

Kate Barratt to be honoured at Brier

Curling Canada Volunteer of the Year

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FEBRUARY 23, 2017 12:03 PM



MP Pam Goldsmith-Jones, Gibsons Curling Club president (and Curling Canada's volunteer of the year) Kate Barratt and vice president Manon Staiger at the Oct. 1, 2016 open house celebrating the club's new ice plant, which Barratt was instrumental in securing the funding for.

You might see a familiar face at the 2017 Tim Hortons Brier national curling competition, broadcast on The Sports Network (TSN) Saturday, March 11.

For a few minutes between the third and fourth ends of that day's semi-final, there will be an on-ice ceremony to honour the exceptional volunteer efforts of Gibsons Curling Club member Kate Barratt.

Barratt is responsible for, among other things, raising \$140,000 for a much needed new ice plant at the Gibsons Curling Club.

"TSN typically records a few seconds of the ceremony to show during the broadcast," said Al Cameron, director of communications and media relations with Curling Canada, noting the actual ceremony will take place during a commercial break.

Barratt was picked by Curling Canada along with two other women from across the nation to be honoured at the Brier in Newfoundland this year.

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Barratt will receive the Volunteer of the Year Award, while Bernadette McIntyre from Saskatchewan will receive the Award of Achievement and Kathy Siddall of Nova Scotia will be given the Ray Kingsmith Award, meant to honour commitment and dedication to the sport of curling.

“As much as our sport is about the athletes, it’s the people behind the scenes whose names rarely, if ever, make the headlines who make it possible for those athletes to perform at a high level,” said Curling Canada Board of Governors member Scott Comfort, who chairs the Awards and Hall of Fame Committee.

“These committed volunteers also work hard at developing the grassroots of our sport. This truly is a gratifying day because we get to thank and honour people who make our sport so special.”

Barratt got involved with the Gibsons Curling Club in 2011 as a member and started volunteering soon after that.

She joined the board of directors in 2013, was named vice president in 2014 and went on to take the reins as president in 2015.

During the 2015-16 curling season, she added major fundraiser to her volunteer job title, seeing the need to replace the club’s failing 40-year-old ice plant.

“While Barratt’s contributions to her hometown Gibsons Curling Club go back further than the 2015-2016 season, it was then that she stood tallest to ensure that her fellow curlers on the Sunshine Coast had a dependable ice surface on which to play,” a press release from Curling Canada said.

“She applied for grants and donations of all kinds, and in the end her single-minded tenacity would end up producing a remarkable \$140,000 of the \$160,000 cost of the project.”

Barratt said being honoured by Curling Canada for her volunteer work is “very gratifying,” but she’s quick to share the credit on the fundraising front.

“The ice plant project could not have been completed without the support of the Gibsons Curling Club board of directors and club members who volunteered their time and talents,” Barratt said. “I would also like to thank the donors for their financial support.”

Curling Canada will fly Barratt and her husband to the Brier next month, so she can accept her volunteer award on the ice in front of her peers.

She’s looking forward to the experience.

“I am very excited to go to the Brier, especially because it is being held in Newfoundland, the one Canadian province I have not visited,” she said.

Tune in to TSN between March 4 and March 12 for daily coverage of the 2017 Tim Hortons Brier.