



A Positive Outlook To Appreciate Las Vegas' Sports Future, Look to the Past

Southern Nevada is in the midst of a major sports revolution. With the Las Vegas Raiders moving into Allegiant Stadium later this year, 2020 will mark a milestone in the regional sports landscape that began its transformation with the arrival of the Vegas Golden Knights just three years ago. Those headliners of professional sports are joined by the Aces of the Women's National Basketball Association, the Lights of the United Soccer League and the National Basketball Association's Summer League, along with many high-profile collegiate and high school events spanning a number of sports.

This rapid evolution of Southern Nevada's sports scene did not happen in a vacuum. While the region has not had a major league franchise until recently, longtime residents will recall a rich history of sports at all levels: a history that was shaped by the local kids who made it big, the leaders who cultivated leagues and led teams, the benefactors whose support helped dreams become reality and the athletes and events who became synonymous with Las Vegas.

The Southern Nevada Sports Hall of Fame is dedicated to that history. Established in 1996, the non-profit organization has recognized the outstanding achievements of Southern Nevada athletes, both in the world of sports and the local community, while it supports local youth programs that help mold new generations of community leaders through sports participation.

In its brief history, the Sports Hall of Fame has inducted 110 people, events and organizations into its illustrious halls. The first inductee was David Humm, a local quarterbacking phenom who starred at Bishop Gorman High School, became a Heisman Trophy candidate with the University of Nebraska and played a decade in the NFL, including seven years with the Oakland Raiders.

The inductees who followed are a Who's Who of Southern Nevada sports royalty: Greg Maddux, Andre Agassi, Jerry Tarkanian, Floyd Mayweather, Mike Tyson, Dana White and Larry Johnson. Hall of Fame members also include local influential families who supported a number of efforts to grow sports, community leaders who supported athletics on the amateur and professional levels, as well as some of the most influential events and teams that have made the Southern Nevada sporting world what it is today, such as the Golden Knights, the

national champion UNLV Runnin' Rebels and the National Finals Rodeo.

While the Southern Nevada Sports Hall of Fame celebrates the past, it also has an eye toward the future. The organization awards six \$2,500 scholarships to graduating high school seniors each year, and it regularly supports initiatives that enhance youth sports throughout Southern Nevada. The Hall of Fame's tagline is "Where would you be without sports in your life?" For those of us who grew up swinging a



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bat or shooting a ball, the effect of sports is indelible, as it helped teach us the values of life through the spirit of competition, and the Hall of Fame is committed to that proposition for the generations of today and tomorrow.

Southern Nevada wouldn't be what it is today without sports. That history helped lay the foundation for developments in the past few years that have elevated the region's sporting scene. Sports at all levels, from the games at Allegiant Stadium to the youth sports fields and courts scattered around the urban valley, are and will continue to be woven into the fabric of our community.

While sports do not define us, they are undeniably a piece of who we are as Southern Nevadans. As we head into one of the most important and monumental sports years in our community's history, let's celebrate where we are and where we are headed while always remembering who helped get us there.

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