

## Ron Kopas Award for High Point Mens' Solo Created

**July 2, 2015** - At the Closing Ceremony of the 2015 Canadian Baton Twirling Championships, held in Oshawa, Ontario, Ron Kopas was honoured by the Canadian Baton Twirling Federation for his many years of service to the sport and the organization.

The John L Smetzler Mens' High Point Award was renamed to now be known as the Ron Kopas Award for High Point Men's Solo.

The award was originally created to recognize John L. Smetzler. Mr. Smetzler was born in 1905 and, fascinated with twirling from an early age, he became one of the first full-time baton instructors in the United States – he was both legendary and well-respected. He was often hired to teach in Ontario and he influenced many athletes who went on to be our future CBTF coaches and judges.

As an athlete, Ron Kopas was taught at many clinics by John Smetzler and 2015 marks Ron's 60th year in Baton Twirling!

The John L. Smetzler award was presented annually to the male athlete who achieves the highest score in Level A Solo at the Canadian Championships. The first recipient was Tim King (Ontario) in 1974. The award features such CBTF notables as Cory Archer, Sam Evanochko, Kevan Latrace, Neil Sochasky, Steven Kopas and Matthew Johnson.

Ron has had an incredible career as an athlete, coach, adjudicator, course conductor, course developer, SDP contributor, CBTF and WBTF certified judge, past CBTF Technical Rep, past WBTF Technical Chair, current CBTF Judges Rep, current CBTF representative on the WBTF Judges' Committee, long-time member of OBTA and CBTF Boards of Directors, and current member of the CBTF Education Committee.

As a coach, Mr. Kopas was the Director and Coach of the Mississauga Royal Flash and the Montage Corps who won countless awards for several decades. Ron also coached many award-winning athletes over the years and he continues to be a popular coach at clinics in Canada, the USA and in Europe. His dedication to baton twirling, to CBTF and to WBTF is legendary. Ron Kopas has devoted his life to developing programs for athletes, CBTF and the world technical community. He has conducted coaches and judges courses across Canada and, like John Smetzler, every CBTF athlete, coach & judge – past & present – has been greatly influenced by him. He is highly respected at all levels for his knowledge, expertise and passion for the sport.

The complete history of winners of the former John L Smetzler award, and now the [Ron Kopas Award for High Point Men's Solo](#) [1], can be found in the [Grand Nationals section](#) [2] of the website.

By admin at Tue, 07/07/2015 - 18:19

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