

Backgrounder
Biographies of 2022 Provincial Annual Award Finalists

Junior Female Athlete of the Year (Margaret Davis Memorial Award)

Abby Newhook – Hockey

Abby Newhook had an exceptional season as an NCAA Division 1 rookie hockey player with Boston College Eagles women's team. She has progressed as an elite player, finishing her season with 32 points in 31 games, including 18 goals, six of which were game-winners, and 15 assists. For her outstanding efforts she was named Hockey East Player of the week and Hockey East conference Player of the Month in November during the 2021-2022 season. Striving towards the goal of national or development team participation, Abby was invited to be part of Hockey Canada Development Camps in Calgary last summer.

Kyla Piercey – Gymnastics

Kyla Piercey had an exceptional showing as a gymnast in 2021. Her natural ability, which is bolstered by her "never say die" attitude, has led her to become a three-time National Champion. Kyla became Newfoundland's first gymnast to bring home All-Around National Champion title in gymnastics. A historic finish for the 10-year-old. In addition to winning the all-around national competition, she also earned a Gold Medal on Beam, and a Gold Medal on Floor. Her performances have helped her secured a spot among the Gymnastics Newfoundland and Labrador Canada Games Pool of athletes who are preparing for the 2023 Canada Games.

Abby Williams – Swimming

Abby Williams had an impressive showing as a swimmer with the St. John's Legends Swim Club in 2021, setting three provincial records and 11 personal best times. Her strong training and season performances have not only attracted the attention of the National Collegiate Athletic Association but led her to be selected as one of 14 Female Canadian Age Group Swimmers invited to attend Swimming Canada's 2021 Relay Takeoff Camp. Abby has continued to break her own provincial club records and advance her career on the national scene by adding three more qualifying times at the 2021 Ontario Junior International to be able to compete at the 2022 Canadian Swimming Trials.

Junior Male Athlete of the Year (Joseph P. Mullins Memorial Award)

Zack Dean – Hockey

Zach Dean is a great two-way hockey player and ambassador for the sport in Newfoundland and Labrador who had a great 2021 year on the ice. Playing for the Gatineau Olympiques of the QMJHL, he can be trusted to play the game at both ends of the ice which helped him achieve 10 goals and 10 assists in 23 games, and a plus minus of 10. This earned him the right to be

shortlisted to the National Under 20 Canadian junior hockey team. Last year he was drafted 30th overall by Vegas Golden Knights in round one of the 2021 NHL Entry Draft.

Liam Drover-Mattinen – Tennis

Liam Drover-Mattinen had a great year on the tennis court as he continued his run toward a national singles title. His unparalleled dedication to his sport propelled him to become the 2021 Atlantic U16 tennis champion early in the season. He then went on to become Canada's U16 National Singles tennis champion which is just the second time a player from Newfoundland and Labrador has ever achieved this, and only the third time ever for an Atlantic Canada tennis player. The victory earned him the opportunity to represent Canada as part of Canada's Junior David Cup team. This achievement is all the more remarkable given that Liam was unseeded due to a lack of high-level tournaments played.

Hudson White – Baseball

Hudson White puts countless hours into mastering his baseball skills to ensure he is ready to compete at the highest level possible. As a member of the 17U Provincial Team he had a number of highlights in 2021, including representing the Province at three different Atlantic Championships, winning a silver medal at one event and claiming the Top Pitcher Award at another. Hudson wrapped up his season by being selected as a member of Baseball Canada's Junior National Team Instructional Camp in Dunedin, Florida and was also selected as a member of Team NL for the 2022 Canada Games in Niagara, ON.

Senior Female Athlete of the Year (Elizabeth Swan Memorial Award)

Kate Bazeley – Athletics

Kate Bazeley has competed at the highest possible level throughout 2021, earning invitations to several virtual races. She placed in the top four with all three virtual races for the Canada Run Series elite competition. With several marathons under her belt, the St. John's native made her World Marathon Major debut at the Chicago Marathon placing 16th in the elite women's field, short of her personal-best time. To complete a fantastic season Kate raced the Tely 10 Road Race, achieving a personal best time of 55:06 and placing third overall.

