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OVAL FUNDING PARTNERS STEP UP FOR CANADA'S ATHLETES

—Training facilities to play critical role in preparing Canadian athletes for success at 2010 Games—

CALGARY—Own the Podium, WinSport Canada and the University of Calgary have worked together to develop a solution to the funding shortfall facing two world-leading training facilities. The result of the additional funding is that dozens of Canada's athletes with medal potential, representing six winter sports, will have guaranteed access to training facilities leading up to the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

The Calgary Olympic Oval funding model requires that two-thirds of the operating budget for the Oval be financed through proceeds from WinSport Canada's Olympic Endowment Fund (OEF) and the remaining third be contributed by the University of Calgary. The OEF value has shrunk substantially due to the economic downturn over the past year and proceeds from the fund are estimated to total just \$700,000 this fiscal year. WinSport Canada has increased their contribution by an additional \$700,000 from other sources for Oval operations for a total of \$1.4 million. The University of Calgary's one-third contribution would total \$700,000, to which they have contributed an additional \$233,000 for a total contribution of \$933,000.

The combined contributions from WinSport Canada and the University of Calgary totaling \$2.333 million was still not sufficient to fully fund the Olympic Oval's operating budget. Own the Podium has stepped up to the plate with \$300,000 to fill the funding gap and ensure that ice is available for Canada's internationally dominant short-track and long-track speed skating athletes from July until mid-February when the Vancouver Games begin.

"Own the Podium is committed to giving Canadian athletes access to the resources they require to foster excellence and be the world's best," said Roger Jackson, chief executive officer, Own the Podium. "OTP is pleased to assist the winter sports with access to the facilities they need."

Own the Podium will also contribute up to \$100,000 to supplement WinSport Canada's operational expenditures in order to give Canada's freestyle skiers, snowboarders, and ski-cross athletes access to Camp Green on Farnham Glacier. The alpine summer-training facility provides snow-sport athletes with training opportunities close to home rather than going to distant glacier training sites in the southern hemisphere and Europe.

Designed to boost Canada's performance in the alpine snow-sports for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, Camp Green on Farnham Glacier, located in the Purcell Mountain range of southeastern British Columbia, is one of the best summer-training glaciers in the world and provides a critical off-season training base for Canada's snow-sport athletes. WinSport Canada has operated Camp Green on Farnham Glacier since 2003.

"With Own the Podium's generous contribution to address our operational needs, WinSport Canada will extend our operation hours, and open the doors of these world-leading facilities so Canadian athletes will have the opportunity to be fully prepared to win in 2010," said Guy Huntingford, president and chief executive officer, WinSport Canada. "This partnership gives new life to these medal-winning sports for Canada, and guarantees the road to Vancouver will continue to wind through southern Alberta and British Columbia."

“Speed Skating Canada would like to thank OTP and its partners for this contribution, crucial for our athletes’ preparation for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games,” said Brian Rahill, High Performance and Olympic Program Director for SSC. “We now know for a fact that our National and Development Team athletes will be able to conduct their pre-planned training at the Calgary Olympic Oval this summer, which is critical to optimise their preparation for the Games.”

The sports of short- and long-track speedskating, snowboarding, and ski-cross contributed to winning 21 of Canada’s 29 medals at the 2009 World Championships in Olympic sports, playing a critical role in putting the country number one for the first time ever in the overall medal count.

WinSport Canada

The Canadian Winter Sport Institute provides world-class sport facilities where Canadian athletes can develop and excel. WinSport Canada owns and operates Canada Olympic Park in Calgary, the Bill Warren Training Centre located at Canmore Nordic Centre, the Beckie Scott High-Performance Training Centre at Haig Glacier near Canmore, Alta., and Camp Green at Farnham Glacier in southeastern British Columbia. As a non-profit organization, WinSport Canada supports national sport organizations, encourages educational opportunities, and subsidizes the operation of unique training and recreational facilities used by the nation's top athletes and the general public. WinSport Canada also provides the necessary support to host major national and international winter sporting events at the various facilities, making the Calgary/Bow Valley area home to high performance winter sports in Canada. For more information on WinSport Canada please visit www.winsportcanada.ca.

Own the Podium 2010

Own the Podium 2010 (OTP) is a winter sport technical program designed to help Canada become the number one nation (total medal count) at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games and to place among the top three nations (gold medal count) at the 2010 Paralympic Winter Games. The initiative is a partnership of Canada’s 13 winter national sport organizations, the Canadian Olympic Committee, the Canadian Paralympic Committee, Sport Canada and the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC).

One-half of the \$110 million in funding, which began in 2005, originates from the Government of Canada, through Sport Canada (\$55 million). VANOC is raising the other half (\$55 million) through corporate, provincial, territorial, and public support. Bell Canada is the founding corporate partner and the other corporate partners include General Motors of Canada, Hbc, McDonald’s Canada, Petro-Canada, RBC Financial Group and RONA. Provincial and Territories support are provided by the Governments of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Québec, Saskatchewan, and the Yukon.

For a full summary of Own the Podium 2010 initiatives and programs including breakdown of support and services by sport, please visit us at www.ownthepodium2010.com on the Internet.

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