

VELOCITY

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SENIOR AND JUNIOR TEAMS SET FOR WORLD CUP JOURNEY

The Canadian Luge Association named its 2007-08 National Senior and Junior Teams who will begin their quest for the podium on tracks around the world.

The CLA joined forces with Own the Podium 2010 to announce newly-recruited head coach, Wolfgang Staudinger, and the entire Canadian Senior Team, to officially kick off the season during a media conference in November.

The women's team is led by 27-year-old Regan Lauscher, who won Canada's first ever World Cup silver medal, and finished 10th at the Torino Olympics. Lauscher will be joined by Regina's 21-year-old Meaghan Simister, who continues to put down some of the fastest starts on tracks around the world.

Calgary's Jeff Christie, who enjoyed a breakthrough season last year, will once again lead the men's contingent. Building off the experience gained from his first trip to the Olympic Winter Games in 2006, the 24-year-old Christie completed the World Cup season with four top-10 finishes in eight races, including a sixth-place finish on his home track in Calgary. Christie's 23-year-old Olympic comrades from Calgary, Sam Edney and Ian Cockerline, will round out the men's team.

Canada will field two competitive and veteran sleds in men's doubles races once again this year. Leading the charge for the Canadian doubles team are Calgary brothers Chris and Mike Moffat. The sibling duo, who



finished ninth at the 2006 Olympic Winter Games, continued to threaten for their first podium performance last season. Eric Pothier, 28, a native of Airdrie, Alta., will also continue to chase his first World Cup medal with 26-year-old doubles partner, Grant Albrecht.

Canada's next generation of luge athletes were also named in November. The CLA will field one of the deepest and most talented team of athletes loaded with international experience that will compete on the Junior World Cup.

The eight athletes named to the Canadian Junior Luge Team include three young Canucks returning for their third stint on the national team, and three other athletes making their second journey around the world to make their mark against the best junior lugers.

Leading the junior women's team is 17-year-old, Arianne Jones, who returns for her second stint on the national team. Jones finished sixth in the Overall Junior World Cup standings last year after posting three, top-10 finishes. Another sophomore on the

junior squad, Denae Delcourt, will also return for her second stint, while Kimberly McRae slides into her rookie season.

The Canadian men's team brings a wealth of international experience to the development circuit with Cameron Gunn and David Adair competing in their fourth season on the Junior World Cup, while Stefan Rath returns for his third season, but first in the junior division.

As one of the youngest members of the team, Rath moves up a division from Youth A where he produced outstanding results, bringing home four, top-10 finishes in 2007. A Grade 11 student at the National Sport School Stefan has enjoyed success both on and off the ice, achieving top academic awards while competing and traveling internationally with the luge team. This past summer, the 16-year-old Rath, along with 28 other youngsters from across Canada, were selected to attend the Junior Team Canada International Mission going to Vietnam, Malaysia and Singapore. Stefan was the youngest of the team members, and gained valuable, real world business experience on this unique three-week trip in August.

Tristan Walker, who is coming of an extremely successful fall season of selection trials, may be Canada's best bet to slide into the medals the junior circuit. Walker will enter his second season against the world's top junior luge athletes. Justin Snith will round out the national team lineup.

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MCMURRAY, LAUSCHER AND THE MOFFATS CLAIM NATIONAL TITLES

Matt McMurray, Regan Lauscher and the Moffat brothers all captured national titles in their respective disciplines (men's and women's singles and men's doubles) on the Olympic Track in Calgary at the 2007 Canadian Luge Championships in late October.

The 22-year-old McMurray, of Calgary, knocked off Canada's Olympic luge athletes to claim his first national title with a two-run time of one minute 31.372 seconds.

"This was a very big day for me to win my first championship, but also because it was a selections race," said McMurray. "I knew I can go fast on this ice and race with our best athletes, and to do it today is a great feeling."

Fellow Calgarians, Sam Edney and Ian Cockerline finished second and third respectively. Edney came up short in his bid to defend his title after he clocked a silver-medal time of 1:31.379, while Cockerline crossed the line with a two-run time of 1:31.516.

Two-time Olympian, Regan Lauscher, grabbed her sev-

enth national title in the women's singles race. Lauscher, of Red Deer, Alta., set the time to beat at 1:35.421.