Maggie Connors – Hockey

Maggie Connors had a great NCAA hockey season in 2021 playing for the Princeton Tigers in spite of the majority of the hockey season being cancelled due to Covid-19. Maggie played in 31 games and led the team in scoring with 12 goals, six assists, and five power-play goals for the season in 25 games. This earned her an invite to attend the Hockey Canada Development Camps in Calgary last summer with 43 players and 22 forwards, and the chance to be a Team Canada prospect.

Sophie Pickard – Rugby

Sophie Pickard is a standout rugby player who had tremendous success in 2021 both academically and on the field. She received two prestigious awards, a co-recipient of the Acadia Rugby Coaches Award for women's varsity rugby and female recipient of Acadia University Presidents' Award for Athletics and Leadership. In addition to these achievements, her team had an undefeated regular Atlantic University Sport Women's Rugby season, finishing second, and she was named Varsity Athlete of the Week leading into the National Rugby Championship, along with placing seventh at the U Sports National Championships. This past year she sat on the Advisory Board for Acadia's strength and conditioning program and was asked to sit on the Senior NL Rock women's team board.

Senior Male Athlete of the Year (Fred Hayward Memorial Award)

Emmanuel Dolo – Soccer

Emmanuel Dolo as a dynamic soccer player had a ground-breaking year in 2021 playing at the senior level with Feildians Athletic Association. With 20 goals in 15 regular-season games, his abilities earned him and his Feildians team the 2021 Johnson Insurance Challenge Cup provincial men's soccer trophy, their first title in more than 50 years. Playing with the Memorial Sea-Hawks men's Atlantic University Sport (AUS) team, Emmanuel finished second in AUS scoring with 11 goals and was named an AUS 1st team all-star. He was also named the 2021 NLSA Senior Male Player of the Year.

Liam Hickey – ParaHockey

Liam Hickey achieved so much in 2021 as one of the top para hockey players which earned him a place on Team Canada's 2021 National Para Hockey Team that played at the 2021 Para Ice Hockey Championships, winning a silver medal. As a great player and ambassador of the game, he was named Best Defenseman at the 2021 World Para Hockey Championship tournament. These competitions led to an invitation to represent Canada at the 2022 Winter Para Olympic Games in Beijing.

Colin Walsh – Softball

Colin Walsh enjoyed a successful fastpitch softball season at the local, provincial, and national levels in 2021, earning three MVP performances to lead his 3 Cheers Pub Miller Lite team to three Championships. He also captured a number of awards during the regular season, including Top Batter, Pitching Wins, and Player of the Month honours for June and September/October. Continuing to have an impact he was named the 2021 Softball NL Senior Male Player of the Year and selected to represent Canada at the 2022 Men's Pan American Championships in Parana, Argentina.

Executive of the Year (Graham Snow Memorial Award)

Sean Cadigan – Softball

Sean Cadigan made a significant impact on minor softball for the last five years (2017-2021), and the past year was no exception. As part of the executive for Softball NL, his most notable work was with the U8 and U10 Timbits Program, as well as being a member of Timbits Softball with Softball Canada. Sean has also been instrumental in the formation and operation of four male and female fastpitch leagues which provided further opportunities for athletes and coaches to play the game. Under his leadership and guidance, the Softball NL Minor Membership Registration in 2021 increased, with the highest number of females registered in 5 years. In addition to his Minor Director role, Sean also serves on the Softball NL Coaching Committee, Finance Committee and Hosting Committees for National and Eastern Canadians.

Greg Barton – Hockey

Greg Barton, as part of the executive of the Paradise Minor Hockey Association, volunteered his time with the association at many levels. Under his leadership and valuable insight, Greg has quickly grown it to be one of the largest associations in the province. With the many challenges to program interruptions caused by Covid-19, Greg worked diligently with stakeholders to get children back on the ice. As an ambassador for the hockey community in paradise he led the First Shift program, helping to focus efforts to make sure that every new-to-hockey child was given the opportunity to play a game of hockey which resulted in noticeable dividends as many children went on to join regular hockey programming.

Chris Bartlett – Soccer

Chris Bartlett served the soccer community in several capacities in 2021. Serving as Regional Director for Trinity/Conception/Placentia soccer he represents the region at NLSA Board meetings, also serving on the youth committee to assist the vice-president youth. Chris has contributed to the internet technology of the NLSA with one of his major accomplishments being the implementation of a new online registration program, assisting regions and teams in understanding and use of the program. In addition, as President of the CBN Lightning soccer club, he oversaw all the workings of running and operating a youth soccer program, while also implementing the Canada Soccer Club licensing initiative for the club.

