

2011 Alberta Volleyball Hall of Fame Award

Category: Builder

Inductee: David & Doreen Ross

David and Doreen Ross have been volleyball players, coaches, officials, clinicians, and administrators for over 30 years. The St. Albert couple's passion was instrumental in helping the sport take a strong foothold in the province in the early seventies, and in increasing participation levels in the succeeding three decades.

After the 'old' Edmonton Phoenix Volleyball Club dissolved in early 1975, David and Doreen enthusiastically picked up the ball and founded the Edmonton Friars Volleyball Club in the fall of 1975. A core group of Dave and Doreen's friends were able to recruit enough players to form 3 women's teams and 2 men's teams in that inaugural year. These teams practiced regularly and played in the various tournaments in and around Alberta and Western Canada. The Friars operated until 1998, a total of 25 years.



Recognizing the increased demand from adult and club teams to play in a league format, they founded the Edmonton Volleyball Association (EVA) in 1976. They completed all of the detailed paper work including drawing up a constitution, creating by-laws, and making the EVA a registered Alberta Society. Dave was the EVA's first President. Their efforts were not in vain as the very first year of operation saw the EVA start up with 20 men's teams and 14 women's teams. Dave and Doreen spent countless hours working with the City of Edmonton to get adequate gym space for league play. The strong, professional relationship they fostered with the City paid dividends in all of the succeeding years. The Ross's also worked cooperatively with the Alberta and Canadian Volleyball Associations, and strongly encouraged their EVA teams to register with both associations. As a result, excellent working relationships have survived to the present day. The Edmonton Volleyball Association is still fully functional and has become the biggest city league in North America; currently featuring close to 200 teams: 108 co-ed; 48 women's, and 42 men's teams.

In 1977, the Friars VB Club founded the Friar's Women's Open VB Tournament- a Canadian Volleyball Association sanctioned event that continued until 1998 – a total of 21 years! In 1980, this energy-filled couple saw the need for a tournament that would give teams that were below the calibre of the 'AA' and university-based teams a chance to compete with equally skilled teams. The inaugural Western Canadian Volleyball 'A' Championships were hosted in Edmonton that year and are still going strong over 30 years later.

When the University Games came to Edmonton in 1983, Dave and Doreen answered the call for volunteers. Dave became the Venue Manager for the Kinsmen Centre VB venue, and Doreen did the same for the U of A Main Gym venue. These were huge responsibilities as there were teams from all over the world. Dave and Doreen carried out their duties with their customary professionalism.

These two wonderful role models not only were top organizers, they were also successful Edmonton high school volleyball coaches; Doreen at Archbishop O'Leary and Dave at Louis St. Laurent. In the 70's and 80's, along with their heavy administrative load with the club and leagues, they both played on their respective Friar volleyball club teams. Doreen became an AVA carded official in 1968; refereed until 1979; took a few years off to concentrate on administration; then returned to refereeing in 1998 and to this date is still officiating for the High School leagues.

While all of this volleyball commitment was going on Dave and Doreen had time to raise 3 children: Danielle, Stephanie, and Regan (who have subsequently produced 7 healthy grandchildren). The Ross's have now pulled back a bit from volleyball but still enjoy being active. They both have taken up golf and as one can imagine they are pretty proficient golfers. Through their unselfish dedication to all aspects of volleyball, Dave and Doreen have been instrumental in creating opportunities for thousands to participate in our sport. Alberta Volleyball is tremendously proud to induct Dave and Doreen Ross into our Hall of Fame.