John Buchanan received the University's 2014 Chancellor’s Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his outstanding commitment and service to the University.

SPORTS

Obituary: John Buchanan, Clan soccer and golf coach, May 26, 1939-Jan. 19, 2017

January 25, 2017

By Steve Frost

SFU men’s soccer and golf coach John Buchanan passed away peacefully at home with his family on Jan. 19 at the age of 77. A charter member of the SFU Athletics Hall of Fame, Buchanan retired as manager of recreation in 1997 after more than 30 years of service, but continued to volunteer as many as 60 hours a week as head coach of the men’s and women’s varsity golf teams, until recently.

Buchanan established the Clan men’s soccer program in 1966 and led the team to the National Athletics Association of
Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) national title in 1976. He later re-established the golf programs.

“Coach Buchanan left a lasting legacy with the University and his efforts and his contributions to the SFU men's soccer and golf programs will always hold a special place in our hearts,” says Theresa Hanson, senior director of athletics and recreation.

Buchanan joined SFU in 1966 as facilities manager and established the soccer club program.

Soccer earned varsity status in 1975 and with Buchanan as head coach, created history. By the time he retired from that position in 1981, the team had won seven consecutive regional championships, an NAIA National Championship and the overall NAIA/NCAA Championship (1977). His record was 95-21.

In 1976, the soccer team fulfilled Chancellor Gordon Shrum's promise that "one day SFU would play in the Rose Bowl." The team won the NAIA national title with a 1-0 win over Rockhurst College of Missouri before 10,250 fans at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California. A 2-1 semifinal victory over Quincy College of Illinois went 14 overtimes and lasted 243 minutes, setting a Guinness World Book of Records mark for the longest soccer game in modern history. Thirty-six hours later, the bruised and exhausted SFU team defeated Missouri's Rockhurst College for SFU's first soccer championship.

During SFU's 50th Anniversary, the 1976 Rose Bowl win was chosen one of the 50 Most Incredible Moments in SFU Athletics history. It was moment number five.

Buchanan also served as assistant coach with Team Canada at the 1976 Olympics and with the Vancouver Whitecaps during the 1974-75 NASL season.

Buchanan's passion for golf was the driving force behind the Clan men's and women's golf programs in both the NAIA and NCAA. In 1988, he took over the golf program (which began in 1972) and organized it into a dominant force in NAIA district and regional competitions. The Clan qualified for nationals on a regular basis.

In 1999, with Buchanan as coach, SFU's Brent Osachoff was crowned NAIA national tournament medalist champion and the team finished second. In 2015, Buchanan led the men's golf team to fifth place at the NCAA National Championships with Chris Crisologo placing eighth in individual play.

In 1986, Buchanan was inducted as a charter member of the SFU Athletic Hall of Fame and, in 2016, he entered the Hall of Fame again as a member of the 1976 men's soccer team. In 2006, Buchanan was inducted into the Canadian Soccer Hall of Fame and in 2014, SFU awarded him the Chancellor's Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his outstanding commitment and service to the University.

Buchanan also played an instrumental role in SFU's world championship pipe band. In 1981, with Ian McGregor, he was instructed by then-President George Pedersen to approach the City of Port Moody Pipe Band to talk them into becoming affiliated with the University.

The SFU band has since become one of the world’s top pipe bands, finishing in the top three more than 20 times with six championship titles that include back-to-back wins in 2008-2009.

In recognition of John's 50th anniversary with SFU, Simon Fraser University recently renamed its annual golf tournament, which raises money for SFU athletics scholarships, as The SFU John Buchanan Golf Classic.

In lieu of flowers, the Buchanan family asks that donations be made to the newly established John Buchanan Endowment for Golf at SFU, established in recognition of his commitment to the establishment and promotion of golf at SFU. The link to the donation page can be found here: http://bit.ly/buchanangolfaward.

A Celebration of Life for John's many colleagues, friends and former student athletes will be held at a later date. Cards can be
sent directly to the Buchanans at 950 Dundonald Drive, Port Moody, B.C., V3H 1B7.

The SFU Department of Athletics and the entire Clan family extends its deepest sympathies to Coach John Buchanan’s family and friends.