Volunteer of the Year (Frank W. Graham Memorial Award)

Jared Butler – Hockey

Jared Butler is a key volunteer with Hockey Newfoundland and Labrador as their Vice President and Chief Medical Officer. In 2021, he worked with determination, committing up to 20 hours a week of his spare time to build, amend, and promote a safe return to hockey caused by Covid-19 challenges so that up to 10,000 hockey players could return to play hockey in a safe environment

during the pandemic. In his board position he also led a governance committee to institute many new policies and protections to be able to adhere to the NL Corporations Act and to better align the organization in its strategic planning and implementation of by-laws for the organizations future success.

Bernie Manning – Soccer

Bernie Manning spent countless hours volunteering for the Newfoundland and Labrador Soccer Association (NLSA) and the Feildians Athletic Association as a board member and a coach with both organizations, training three teams in total. During the 2021 season, Bernie was keen to ensure the growth of women's soccer as well as referee development. He also spearheaded the Women's Panel and the Referee Development panel. Sitting on numerous committees for the NLSA including the Executive Committee, Rules and Regulations Committee, Discipline Committee and Branding Committee, he was also the recipient of the 2021 NLSA Volunteer of the Year Award.

Colin Rose – Baseball

Colin Rose stepped up as a volunteer within the baseball community in 2021. As the program coordinator of the Challenger Baseball program since 2018, Colin ensured that all players with varying abilities got the chance to play the sport and enjoy the benefits of baseball. He has made the Challenger program one of the best and the envy of other provinces across the country. This garnered him national attention, being invited to attend several training sessions and workshops led by the Jays Care Foundation, which resulted in fostering a partnership with a local non-profit organization; so that Challenger sessions were able to take place in the off season. He was also the recipient of the Les Noseworthy Memorial Award, an award recognizing outstanding growth and development of baseball in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Female Coach of the Year

Kristyn Coley – Baseball

Kristyn Coley has been a baseball coach for nine years and enjoyed many successes throughout the 2021 season at the Provincial and Atlantic levels. Her season was highlighted by being an Assistant Coach of the Baseball NL 16U Provincial team that went undefeated to win the 16U Atlantic Baseball Challenge, the first Championship at this age category for Team NL in an Atlantic or National event. She also became an NCCP-certified Facilitator for baseball and completed Baseball Canada Comp-Dev courses to begin certification. Both of these accomplishments helped Kristyn become the first female to complete either for baseball in the province.

Stephanie Delaney – Hockey

Stephanie Delaney has coached hockey for more than eight years. She is currently coaching in the Don Johnson U13 A Female Hockey League, which is the first year in the league has existed.

Stephanie has made a number of gains by bringing a higher level of competition to the female game and being named Hockey Newfoundland and Labrador Coach of the Month once during the hockey season. As a member of the “We are Coaches” program run by Hockey Canada she plays a big part in growing the female game and works to increase the number of female coaches within the sport in the province. Stephanie has been named as the assistant coach for the 2023 Female U18 Canada Winter Games team, heading to Prince Edward Island next February.

Allison Kirby – Gymnastics

Allison Kirby is a passionate Women’s Artistic Gymnastics coach who oversees a program with over 85 female artistic gymnasts, 25 male artistic gymnasts, and 12 trampoline gymnasts. During the 2021 competitive season, she trained gymnasts to eight medals at Canadian National Championships including a first ever all-around gold and three other gold medals. This was a best ever finish as her athletes represented the province during Gymnastics NL team travel events. As a head coach and women’s artistic program lead and a certified national level judge, she consistently produces gymnasts at the high-performance level, coaching a gymnast to the Gymnastics Canada Junior High Performance List, another first for the province.

Male Coach of the Year (John Drinkwater Memorial Award)

Stephen Nolan – Gymnastics

Stephen Nolan is an ambitious, yet selfless Trampoline Gymnastics coach who has acclaimed several prestigious accolades in his career, but many most recently in 2021. During the competitive season, he had an athlete qualify for several major competitions and place first at the 2021 Elite Canada Competition. Steve was recognized as Trampoline Coach of the Year by both Gymnastics Newfoundland and Labrador and Campia Gymnastics. He has played an integral role in the gymnastics community by mentoring several coaches and has also taken on additional responsibility as a learning facilitator.

