

# VELOCITY

v é l o c i t é

Spring 2008

www.luge.ca

## LET THE SLIDING....BEGIN!

The Canadian Luge Team was amongst the world's best sliding athletes who participated in the homologation process for The Whistler Sliding Centre which concluded in March, achieving another milestone in the timeline to ensure the venue for bobsleigh, luge and skeleton competitions is complete for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games.

The four days of testing and evaluation by the International Bobsleigh and Tobogganing Federation (FIBT), the International Luge Federation (FIL) and the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) will allow the venue operators to move ahead with the next phase of planning to have the facility fully operational in the coming months.

"From design, to construction and through start-up, we knew we were building a very special sliding track. This track was designed and built to be a world-unique sliding sport venue and this week's runs, along with the feedback from the athletes, coaches and the technical officials from international sport federations, have proven that we are well on our way to reaching this goal," said Craig Lehto, VANOC's director, The Whistler Sliding Centre for VANOC. "The homologation process is a major milestone towards hosting spectacular sliding competitions during the Games in 2010."

Over the duration of the homologation, more than 200 runs were taken at The Whistler Sliding Centre. Athletes from seven countries (Austria, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, It-



aly, Russia and the USA) representing the three sliding disciplines completed runs from six different start positions on the track. Working from the bottom to the top, a detailed evaluation was completed to ensure the 1,450 metre track is safe for all athlete ability levels.

"There are lots of technical tracks around the world, but this one is so unique because of the speed — that is what makes it so challenging," said Walter Plaikner, technical delegate, FIL Track Commission. "The homologation went very well and there is almost nothing to change. This is because of the great work by the construction crew, the ice crew who had the ice in great condition and the entire team of people here in Canada which have done such a great job and made the homologation a success."

Canada's top luge athletes were in Whistler for a three-week training session, in conjunction with homolo-

gation, where they completed more than 80 runs on the new Olympic Track.

"It is definitely my new favourite track in the world. I love the flow of it and the way each corner matches and the speed is just a great feeling," said Meaghan Simister. "The progression from ladies start is perfect and I have a lot of fun each time I slide on it."

The Whistler Sliding Centre consists of a 1,450-metre competition-length concrete sliding track through 16 corners, refrigeration facilities, support buildings and access road. This new sliding track is integrated into Whistler's long-term resort development plan. Post-Games, The Whistler Sliding Centre will be operated under the direction of the Whistler Legacy Society, supported by an endowment trust established by the federal and provincial governments.



Athletes also participated in a media conference to open the new venue and took their start ramp into Whistler Village where they signed autographs, sold Karbon t-shirts and showcased their sport to Whistlerites.

DOW

KARBON

nu•leus  
Information Services Inc.  
"Everything Internet" ®

# HAYWOOD SECURITIES' EMPLOYEES SHOW GOLDEN SPIRIT FOR LUGE

Haywood Securities helped restore home-ice advantage for the Canadian Luge Team in their quest for the international podium, thanks to the generosity of the Vancouver-based company's employees.

After years of anticipation for the new track at The Whistler Sliding Centre, the journey to the podium got off to a rough start for Olympians Sam Edney and Ian Cockerline when a thief broke into the lodge their team was sharing in Whistler.

The thieves made away with the two athletes' laptop computers and a camera - all essential tools for the team, which uses the equipment to keep notes on the various tracks they compete on, and to analyze footage of their runs to learn to shave precious fractions of a second off their time.

When employees at Haywood Securities Inc. - a long-time supporter of the Canadian Cross-Country Ski Team - heard of the Luge team's misfortune, they chipped in to present each athlete with \$2,500 to replace their stolen items, allowing them to refocus on achieving excellence.

"Haywood has been very proud of its involvement in fueling the journey towards the



EDNEY



COCKERLINE

international podium for many of Canada's winter sport athletes," said David Lyall, vice-president, institutional sales and trading, Haywood Securities Inc. "When I personally heard this story, I knew these actions were not indicative of what Canadians, or Whistlerites are about. A group of employees felt it was important to show the true Vancouver spirit, and support for these great Canadian athletes in their quest to achieve excellence."

For a sport that operates on a miniscule budget without a title sponsor, neither athlete could easily afford to replace their laptops.

"This is absolutely amazing for the employees at Haywood Securities to recognize how this

bump in the road affected us, and to show their golden spirit by helping us get back on track," said 23-year-old Sam Edney, who finished ninth at this year's World Championships. "This gesture means the world to our entire team, and we will never forget their support in our journey towards the 2010 Games."

