

PIONEER CATHY PHILLIPS RECOGNIZED FOR HER CONTRIBUTION TO WOMEN'S HOCKEY

- Gold Medal Goaltender – 1st Nationals (1982)
- Gold Medal Goaltender – 1st World Tournament (1987)
- Gold Medal Goaltender – 1st Women's World Championship (1990)
- OWSHA Player
- OWSHA Coach
- OWSHA Volunteer
- Outstanding Person

The Isobel Gathorne Hardy Award is attributed to an active player, at any level of the game, whose values, leadership and personal traits are representative of all female athletes. The award recognizes a player that has demonstrated strong community involvement and dedication to the game of hockey.

Cathy Phillips was presented the 2005 Isobel Gathorne Hardy Award at the Esso Nationals Banquet to a standing ovation from the participating players, coaches and volunteers. The award was presented by Karen Fraser from Imperial Oil. The following is Cathy's introduction for the award:

This year's winner has been involved in women's hockey for 31 years. She was born and raised in Burlington, Ontario and began playing hockey at the age of 13. For the first 17 years of her participation, she played for both Burlington and Hamilton teams.

She was voted Top Goaltender 14 times and Most Valuable Player twice during her years of play in the Central Ontario Women's Hockey League (COWHL), the fore-runner of the NWHL.

She participated in 7 of the first 9 National Championships winning 4 gold, 2 silver and one bronze medal. She was the winning goaltender at the inaugural National Championship held in Brantford, Ontario in 1982. Led by her solid goaltending, Ontario defeated Alberta in overtime. The Canadian public had witnessed the excellence of female hockey!

The success of the National Championship led to the creation of the first World Tournament in 1987 and the first World Championship in 1990. Our winner was in goal for Canada for both those gold medal winning Canadian teams.

She played goal for all three events that paved the way for the credibility we enjoy today.

Within a few short weeks of the first world championship, our winner faced a significant off-ice challenge.

She was diagnosed with a brain tumor. She had no choice except to undergo very risky surgery. The surgery was performed and she has moved forward with a positive attitude that has inspired those who have the good fortune to hear her speak or to meet her.

Although she was not able to play at the top level, she turned her efforts to what she could do – and she did it well! She secured her Advanced Level coaching certification and served as an Assistant Coach on the Ontario Women's Hockey Association's winning team at the Canada Winter Games. She continues to serve as an assistant coach of an Intermediate AA team and she has also returned to the net at the Recreational "W-R-E-C-K" level.

In her outside life, she was an electrician with Dofasco. She was inspired in her career by her father who had been her coach until his passing shortly before the first World Tournament. Her mother, Eileen, is with us today.

Many of the participants here have met our winner. She is a regular volunteer at Esso National Championships and special events held in Ontario.

She is an exceptional athlete whose performance brought the game of female hockey the credibility and exposure the athletes deserve. She is an amazing person who we sincerely congratulate and thank.

*Please stand and join me in congratulating our champion and a very deserving winner of this year's Isabel Gathorne Hardy Award: **CATHY PHILLIPS***