

Football Alberta is proud to announce their winners of the following Coach/Official/Volunteer Awards for the 2021 season. It is the first time since the end of the 2019 season that we've been able to do this. The 2020 Awards were replaced by Awards of Merit recognizing many people across the province for "keeping the lights on" during the shut downs in 2020 due to the Pandemic. Thankfully, we were able to run a near-normal 2021 season and the awards below reflect the best of that year. We are also proud to announce the first official winner of the **Rob and Grace Zittlau Media Award**. This award was created in 2020 to recognize people on the technical side of the sport, be they local media reporting on amateur football or individuals who work in the ever increasing electronic side of our sport. Last year Rob Zittlau was posthumously announced as the first winner and in 2021 it is now one of our regular awards. Each person recognized has been informed and will be receiving a commemorative plaque from the Football Alberta office. Please note that the **Norm Kimball Coach of the Year Award** goes to the overall coach of the year in all disciplines in Alberta for 2021.

### **Rob and Grace Zittlau Media Award**

#### **Ross Folan (Calgary Stampeders)**

For over 10 years Ross, through the Calgary Stampeders, has supported Calgary High School Football and the Calgary Spring Football Association with professional level support with both leagues HUDL systems. The support that Ross has given teams allows Calgary high school aged players to access to film that is at a collegiate or even professional level. In recent years he pushed to add END ZONE film to the package which has been huge especially for the development and coaching of line play in the city. It's safe to say that the technological advances in film and video work for high school football in Calgary has been made better, more consistent, and affordable for all thanks to Ross's efforts.

### **Official of the Year**

#### **Kim Werenka (St. Paul Football Officials Association)**

Kim has been refereeing in St Paul and area for 23 years, beginning in 1998. Kim has his Level 2 status as an official. Kim is the lead organizer for St Paul Officials. He ensures we have enough referees for our games and is always recruiting new officials for us. Kim works as our Umpire (by choice) but he knows the rules very well and our Head Referee relies on his knowledge. Kim works throughout the Wheatland area, refereeing games at peewee, bantam, high school and Alberta Men's league levels. He has worked many championship games and is often asked by other clubs to help when they are short-staffed for a game or when they need a referee for a championship game. Kim has also refereed many provincials games. At times Kim has also worked games in Edmonton to help there. He is passionate about being a referee and cares greatly about getting the rules correct. Without Kim's dedication and commitment, it's likely that St Paul would not have enough officials to host games. He is an integral part of football in the Wheatland area.

### **Atom/Pee-Wee Coach of the Year (Co-Winners)**

#### **Jonas Freedman (Lethbridge Jr. Cougars Atom and Pee-Wee)**

Jonas Freedman has been coaching with Lethbridge Minor Football for 7 years. He puts so much effort and time into his team and LMFA as a whole and football is his passion.

With everything in question with Covid and the unknown of a season happening he was always on top of what and when it could all happen. The football season is not just a short season for him. It's a year-round lifestyle and commitment and all he wants is to get these kids trained and having fun just like he did as a kid. He is not only the Atom coach but he also is the president of Lethbridge Minor Football, PeeWee Commissioner, Special Teams Coordinator and couldn't not still be a part of his son's team so helped whenever he could with the Bantams as well. In the off season he also gets practices going with some flag football for all ages. With his knowledge and excitement for the league he always has the team parents help and support because he is always there for them and the families. This past year he organized a PeeWee Jamboree in Lethbridge that was a big success and a weekend at McMahon Stadium in Calgary where he got all Jr Cougars and the families to take part (Atom, PeeWee, Bantam). The kids had a great time watching the Dinos play and also getting to play themselves on the big field. 50 pizzas, 75% of the hotel booked just for us and the swimming pool full of kids was all put on by him. Creating memories, teaching others his expertise in football and getting these kids active is what he is most excited about and Lethbridge Minor Football and the Jr. Cougars wouldn't be what it is without him.

