

2015 Volleyball Alberta Hall of Fame Award

Athlete

Murray Grapentine



Born in Wetaskiwin in 1977, this all-around athlete grew up in the Wetaskiwin Minor Hockey, Softball and Baseball programs, school sports and Club Volleyball. Murray's experience with volleyball began in grade 8 at Queen Elizabeth Junior High. In grade 10 (1993) he was chosen to play for the Alberta Juvenile Volleyball Team and competed in the Western Canadian Championships. This exceptional and humble blocker wouldn't have to travel far to start his post-secondary career. After one season at Red Deer College, winning the CCAA National College title and being recognized as the Most Improved Player on the team, he traveled north up Highway 2 to join the Golden Bears volleyball program at the University of Alberta from 1996-1999. He represented Alberta twice more as a junior player and in 1997 he was named an All Star at the Canadian Junior National Championships. Murray was selected to the Canadian National FISU team in 1997. Golden Bears' Coach Terry Danyluk reflected that Murray was "instrumental in the Golden Bears 1997 CIAU National Championship" and was also the University of Alberta's Wilson Trophy winner as the school's most outstanding male athlete in 1998 and the CIAU Player of the year award in 1999.

After graduating from University, his international appearances included: the Universiade Games of 1997 and 1999, the 1998, 2002 and 2006 World Championships and Murray played volleyball professionally in Spain, France and Italy for over seven years. As a professional, he led his team to the Coupe de France in 2004 and 2007, as well as the Championat de France title in 2003. He also continued playing for the Canadian National Team and continued gaining acclaim for his prowess on the volleyball court including:

- Best Blocker and Server at the 2000 FIVB Olympic Qualifier;
- All Star at the Men's World Championship Qualifier in 2001;
- Best Blocker at the NORCECA Championships in 1999, 2003 and 2007;
- Selected as Captain of Team Canada in 2005;
- Fourth Best Blocker at the 1998 World Cup and 2006 World Championships
- Best Blocker in the 2006 Pan-American Cup.

Danyluk recalls that "Murray has really 'done it all' as a player in the sport of volleyball, he was a standout at all levels in which he played; locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally. This all says a great deal about his athletic achievements but as his former coach what is most special about Murray is not that he succeeded at becoming a world class middle blocker but that he did so humbly and with great commitment to all the teams he participated on."

After eleven seasons with Team Canada, Murray retired from competition in January 2008 and mentored athletes as an assistant volleyball coach for the University of Regina Cougars from 2008-2014. In 2012, his hometown of Wetaskiwin inducted Murray into the Hall of Fame as an athlete. Murray is changing gears from volleyball and completing a Bachelors of Business real-estate degree. It is a pleasure to honor and recognize Murray Grapentine as a 2015 Inductee as an Athlete to the Volleyball Alberta Hall of Fame!