Jake Stanford – Soccer

Jake Stanford achieved many successes in 2021 as a coach of both male and female teams within the soccer community. His coaching activities include training the Holy Cross Crusaders, the Holy Cross Jubilee Trophy team, and the Memorial Sea-Hawks men’s varsity team. During the soccer season he coached his Holy Cross Jubilee Trophy team to another first place finish on its way to capturing the Jubilee Trophy Championship, while earning the Jubilee Trophy league’s Coach of the Year award. He followed this up with leading his Holy Cross Challenge Cup Trophy team to a first-place regular season finish, while also earning the Challenge Cup League’s Coach of the Year. He was also named 2021 Atlantic University Sport Men's Coach of the Year.

Jeff Thomas – Curling

Jeff Thomas is no stranger to the curling world, coaching teams for 35 plus years. With such a passion for helping NL curlers of all skill levels succeed at local, provincial, national, and international levels his technical knowledge and ability to teach are second to none. In 2021, Jeff coached Team Gushue to the semi-finals at The Masters - Grand Slam of Curling and most impressively coached them to victory at the Canadian Olympic Curling Trials, which led him to coach the team in preparation for the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing. He also coached Team Young to a second-place finish at the National World Juniors Qualifier and coached Team Thomas to a second-place finish at the Men's Provincial Tankard.

Team of the Year (Edward P. Browne Memorial Award)

16U Female Provincial Team – Baseball

The 16U Female Provincial Baseball team had a successful season after the unfortunate cancellation of events due to the Covid-19 pandemic, including Baseball Canada's 2021 National Championships. The team was able to compete at the Baseball Atlantic 16U Championships, a newly created tournament in partnership with the four Atlantic provinces. Advancing to the finals of the tournament they brought home the championship title for the province by defeating Nova Scotia.

Newfoundland Rock Senior Men's Team – Rugby

The Newfoundland and Labrador Rock Senior Men's team, made up of a 27-man squad, enjoyed a successful season after a two-year break from competition due to the limitations of the pandemic. The team emerged with a Gold Medal at the Atlantic Rugby Championship, beating New Brunswick, and then going on to beat hosts Nova Scotia with a Golden Point score in overtime.

Team Gushue – Curling

Team Gushue continued the 2021 curling season showing why they are one of the most dominant teams in the world to compete at all tournament levels. The team reached the semi-finals of The Masters - Grand Slam of Curling, competed against nine men's teams at the Canadian Olympic Curling Trials, winning the right to represent Canada at their second Winter Olympics with an 8-1 record. A force to be reckoned with, they know how to win big events, ending the season with an impressive victory at the Champions Cup.

Official of the Year Award

Kevin Fitzpatrick – Basketball Officials

Kevin Fitzpatrick has been involved in almost every aspect of basketball for over 50 years. He has officiated thousands of games over his 20-year career as a referee, from minor ball to high school, to senior men's and ladies' leagues, and many NLBA provincial tournaments at all levels. As president of the St. John's Association of Basketball Officials, during the 2021-2022 season, Kevin led recruitment efforts which resulted in attracting approximately 15 new officials and volunteered as the Officials Development Coordinator for the season, with the goal to develop and mentor both new and existing officials in the region to help them grow into provincially and nationally recognized referees.

Chantal McDonald – Soccer

Chantal McDonald had an incredible 2021 soccer officiating year. As an up-and-coming official who strives to achieve success on the field, she has been officiating for approximately four years. This past season, she officiated in the Premier Youth League, Jubilee Trophy and Challenge Cup Leagues. At the end of the 2021 soccer season, Chantal was invited by Canada Soccer to attend the Canada Soccer Women's Referee Development Seminar which led to her being recommended to, and officiated at the U-Sports Women's Championship that took place in Cape Breton. She was also named 2021 Newfoundland and Labrador Soccer Association Official of the Year.

Danielle Mills – Hockey

Danielle Mills is a respected hockey referee who has officiated male and female hockey at all levels for the past 21 years. She is a Member High Performance Level official with Hockey NL and is the first female in 2021 to referee at the highest level of minor hockey with Under 18 Male provincial league and playoff games. Danielle can be found mentoring many officials in the Grand Falls-Windsor Minor Hockey Association and sitting on a national task force to help grow female officiating numbers across Canada.