

VIRGINIA SPORTS HALL OF FAME



Media Release

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For More Information, Contact:
Will Driscoll, Executive Director
(757) 800-1555 driscollw@vasportshof.com

Virginia Sports Hall of Fame Announces 49th Induction Class

Induction Weekend to be held April 24-25, 2020 in Virginia Beach

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA – Two NCAA All-Americans, one Olympic Medalist, 10 professional All-Star appearances, 65 years in professional baseball, and more than 80 years of sports media coverage. Add it all up, and you have seven new inductees of the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame. The Virginia Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2020, the 49th in the Hall's history, features a talent-rich group of athletes, contributors, and broadcasters that have enjoyed success at all levels of sport.

The seven member Class of 2020 was selected by the Hall of Fame's 25-member Honors Court, after reviewing a host of nominations from among the ranks of athletes, coaches, journalists and other contributors, who either were born and/or raised in Virginia or made a significant contribution to sports in Virginia. "The Class of 2020 is a continuation of the strong sporting tradition in Virginia" says Will Driscoll, Executive Director of the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame. "With six members of this class native to Virginia, and another who has served the state for over 40-years, this class upholds our mission of honoring athletic excellence in the Commonwealth."

Virginia Sports Hall of Fame, Class of 2020:

- **Dennis Carter**, a native of Danville, VA, began his career in sports media working for two outlets in his hometown, the Danville Register, and WBTV/WAKG Radio. Carter moved to WSET in Lynchburg in 1983, and has represented ABC13 Sports for 37 years. Covering local and national sports stories, Carter has been honored numerous times by both the Virginia Associated Press Broadcasters and Virginia Association of Broadcasters. He has previously been inducted into the Lynchburg Area, Amherst County, and Danville Community College Sports Halls of Fame.

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- **Mike Cubbage**, a Charlottesville native, has spent almost a half century in professional baseball. Drafted out of the University of Virginia in 1971 by the Washington Senators, Cubbage would play 8 seasons in MLB, before embarking on a post playing career that has taken him from the dugout to the executive box. Cubbage has served as base coach, bench coach, manager, scout, and most recently as a special assistant to the General Manager of the 2019 World Series Champion Washington Nationals.
- **Lawrence Johnson**, began his track and field excellence in Chesapeake, VA at Great Bridge High School. Originally a hurdler, Johnson made the switch to pole-vault his freshman year and the rest is history. Johnson placed in the high school division at the 1992 Penn Relays, and continued that success at the University of Tennessee. The 6-time SEC, and 4-time NCAA champion, Johnson was named the 1996 NCAA Athlete of the Year. Johnson enjoyed success on the international stage, competing in two Summer Olympics, winning a silver medal in Sydney in 2000, becoming the first African-American pole vaulter to medal in an Olympic Games.
- **Bruce Rader**, assumed the role of Sports Director at WAVY-TV in 1979, and has held that position for 40 years. Serving the Hampton Roads market, Rader changed the landscape of television sports media by focusing on underserved segments such as high school sports and the area's Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Rader was also the first area reporter to cover the Washington Redskins regularly. Rader has previously been honored by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, the Virginia Association of Broadcasters, the Norfolk Sports Club, and the CIAA Hall of Fame, the Hampton Roads Sports Hall of Fame, and Hampton Roads Sports Media Hall of Fame.
- **Tracy Saunders**, a native of Suffolk, VA enjoyed a legendary career for Norfolk State University Women's Basketball. Playing for the Lady Spartans, then in Division-II, Saunders would be named 3-time All-Conference, 2-time All-American, the 1991 NCAA Division-II Player of the Year, and the 1991 Honda Award recipient, recognizing the top female athlete in all sports in Division-II. Saunders finished her career with 2,084 points and 978 rebounds, leading the Spartans to a four year record of 95-25. Saunders has previously been honored by the Norfolk State Athletics, the Hampton Roads Sports, and the Hampton Roads African American Sports Halls of Fame. Her #10 jersey is retired by Norfolk State.
- **Al Toon**, from Menchville High School in Newport News, VA, put his football and track abilities on display at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. While with the Badgers, Toon set school records for receptions, receiving yards, and touchdown catches, in addition to conference and school records in the Triple

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Jump. Drafted 10th overall by the New York Jets in the 1985 NFL Draft, Toon would catch 517 passes for 6,605 yards, and 31 touchdowns over an 8-year career, all with the Jets. A 3-time Pro-Bowl and 3-time All-Pro Selection, Toon was named the AFC Player of the Year in 1986. Toon was named to the Jets All-Time Four Decade Team in 2003, and the team's Ring of Honor in 2011.

- **David Wright**, made his Major League Baseball debut in 2004 and enjoyed a 14 year MLB career, that saw him set numerous team records for the New York Mets. The Chesapeake native, and Hickory High School alum, is the Mets all-time leader in hits, runs, R.B.I, doubles, extra base hits, and all-star selections. The 7-time All-Star, and 2-time Gold Glove and Silver Slugger Awards winner, was named team captain from 2013 through his retirement in 2018. He ended his career with a .296 career average, 1,777 hits, 242 homeruns, 970 rbi, and 949 runs scored.

The induction ceremony, taking place Saturday night April 25 at Zeiders American Dream Theater in Virginia Beach, will be the culmination of a weekend filled with events to honor the Class of 2020, including a VIP Reception Friday April 24, and a Breakfast with Champions event the morning of Saturday, April 25.

Event and ticket information can be found at the Hall of Fame's website, www.vasportshof.com. Any questions regarding the Induction Weekend events can be directed to Driscoll, driscollw@VaSportsHOF.com

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About the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame:

Since 1972, the Virginia Sports Hall of Fame has been proud to honor Virginia's contributions to the world of sports. As the Commonwealth's official hall of fame, our mission is to honor athletic excellence, serve as a nonprofit resource highlighting philanthropy through sports, while inspiring sports fans through programming and engaging entertainment.