



NEWS RELEASE



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JOE BERTAGNA NAMED 2023 LESTER PATRICK TROPHY HONOREE

NEW YORK (October 12, 2023) – The National Hockey league today announced that **Joe Bertagna** (Arlington, Mass.) has been named the recipient of the 2023 Lester Patrick Trophy for outstanding service to hockey in the United States.

The annual award, one of the most prestigious in hockey, was presented to the National Hockey League by the New York Rangers in 1966. It honors the memory of Lester Patrick, who spent 50 years in hockey as a player, coach and general manager and was a pioneer in the sport's development.

"The first time I saw Joe Bertagna, I booed him – it should be noted that this was 1972 and he was tending goal for Harvard against my beloved Cornell Big Red in Lynah Rink," NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman said. "In the many years since, I have come to know Joe as a passionate advocate for our game at all levels throughout the United States. Joe has coached men's and women's teams at his alma mater and has been an innovative goaltending coach on the collegiate, national team and NHL levels for 50 years.

"In addition, combining his tenures leading the ECAC and then Hockey East, he has served longer as a college hockey commissioner than anyone – that's another personal connection we have. For his lifetime of service to hockey in the United States, Joe Bertagna is a fitting and deserving recipient of the 2023 Lester Patrick Trophy."

Bertagna, 71, has devoted a lifelong career to the game of hockey, including 40 years as a college hockey administrator and 50 years as a goaltending coach. The longest-serving college hockey commissioner in NCAA history, Bertagna acted as ECAC Hockey commissioner for 15 years and then as commissioner of Hockey East for 23 years. While with Hockey East, he led the hosting of the 2015 Frozen Four in Boston, negotiated a new television contract for the conference, organized multiple sold-out events at Boston's Fenway Park, and brought the University of Notre Dame and University of Connecticut into the conference ranks. Bertagna is currently in his third year as Commissioner of the Eastern Hockey League (EHL).

Bertagna has been instrumental in the growth of women's hockey across the United States for over five decades. He helped launch Harvard's women's program in 1977-78 and served as the team's first head coach for two seasons. He also was the catalyst behind the formation of the Hockey East's women's league in 2002-03, just as he initiated collegiate league play for both Division I and Division III women's programs while with the ECAC. In 2013, the Women's Hockey East championship trophy was named the Bertagna Trophy.

In addition to his administrative service, Bertagna has been a pioneer in the area of coaching netminders. A star goaltender himself at Arlington (Mass.) High School, and at Harvard in the late '60s and early '70s, Bertagna served as goaltending coach for the NHL's Boston Bruins from 1985-86 through 1990-91, as well as for the 1994 U.S. Olympic Team, the U.S. Men's National Team, and the Milwaukee Admirals of the International Hockey League (IHL). He also was the head coach of the Men's Junior Varsity Team at Harvard and has written numerous books on goaltending, as well as a pictorial history of Harvard Athletics.

Bertagna was honored with the USA Hockey Distinguished Service Award in 2017, and is a member of the Massachusetts Hockey, ECAC, Women's Beanpot, and Massachusetts High School Hockey Coaches Association Halls of Fame.

Bertagna will be formally honored as part of the [U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame Induction Celebration](#) Dec. 6 in Boston, at the Westin Copley Place. That event will include the enshrinement of U.S. Hockey

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Hall of Fame Class of 2023 honorees **Dustin Brown, Brian Burke, Katie King Crowley, Jamie Langenbrunner** and **Brian Murphy**.

Past winners of the Lester Patrick Trophy include Warren Strelow (2022), Jack Barzee (2021), Lynn Olson (2020), Dr. Jack Blatherwick (2019), Jim Johansson (2018), Peter Lindberg & Dave Ogreaan (2017), Mark Howe & Patrick J. Kelly (2016), Jeremy Jacobs & Bob Crocker (2015), Bill Daly & Paul Holmgren (2014), Kevin Allen (2013), and Bob Chase-Wallenstein & Dick Patrick (2012). For the full list of Lester Patrick Trophy recipients please [click here](#).

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