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Wednesday, June 28, 2017

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FAIRFIELD COUNTY SPORTS HALL OF FAME NAMES NEWEST MEMBERS

STAMFORD, CT – The Fairfield County Sports Hall of Fame today announced its new class of inductees, naming six prominent sports figures into its three wings. The Hall of Fame, which is overseen by the Fairfield County Sports Commission, Inc., will honor the newly elected Hall of Famers with an induction ceremony at the Commission's 13th annual Sports Night awards dinner, Monday, Oct. 16 at the Stamford Marriott at 6 p.m.

With the six new inductees, the Hall of Fame has now recognized 84 county sports legends.

The class of 2017 honorees are:

Jackie Robinson Professional Wing: **KEN GREEN (DANBURY), RANDY LAJOIE (NORWALK)**

James O'Rourke Amateur Wing: **PHIL KYDES (NORWALK), the late BERTHA RAGAN TICKEY (STRATFORD)**

J. Walter Kennedy Community Service Wing: **JIM DOLAN (REDDING), LADDIE LAWRENCE (WESTPORT)**

With Green's induction as the first Danbury honoree and Dolan being Redding's initial inductee, a total of 18 different towns are now represented in the Hall of Fame.

Green, a Danbury native who has been a professional golfer for nearly 40 years, made his debut on the PGA Tour in 1980 and recorded his first victory in 1985. He was a five-time winner who earned more than \$3.5 million and finished seventh in the U.S. Open in 1996 and 11th in the Masters in '89. His best season was 1988 when he posted two PGA wins and also won a Japan Tour event and finished 4th on the money list. Green, who played three years at the University of Florida (1977-79), was a member of the U.S. Ryder Cup team in 1989. He joined the Champions Senior Tour in 2008, but Green was involved in a tragic auto accident in June 2009 and the injuries he sustained led to his lower right leg being amputated. He was named the FCSC's Chelsea Cohen Courage Award winner in 2010. He was elected to the CT Golf Hall of Fame in 2006.

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LaJoie becomes the first race car driver to be inducted into the FCSHOF. Growing up in a racing family headed by his father Don, he rose from driving go-karts as a young teen to a track champion at the Danbury Fair Racearena when he was 18 to a highly-successful professional stock car racer who earned more than \$9 million in a career that started in 1983. He won 15 races in the Busch Series from 1986-2005 and was a two-time champion of the racing series (1996 & '97). He had 394 starts and made 14 of those in 1995 when he reached the top of the racing world in NASCAR's Winston Cup Series. In 2016, his career came full circle by being named to the New England Auto Racers Hall of Fame. LaJoie, who retired from the sport in 2006, now spends time watching the next generation of LaJoies compete as his son Corey races in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series.

Kydes was one of most prolific high school soccer scorers in state history at Brien McMahon High, leading the Senators to two FCIAC titles and a state crown. He scored 74 goals in three seasons and was all-state each of those years under coach Ralph King, also a FCS HOFer. His senior year in 1967 he scored a state-record 31 goals in 11 games. Kydes moved on to a storied career at Harvard, leading the Crimson to a pair of Ivy League titles and its most successful three-year period in school history, including Harvard's first-ever NCAA Tournament appearance. He concluded his career as Harvard's then all-time assist leader with 20, became a second team All-American in 1971 and was two-time All Ivy first team. He is inducted in the Harvard Varsity Club Hall of Fame as is his older brother Andy. Kydes was drafted with the first pick of the second round by the Montreal Olympics in the initial North American Soccer League professional draft in 1972.

Ragan Tickey was one of the greatest pitchers in women's softball history, and her arrival in Stratford was a key factor in the development of the Raybestos Brakettes into a world class team. She came East in 1956 after a stellar career in California with the Orange Lionettes and in her 13 seasons playing in Stratford led the Brakettes to seven national titles. During that time she not only posted an amazing 285-26 record, but she mentored the Brakettes' young pitchers, including Joan Joyce and Donna Lopiano, both members of the National Softball and FCS HOFs. She retired in 1968 on a grand note with her final game producing a national crown for the Brakettes as she tossed a perfect game and struck out 20 of the 21 batters. Her 757 wins with 42 perfect games and 162 no-hitters earned the 18-time All-American a spot in the National Softball Hall of Fame in 1972 and the CT ASA HOF in 1973. Ragan Tickey passed away at the age of 91 in 2014.

Dolan coached for 37 years at Barlow High in Redding, amassing over 750 victories in the three sports he piloted -- soccer, baseball and golf. He was the school's first varsity soccer coach and the 411 wins he posted over his 29-year career were second all-time in the state at the time of his retirement in 2003. He won six Class M state titles and 13 league crowns. In 1995, he was named the National HS Soccer Coach of the Year. Dolan coached baseball for 17 seasons, winning 236 games and three league titles. After 12 years as the Falcons golf coach, he retired from coaching in 2012. He was elected to the Connecticut High School Coaches Hall of Fame in 2004 and the CT Soccer HOF in 2010.

Lawrence has been one of the state's premier track and field and cross country coaches over his 49-year career at Staples High, where he has coached both boys and girls. He has served as the boys indoor track and field head coach since 1970, boys cross country (1972) and boys outdoor track and field (1977). Lawrence has amassed a record of 1,824-395, and has led his teams to 32 undefeated seasons. He won 32 FCIAC championships, 40 CIAC State Class (including 9 straight class L's at one point) or Open titles and two New England crowns. His many honors include being selected for the National Coaches Hall of Fame in 2015 and National Coach of the Year in cross country in 1990. Lawrence, who has coached eight national champions, is a member of the FCIAC and CHSCA Hall of Fames and received the Gold Key award from the CT Sports Writers' Alliance in 2013.