"For me this is an indicator that I'm at the top of my game and is a huge confidence booster heading into the World Cup season, especially since I missed Canadians last year because of an injury," said the 27-year-old Lauscher. "I treat the Canadian Championships seriously. It is good to get focused, put on the race suit and get those extra runs on the track. This puts me in a good frame of mind."

Lauscher was joined on the podium by teammates, Meaghan Simister, of Regina, and Monica Gorham, of Calgary, who clocked times of 1:36.469 and 1:36.816 respectively.

The Moffat brothers of Chris and Mike had their sled in fine form as they captured their third consecutive Canadian Championship title in the men's doubles category. The sibling duo, who have enjoyed one of their strongest summers of training, slid to a combined time of 1:28.973.

"We have been sliding really well lately, and today had to put the edge on our steels to win," said the 25-year-old Moffat, who is the younger of the two brothers. "We were pushed hard today, and we are really excited to start competing on the World Cup."

Rounding out the men's doubles podium was Grant Albrecht and Eric Pothier in second (1:29.335), while Cameron Gunn and David Adair finished third (1:31.679).



SHOWING ALBERTA TO THE WORLD

Travel Alberta and six national winter sport organizations signed a landmark marketing partnership last month designed to promote Alberta as a premier international winter sports destination.

Surrounded by medal-winning World Cup athletes and representatives of Canada's national sport governing bodies, Cindy Ady, Associate Minister of Tourism Promotion, announced the \$450,000 agreement - the first of its size in

the world - during a ceremony at CODA's Canada Olympic Park - the flagship facility of the 1988 Olympic Winter Games.

"Alberta hosts by far the most World Cups in North America and this agreement boosts funding for sport while bolstering our international tourism reputation as a true world leader in winter sports," said Ady, who also leads Alberta's innovative 2010 Olympic Winter Games initiatives. "Never before have so many sports come together to showcase Alberta to the world under the leadership of Travel Alberta."



Partners on the World Cup Roundtable in support of the agreement include: Cross Country Canada, Canadian Snowboard Federation, Speed Skating Canada, Biathlon Canada, Bobsleigh Canada Skeleton and the Canadian Luge Association.

Though increased signage, marketing opportunities, hosting and numerous other initiatives, Travel Alberta intends to use international television coverage for the 2007-08 World Cups to promote the province as a sport tourism destination. All of the World Cup events are televised internationally, attracting more than one hundred million viewers over 310 broadcast hours each winter.

"Amateur sport in Europe attracts millions of visitors who tune in to follow the World Cup circuit each week," said Jean R. Dupre, director general, Speed Skating Canada, who added speed skating in the Netherlands is similar to Canadians watching Hockey Night in Canada. "Whether it is speed skating in

the Netherlands, snowboarding in France, cross-country skiing in Norway or bobsleigh in Germany, winter sport is an integral part of European culture, and we believe working together with Travel Alberta will be an effective way to reach these audiences and better market the province as a winter sport destination."

Promotions of the one-year agreement, with the potential for renewal into the future, started with the Essent ISU World Cup Speed Skating held over the weekend on the Olympic Oval ice at the University of Calgary.

"The support of Travel Alberta will help our athletes become the world's best while also showing to the world the wonderful and unique sport and travel opportunities available in this province," said Jim Younker, CODA's acting president. "Travel Alberta has been a leader in supporting international events in the Calgary Bow Valley Corridor, and today once again, has shown its commitment to marketing this province by showcasing what makes Alberta great - and winter sport excellence is one of our significant strengths. We encourage not only our friends around the world, but all Canadians to catch these exciting sporting events."

CANADIANS POSTS SOLID RESULTS AT SUCCESSFUL WORLD CUP IN CALGARY

Canada's luge athletes hit the start house and stood their ground on the home track in Calgary during a successfully-run 2007 Viessmann Luge World Cup.

Led by the success of the Canadian men's team with Jeff Christie, Sam Edney and Ian Cockerline all posting personal best World Cup results, the Canucks were one of the strongest nation's throughout the weekend.

Canada's Jeff Christie slid into sixth place on a day when knowledge of the home track really was an advantage with gusty, Chinook winds blowing through Canada Olympic Park. The 24-year-old Calgarian matched his sixth-place finish from last year, which is his best ever on the World Cup, with a two-run combined time of one minute 31.179 seconds.