### **Chris Malo (Fort Saskatchewan Falcons Pee-Wee)**

Fort Falcons Fort Saskatchewan Minor Football Association would like to nominate our Coaching Director – Chris Malo for Atom/PeeWee Coach of the Year and Bantam Coach of the Year. Chris Malo is our Coaching Director and Head Coach for our PeeWee and Bantam Team. When covid first came out in 2020, Chris Malo created and implemented an online learning program for our players. Each weekend was a google session for all levels to come together and learn the fundamentals of football and to come together to remind each other what they loved about the past season and how to improve for the upcoming season. Chris Malo also created cohorts with other associations to ensure our association had a season during a difficult season with covid protocols. For our 2021 season, Chris took on both head coach of the PeeWee Team and the Bantam Team and led them both to their championships wins. As Head Coach for both PeeWee and Bantam, Chris created and implemented each practice guideline for all of our coaches to follow through each practice. These plans are available for all of our coaches going forward to use and pull from to make their practices the best they can be. Chris brings in coaches and players from other football teams (Elite Football, Huskies Football, Golden Bears U of A) to provide additional experiences for their players during practices. In the off season, Chris continues to maintain the momentum of training and enthusiasm for all of our players and coaches by creating the Falcons In Training (F.I.T). This program provides a home fitness program geared towards each level of player (novice, atom, peeWee and bantam) and coaches and family.

### **Bantam Coach of the Year**

#### **Steve Adams (Leduc Ti-Cats)**

Steve coached a very successful group of athletes to win the Provincial Championship for 9-a-side football in 2021. They dominated throughout the season with no losses. They had the best Offense and the best Defense in their league and despite the lopsided scores opposing team gave great reviews to the league about the

sportsmanship of the team. Steve coached this group to a city championship in 2019 at the Pee-Wee level. Steve's philosophy will help those athletes have success in all areas of their life outside of Football. What stood out to in addition was how he managed to build such a bond amongst the players. There was always a fun and vibrant atmosphere around the team, while still maintaining focus for a team that could have become complacent. From what was observed and experienced, Steve was always approachable for the athletes, parents and other coaches within the organization.

### **Tier IV High School Coach of the Year**

#### **James Watson (Sexsmith Sabres)**

James coached the Sexsmith Sabres football club to be Tier IV Provincial champions in 2021. The only two losses they had all year were to the Saint Joe's Celtics (undefeated Tier II Provincial Champions) in Mighty Peace League play as well as the Peace Bowl. Throughout the season, the Sabres were dominant against other Tier I, III, and IV schools. James is a fantastic coach and mentor to the players and that showed with three dominant wins during Provincials. Year after year, James gets the players and keeps the small school program not only alive but thriving. A great coach and the winner of the the Tier IV Coach of the Year.

### **Tier III High School Coach of the Year**

#### **Rob McNab/Ken Polson (Cochrane Cobras)**

The offensive and defensive coordinators for the Cochrane Cobras had their work cut out for them in 2021. Normally the Cobras run the board in the Rockyview League but this year they suffered a rare regular season defeat and had to go to overtime to win their League Championship game. This caused some reworking of the systems and a lot of hard work went in to preparing to defend their ASAA Tier III Championship from 2019 (no event in 2020). The work paid off and the Cobras won three straight in the post-season to claim their 16<sup>th</sup> Tier III title. A great job by two great coaches.

### **Tier II High School Coach of the Year**

#### **Trevor Prichard (St. Joseph's Celtics)**

Trevor is incredibly devoted to football. The Celtics are consistently among the best teams in Alberta and proved it in 2021 but going undefeated the entire year and capturing their second ever ASAA Tier II Provincial Title. He does exemplary work with Football Alberta teams having served on the defensive staff for the U18 team for going on seven years. Not only did the Celtics win the Tier II Provincial Championship this year and might very well have been the best team in Alberta period. The Celtics program has become exemplary under his guidance. He is a deserving winner of the Tier II Coach of the Year Award

### **Tier I High School Coach of the Year**

#### **Cam Fraser (Salisbury Sabres)**

Coach Fraser's Sabres had a dream in 2021. After a tough 2020 where his team was not allowed to participate on-field at all, he had to put his program back together and continue to climb the hill that had been Harry Ainlay for them the past two seasons prior to the COVID break. During the regular season they ran the board save for the Ainlay game where they lost 35-30. The story of that game was that the Sabres trailed 28-0 at

halftime and almost rallied back to a miracle finish. These same two teams would meet again in the Carr Division Championship game and Coach Fraser's team played flawlessly and wound up claiming the Title with a 21-14 victory. For this they would advance to the Brian Fryer Division of the ASAA's Tier I playoffs. They would lose the semi-final to a strong team from St. Francis, but the dream of the Carr Conference Title was achieved and capped a great year for Salisbury.