In a sport where winning medals is determined by thousandths of a second, sliding-sport athletes use computers and cameras for video analysis to foster development - not to mention to keep in touch with family and friends while representing Canada at international competitions each week throughout the year.

"I am so grateful for this generous support," said Ian Cockerline, 24, who finished 15th at the World Championships last month. "Laptops are a valuable and expensive component to our training, and we certainly aren't rolling in cash by any means so this goes a long way in gaining back a piece of that home track advantage that we are here for."

David Lyall and the Haywood employees made the announcement on the heels of a media conference in Vancouver.

## CANADIAN LUGE ASSOCIATION EXTENDS OFFICES INTO B.C.

The Canadian Luge Team not only opened the start gate to The Whistler Sliding Centre in March. They also blew the doors open to its new office in Whistler, B.C.

In an effort to grow the sport on Canada's west coast, the Canadian Luge Association opened a small office at The Whistler Sliding Centre. Staffed by current members of the Canadian Luge Association, the new office will lead an aggressive recruitment initiative in British Columbia and continue to raise the sport's profile in the community.

"This is a new environment for our athletes, but we recognize that luge is also new to many in the British Columbia area, including young children looking for a sport to pursue their Olympic dream," said Tim Farstad, executive director, Canadian Luge Association. "This is a critical period for our athletes to gain familiarity with the track, but also an opportunity for the national body to educate and grow our sport while inspiring the next generation of Olympic luge athletes."

The office will be staffed by Nicole Simon, program coordinator, for the Canadian Luge Association. Nicole has worked in the Calgary office for the Canadian Luge Association since 2005, and has a long history with the sport as a national-team athlete, coach and now in her administrative role. Nicole will split her time between Whistler and Calgary.

Nicole will begin working on a number of cross-promotional opportunities the Canadian Luge Association is initiating between Calgary and the new track in Whistler.





## REGAN LAUSCHER LIGHTS TORCH TO CELEBRATE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1988 OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES

The 20th anniversary of the opening ceremonies of the 1988 Winter Games was celebrated in Olympic style in February as the Calgary Olympic Development Association showcased two decades of improving winter sport excellence in Canada.

Thousands of spectators joined some of the most infamous and unforgettable personalities of the 1988 Olympic Winter Games during festivities at Canada Olympic Park. They included British ski jumper Eddie the Eagle Edwards carrying the Olympic torch down the main ski hill which began a torch parade that included Jamaican bobsleigh pilot Devon Harris, the four surviving Canadian medallists – Elizabeth Manley, Tracy Wilson, Brian Orser, and Karen Percy-Lowe, and four-time Olympic medallist, Gaetan Boucher. The cauldron was re-lit

by Olympic luge athlete Regan Lauscher and National Sport School student-athlete, Marlis Kromm, who accepted it from Catriona Le May Doan - showcasing Canada's rising medal country from 1988 to well beyond 2010.

"The 1988 Winter Games changed winter sport in Canada and set our athletes on an ever-improving road to excellence thanks to facilities and programming which finally allowed our best to train at home," said Guy Huntingford, CODA's president and chief executive officer. "CODA wanted to give everyone, especially the thousands of volunteers who gave the world the "Best Ever" Olympic Winter Games, the opportunity to relive the magic of 1988 by coming together once again in Calgary."

The free, fun-filled celebration was staged

at Canada's flagship Olympic legacy venue. It was the first of several events CODA held to showcase the on-going record impact the XV Olympic Winter Games continue to have on Canada's winter sport performance, and the country's rising international medal count.

During the two-week celebration, CODA teamed up with the CLA to showcase the Olympic Track and Canada's sliding sport athletes with a Public Luge Race. The public sliding event, which sold out in 15 minutes, included instruction by Canada's high-performance luge athletes, before participants took one shot at posting the fastest time on the track in a fun luge race on February 17. Starting on the lower part of the Olympic Track, the fastest three times of the day for men and women won cash prize packages, and a spot on the podium.

## REMINDER NOTICE – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR THE CANADIAN LUGE ASSOCIATION

The Canadian Luge Association's Annual General Meeting will be held April 18 at the Four Points Sheraton in Calgary at 7 p.m. Agenda items at the 2008 Annual General Meeting will include board elections for the president, vice-president of marketing, secretary and director of officials. The event will also include a presentation by Vancouver 2010.