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Export date: Fri Oct 30 4:07:28 2026 / +0000 GMT

Local hockey player inducted into Old Timers Hockey Hall of Fame

Written By Brian Lockhart

Local hockey player Mark Bates is proof that if you never slow down, you can keep physically active and enjoy playing your sport for many years.

Bates, a local hockey player who never gave up playing the game, has been inducted into the Old Timers Hockey Hall of Fame at the Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex in Kitchener/Waterloo.

The induction ceremony took place at the Kitchener Concordia Club on Saturday, March 28.

This year, 30 new members from Ontario were inducted into the 80+ Hockey Hall of Fame. Bates was nominated by the town and by some players from the Old Timers Shimmy League.

Bates was instrumental in bringing senior shinny to Orangeville.

?I convinced the Town that there was a need for senior shinny hockey,? Bates explained. ?I started the 55+ group with four players and one goalie. Later on, I started the 65+ group. Both groups now play three days a week in the season.?

As more players heard about senior hockey in town, more signed up to play.

The induction ceremony into the Hall of Fame recognized players and organizers across the province who participate in and promote hockey at the senior level.

?The 80+ Hockey Hall of Fame organizers did a fantastic job of making all of us old guys feel like we had just won the Stanley Cup,? Bates said. ?It is a non-profit organization based in Ottawa that nationally recognizes active recreational hockey players 80 years and older who have contributed to the organization and advancement of senior recreational hockey, either as a player and/or a builder.?

Bates said it was a great experience to be among others his age who still enjoy playing hockey.

?This was by far a very humbling experience with over 400 people at the Induction Ceremony presentations, and such a great honour to be part of a group of 80+ folds that still love to put on the skates and play the game they love.?

Bates has no plans to slow down and is looking forward to the next hockey season.