"I have taken so many runs here in the wind so I know exactly where it is going to blow and what it is going to do. I am comfortable with it and it is an advantage," said Christie. "If you even want to think about contending for the medals you have to put down two straight and consistent runs and I did that today so I'm happy. Right now I feel I'm ranked solidly in the seven-to-15 group. If I continue to slide like I did today, I believe I can break out of that group and into the top."

Christie's Olympic and World Cup comrades, Sam Edney and Ian Cockerline, also had their personal best World Cup performances while sliding into the top-15. The 23-year-old Calgarians finished 12th (1:31.855) and 14th (1:31.896) respectively. Edney's



previous best was 14th, while Cockerline matched his personal best World Cup finish which he slid to in Calgary at the 2003 World Cup. The 2007 Canadian luge champion, Matt McMurray, who posted the 10th fastest time in his opening run, settled for a 19th-place finish after stopping the clock at 1:32.194.

Canada's top women luge athletes, Regan Lauscher and Meaghan Simister, also held their own with the world's best after sliding into the top-15.

Regan Lauscher led the way for the female Canucks after posting a ninth-place result with a two-run time of one minute 35.154 seconds. The 27-year-old Red Deer, Alta. native climbed her way into the top-10 after an aggressive second run.

"Overall, I am satisfied with my performance today," said Lauscher who is making a full-time comeback to the World Cup circuit after racing a condensed season last year which ended early with an injury. "I'm always looking for two consistent runs and it is coming. We are only two races into year one of a three-year plan, which ends in 2010, so I keep telling myself there is a bigger picture and I know I'm on track."

Lauscher's teammate, Meaghan Simister,

also powered her way into the top-15. Fresh off her 21st birthday, the Regina native was poised to post her best-ever World Cup finish after an explosive start and solid opening run. Simister, whose best-ever finish on the World Cup is 11th place, settled for 15th spot (1:35.678).

"My starts were strong and I slid the top of the track very consistent in both runs," said Simister, who is one of the fastest starters on the international circuit. "I just lost some speed down near the bottom of the track which cost me some time, but overall I have to be happy with today."

Canada's Moffat brothers, Chris and Mike, also slid into the top-10 after posting two solid runs in men's doubles action. The Calgary-based brothers posted a combined time of 1:28.511 on their home track.

"This is the beginning of a new journey, with a new coach so we need to keep that in perspective," said Mike Moffat, the younger of the two siblings at 25 years old. "We made another step tonight by having two consistent runs. These are baby steps and we are obviously going to have lots more of them, and we have a long way to go until we slide in Vancouver in 2010."

Overall the 2007 Viessmann Luge World Cup was a success with hundreds of athletes, volunteers, and luge racing fans rocking the Park to the live tunes of Bluesmyth on Friday evening and BCDC on Saturday night.

The Canadian Luge Association would like to thank all of its dedicated volunteers for staging another successful event.

OLYMPIC TRACK SET FULL THROTTLE AHEAD

Canada Olympic Park's new track crew, led by Keith Magill, had the Olympic Track in great shape for early-season training and World Cup competition in November. It took two complete weeks and the equivalent of 1,200 man hours to prepare the ice to a 1 1/2 to 2 inch thickness on the 1.4 kilometre track in order to have the facility open in October for Canada's sliding sports.

The entire CLA would like to thank Keith and his crew for a job well done!



Congratulations to the entire track team on a job well done!

Back Row (L-R): Andrew Frosst, Dale Critchley, Brad Mulherin, Brian Lauscher
Front Row (L-R): Scott Bishop, Anthony Brewster, Ritch Moniuk, Keith Magill, Rene Joly
Missing from the photo...by assignment:

Ice Technicians/Track: Mike Bailey, Greg Blackmur, Heath Blackwell, Jack Bloxham, McKuen Brown, John Butler, David Fraser, Keegan Davidson, Nicholas Hammond, Chris Herman, Penny Mauriohoo, Steve Reichenbacher, Jonathan Schaffer, Shane Spooner, Timing/Tower Control, Andre van Baaren, Ryan Chatfield, Trevor Dickson,

Ice House/Administration: Robert Dickson, Jason Hegerfeldt, Michele Podorieszch