legendary hockey player, coach, and broadcaster Howie Meeker is being inducted into the Special Olympics BC (SOBC) Hall of Fame.

Meeker will receive his induction plaque at the successful annual fundraiser that bears his name, the SOBC – Campbell River Howie Meeker Golf Classic, being held this year on August 20.

The [SOBC Hall of Fame](#) recognizes significant, long-lasting contributions that individuals and groups have made to our organization and movement. Induction into the Hall of Fame celebrates the most outstanding achievements and contributions, and is one of the highest honours bestowed within the SOBC organization.

Harry (Red) Foster, the broadcasting and humanitarian legend who helped found Special Olympics in Canada, knew what he was doing when he approached Meeker more than 40 years ago with a request to join the Canadian Special Olympics Advisory Board. He believed that Meeker would stay involved for a long time and make wonderful things happen. Meeker then became a champion for the Special Olympics movement, and his stalwart support has never faltered, as he still makes a difference today for Special Olympics athletes and programs.

With his influential and generous advocacy work throughout Canada and B.C., Meeker has helped change the way our province and country see individuals with intellectual disabilities over the last 40 years. He has also been a vital supporter of SOBC – Campbell River athletes and programs over the last 28 years, championing them and lending his name and time to their annual golf tournament that has raised more than \$750,000. His support has made an important difference in the lives of so many individuals with intellectual disabilities, and his ongoing direct involvement with athletes, family members, and volunteers is genuine and inspiring.

Meeker has made a significant impact on the Special Olympics movement – an impact that has not only benefited SOBC athletes and programs and our society over the past 40 years, but one that will continue to help change lives long into the future.

“Howie Meeker is very deserving of this recognition based on his more than 40 years of supporting Special Olympics in Canada and B.C., and more than 28 years of backing SOBC – Campbell River with the Howie Meeker Charity Golf Classic. We couldn’t be more proud of his involvement with us and excited to honour him in this way,” SOBC President & CEO Dan Howe said.

A four-time Stanley Cup winner with the Toronto Maple Leafs and a member of the Hockey Hall of Fame, Meeker was inducted into the Order of Canada in May 2011. Meeker served in World War II before winning four Cups and the Calder Trophy with the Leafs. He went on to expand his renown as a Member of Parliament, a hockey coach, and a noted broadcaster with a 30-year career. He is now 92 years old and lives in Parksville with his wife Leah; both are both big-hearted supporters of Special Olympics and serve as patrons of the B.C. Guide Dog Services.

“Special Olympics is a special group of people who ... go through life happy as can be,” says Meeker, who is “Howie” to all the SOBC – Campbell River athletes. “They’re a really fun bunch, and some of them have immense talent.”

“I’m very, very excited to become a member of the Special Olympics BC Hall of Fame,” Meeker says. “Over the last 45 years, people involved in this wonderful operation at every level coast to coast have made the experience something extra special in our lives, Leah and I. Much of our appreciation of what we have, and how lucky we are to have it, comes from the Special Olympics athletes. I think we owe them, they don’t owe us, quite honestly. If you’re sitting there in your automobile or reading the newspaper and you’re thinking there’s something missing in your life, and if you’ve got an extra buck or two, or better still a few hours a week to get involved, guaranteed you’ll hit the motherlode with Special Olympics. Yes indeed, the sun does shine 24 hours a day, and you will have fun.”

SOBC – Campbell River nominated Meeker for SOBC Hall of Fame induction this year.

“Howie is much loved by our Special Olympics athletes here in Campbell River, as they all know how important he is to their being able to participate in as many sports as they do here,” says longtime SOBC – Campbell River volunteer Harvey Hunter, who is himself a 2008 SOBC Hall of Fame Inductee in the Builder (Local) category. “The funds raised by the Howie Meeker Charity Golf Classic go towards the athletes and the training of coaches, as well as transportation to different tournaments and competitions around the province. Campbell River now has more than 130 athletes registered in 16 different sports, and is known for its athletes who participate at all levels from local training and competitions all the way through to World Games.”

The 2016 Howie Meeker Golf Classic will be held at Campbell River’s Storey Creek Golf Course on August 20. Golfers will begin play at 11 a.m., to be followed by the banquet beginning at approximately 5 p.m. and the Hall of Fame presentation to Meeker at approximately 7 p.m. Media members are welcome to attend, but space is limited, so please contact SOBC – Campbell River Local Coordinator Maureen Hunter in advance (please see below). This year’s tournament is sold out, but donations in support of SOBC – Campbell River are always welcome – please contact Maureen Hunter.

[View all SOBC Hall of Fame Inductees](#)

About Special Olympics BC

Special Olympics BC is dedicated to providing individuals with intellectual disabilities opportunities to enrich their lives and celebrate personal achievement through positive sport experiences. In 57 communities around the province, we provide year-round training and competitive opportunities in 18 different sports to more than 4,600 athletes of all ages and abilities, thanks to the dedicated efforts of over 3,700 volunteers. For more information, please visit www.specialolympics.bc.ca. Find us on Facebook and Twitter: www.facebook.com/specialolympicsbc / @sobcsociety.

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