

Bill Smith

June 5, 1963 -



The 2015 Special Olympics World Summer Games were held in Los Angeles, California, from July 25 to August 2, featuring approximately 6,500 athletes from 165 nations competing in 25 sports.

One of those athletes, representing Canada, was Cambridge's Bill Smith, who counts the event as one of the highlights of his life. Centered at UCLA and USC, this largest-ever event of its kind to that date, featured heavy participation in Unified sports (combining people with and without intellectual disabilities). He was one of 22 swimmers that earned their spot on the Canadian Special Olympic World Team out of hundreds of Canadian swimmers.

Smith won gold in the 25-metre freestyle swimming event, and won silver in the 25-metre backstroke event against world-class competition. The swimming venue was at the University of Southern California pool complex.

Since arriving in Cambridge in 1988 as a 25-year-old, Smith was aided by the late Sandra Goodwin and her daughter Jennifer; they got him involved in the Special Olympics program, which provided an outlet for his love of various sports, including swimming, basketball and 10-pin bowling.

At the 2013 Special Olympic Spring Games in Kingston, Ontario, he earned four gold medals.

At the 2015 Special Olympic Summer Games, Smith was a member of the Canadian 25-metre freestyle relay team that finished in fourth place.

One year earlier, at the Special Olympic National Games in Vancouver, Smith won four gold medals.

During his athletic career Bill has competed in many Regional competitions and has been honoured by Mayor Doug Craig and the City of Cambridge for his athletic excellence. He was the first Cambridge resident to win hardware at the World Games.

Smith was also a longtime Can-Am-era Games competitor.

Years ago his coach, Jennifer Mousley, told him "You have to train." And he did, putting in lap after lap at the John Dolson Centre pool.

"Bill's a constant," she said. "If you tell him what to do, he'll go do it. There's no ifs, ands or buts. I know if I set up a training schedule for him, he'll follow it to a T."

Derek Dumbrell was the first Cambridge Special Olympian to advance to the Worlds, in 2002, falling short of winning a medal in 10-pin bowling.

At the time of his induction in 2026, Smith continues to compete in Special Olympics at the age of 62.



Inducted 2026