## **Norm Kimball Coach of the Year**

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## **Gary Hobson Volunteer of the Year Award (Co-Winners)**

### **Darryl Moroz (Bellerose High School)**

Darryl Moroz exemplifies exactly what the Gary Hobson Memorial Award is all about. As volunteer General Manager of the Bellerose Bulldogs Senior and Junior High School teams, Darryl is responsible for the inner workings and behind the scenes organization of all the teams' needs. To help a team perform its best requires hours of equipment maintenance which Darryl oversees. He is involved in ordering, handing out and the return of the equipment from team members. Darryl also organizes game day operations from transportation, getting stick crews, organizing rosters and public announcing home games. One of the most important aspects for a team, yet is probably the most dreaded job is that of fundraising. This is another job that Darryl takes on and helps to find opportunities to help the team. Darryl's love for football and the positive influence it had on his life, the lives of his sons and now future generations is what motivates him to continue to give freely of his time and talents to the sport. Darryl is an essential asset to the success of the Bellerose Bulldogs Football teams which is why he is a recipient of the Gary Hobson Memorial Award.

### **Rita Murphy (Spruce Grove and District Minor Football)**

Rita is the SGDMA field liaison, a board member and looks after many tasks, roles and does it all at all levels for SGDMA. She's been with the Spruce Grove Cougars for at least 7 years now. Rita makes sure all of the administrative roles are filled for the association and that the coaches just have to coach. She also handled the fundraising for the association and does innovative things like coordinating stick crews for all games held at Fuhr Field in Spruce Grove. She is a huge asset to the organization and the football community as a whole.

## **Life Membership/Hall of Fame**

### **Rob McNab (Cochrane Cobras)**

Rob McNab has been the Co-head coach at Cochrane High School for the past 30 years. The record on the field speaks for itself (16 provincial championships and counting) but coach McNab has spent more time developing people than football players. Coach McNab has taught valuable life lessons like Teamwork, commitment and accountability over the past 30 years to countless players and trainers. His hard work on the field and in the classroom have led to numerous athletes and students going on to graduate from high school and University and pursue careers in a variety of professions such as: Medicine, engineering, accounting, teaching. He has also coached players who have gone on to have University football careers in Canada and the US as well as a few players who have made it to the CFL.

Coach McNab has had a positive impact on numerous players' and students' lives and we can think of no one more deserving of the Life Time Achievement award than him.

### **Bruce O'Neil (Cochrane Cobras)**

Bruce had a stellar career as a teacher and football coach in Alberta. Bruce taught and coached at Cochrane High School for 39 years and left a legacy in the Alberta football community that may never be matched. His dedication and efforts toward amateur football have resulted in Cochrane being recognized as one of the premier names in the football community. Bruce was a great coach and mentor who demonstrated how a high school program should be run to ensure consistent success and retired from coaching in 2019. His relentless pursuit of excellence through innovative change in our program resulted in many team successes. Bruce's unmatched efforts have been dearly missed at CHS, but the foundation he developed through collectively working with others has resulted in continued excellence in the culture of Cobras Football.

### **Cochrane's record under Rob McNab and Bruce O'Neil:**

- 16 provincial championships at the Tier 2 and Tier 3 level
- 6 Football Coach of the Year awards (won as Co-Head Coaches)
- 2015 ASAA Hall of Fame members
- Longest winning streak in Alberta high school football history: 40 wins from 2014-2018
- Participated in 18 Provincial Football Finals
- Member of the Senior Bowl coaching staff several times
- Pioneer in team travel to the USA to play exhibition games, starting in 2001

### **Robert Whitburn (Bishop Carroll High School/U of Calgary Dinos)**

Bob Whitburn's name is synonymous with excellence in football coaching in Calgary. Starting as a teacher in 1962 Bob coached pretty much everything his school would offer but it wasn't until he moved to Bishop Carroll High School in 1971 to start their football program that he really took off. In the 15 years he was the head coach of the

Cardinals, Bob created a program that would rival the other powerhouses in Calgary and won the Division I title three times in his tenure. No small feat as he was doing it at a school that was almost half the size in student population as his competitors. In 1986 he moved up to become quarterback's coach with the University of Calgary Dinos and was part of a Vanier Cup Championship in 1988. Bob was also instrumental in assisting the local bantam team in his area, the Bulldogs, become one of the traditionally strong programs in Calgary. A great coach and mentor, he is truly worthy of induction into the Football Alberta Hall of Fame.