



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Aboriginal Sport Circle Announces the 2021 Tom Longboat Awards Recipients

The Aboriginal Sport Circle is pleased to announce the winners of the 2021 Tom Longboat Awards. This year's winners are Kerri Einarson and Conner Roulette, both of Manitoba. "It is an honour for the Aboriginal Sport Circle to celebrate the achievements of these outstanding athletes through the Tom Longboat Awards. Conner and Kerri are recognized within their sport and are inspirational role models for Indigenous athletes across the country," states Rob Newman, ASC President.

Kerri Einarson is a proud Métis from Camp Morton, Manitoba. Kerri competes in the sport of curling and has a long list of accomplishments in both women's and mixed doubles. Kerri and her teams participated and won two National Championship tournaments in 2021: the Scotties Tournament of Hearts and the Home Hardware Canadian Mixed Doubles. Playing at the 2021 World Championships, Kerri's women's and mixed doubles team's performance qualified Canada for the 2022 Winter Olympics in both disciplines. Kerri and her teams are currently working toward their goal of being named the team to represent Canada in Beijing in 2022, which will be determined at Curling Canada's national trials in November 2021.

"I'm absolutely honoured to have won the Tom Longboat Award. It's so special to have my name listed among all of the other incredible athletes before me. I'm proud to be an Aboriginal woman in sport," expressed Kerri Einarson.

Conner Roulette, a member of the Misipawistik Cree Nation, is a First Nations athlete currently residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Conner competes in the sport of hockey and has celebrated many achievements within the sport. Conner is a former National Aboriginal Hockey Championships participant where he skated for Team Manitoba. Conner competed for Team Canada at the U17 and gold medalled at the U18 World Hockey Championships. On July 24, 2021, Conner was drafted by the Dallas Stars of the National Hockey League (NHL).

"My message to other Indigenous hockey players is to keep working hard, keep practicing, and keep focused on your goals and don't let anybody tell you that you can't achieve them," said Conner Roulette.

In 1951, the Indian Affairs branch of the Canadian federal government created the Tom Longboat Awards to encourage Indigenous assimilation through organized sports. The awards were named after Tom Longboat, the famed Onondaga distance runner who passed away in 1949. Through the years, responsibility for the Tom Longboat Awards changed hands several times, eventually moving from government to Indigenous control, where it now stands as a proud emblem of Indigenous self-determination. The Aboriginal Sport Circle has managed and presented the award since 1999.



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"Now in their 70th year, the Tom Longboat Awards stand as a testament to the long history of Indigenous excellence in sport -- not as a way to let go of their identities, but as a way to enhance and restore who they are. This is the kind of legacy Tom Longboat would have been proud of," states Dr. Janice Forsyth, Vice President of the Aboriginal Sport Circle and award-winning author of "Reclaiming Tom Longboat".

The 2021 Tom Longboat Awards winners, Kerri Einarson and Conner Roulette, will formally receive their awards at the 2021 Canada's Sport Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, which will be streamed live on October 3, 2021.

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