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“Flurry from Fort McMurray” to enter Hall of Fame

Former Golden Glove champion named first inductee into Class of 2012

(April 13, 2012 – Fort McMurray, AB) The Wood Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame Society is proud to announce the induction of Wayne Bourque as the first of four inductees into the Class of 2012.

Born in 1959, Bourque started boxing with the Clearwater Amateur Boxing Club at a young age winning his first tournament at age 13, the prestigious 1973 Northwest Pacific Golden Gloves in Seattle, Washington.

A year later he would win a Canadian Amateur Boxing Association junior national title at the 80-pound weight class. He would follow with silver in 1974 at 85 pounds and bronze in 1975 at 90 pounds.

Bourque, known as “The Flurry from Fort McMurray”, would establish himself as one of the premiere amateur boxers in Canada, winning three North American Native Boxing titles, four provincial championships and four Golden Glove championships in his respective weight divisions.

Bourque also won bronze at the senior nationals in 1983 and from that had a potential shot at representing Canada at the 1984 Olympics. Unfortunately he injured his right knee while skiing, forcing him to retire from the ring only a few months prior to the trials.

His amateur boxing career totaled 130 fights with an estimated 109 wins and 21 defeats.

He spent the next few years away from the boxing ring, trading early morning runs and the grind of training for a more leisurely lifestyle.

In 1987, looking for a fresh start, Bourque moved to Toronto, where in 1994 he opened Centre Ring, a popular Toronto gym that is now rated as one of the top boxercise facilities in North America. As the name suggests, boxercise offers a combination of exercises that a typical boxer would use during training sessions.

Over the years numerous NHL players have turned to the gym during the off-season to stay in shape. Former NHLer Brad May believes it offers the best workout in the country. When she's not mentoring the current Canadian Olympic athletes, three-time Olympic gold medal rower, Marnie McBean works out with Bourque.

In 2009, at age 49, Bourque returned to competition following a year of intense training to chase another dream -- winning the Ringside World Championships for Masters (age 40 to 50) in the light heavyweight division.

He won his category at the annual event held in Kansas City, Missouri, to close the book on competing.

“It's over. I'm gonna soak this up. I've proven something,” said Bourque of his three round victory over Chicago's Guili Coix, 41. “I have enough to hold me over now for another 25 years.”

Of his connection to Fort McMurray he proudly states: "Even though I have been gone a long time I still call Fort McMurray home. I always let people know that I am from Fort McMurray. We produced a lot of great athletes even though we were so isolated back then."

Of his induction into the Class of 2012 he concluded: "My son Brandon (a 16 year-old who is a talented lacrosse player) hit the nail on the head and said it best; "Dad...they still remember what you did and that was nearly 30 years ago."

"It's nice to be remembered and I am very honoured."

The Wood Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame will honour Bourque, and three other inductees to be named later, at the Sixth Induction Dinner June 21, 2012 at the Sawridge Inn and Conference Centre.

For tickets email admin@woodbuffalosports.com.

The Wood Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame is located inside the Syncrude Sport & Wellness Centre at Keyano College in Fort McMurray, Alberta.

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