

GOSSIPING WITH GOUGH

Name: Alex Gough

Career Goals:

I'm not really any good with setting goals. I always think that if you set them too low you are selling yourself short and if you set them too high you are setting yourself up for disappointment. My goals are : to get stronger and work on getting better start technique so I can have the fastest start possible; to be able to have two clean consistent runs in a race on a regular basis; and to have consistent aerodynamic position.

How did you get involved in luge?

My mom signed me up for a recruitment camp told me I was going to go try luge, and sent me out to C.O.P. for a weekend in 2000. I hardly knew what luge was, but it was fast and a lot of fun so when they asked me to join the program I did.

Career ambitions outside of luge?

I want to get my engineering degree. I want to find something that I enjoy that provides me with the means to do all the things that I love to do (like travelling, skiing and diving).

What is a typical training day? When not sliding I am likely?

In the summer, get up have breakfast, go to training of some variety, come home have lunch and relax for maybe two hours, go back for another training session, come home have dinner. In the spring I sometimes have school and then go to bed and get up the next morning and go it all again.

During the competitive season, Mondays are travel days, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursdays are training (total of six runs), Friday is Nations cup/Qualifying, Saturday and Sunday is World Cup. We usually get two-to-three weights session in there as well. When we are not sliding, lifting, doing sled work and racing I can usually be found in my hotel room reading a book, watching whatever TV show I've brought with me or taking a nap.

When finished with my luge career, I want to?

Finish school and travel

Favourite Luge Track? Why?

Park City, Utah - It's a fast, gliding track and that works best for my style of sliding.

Favourite Competition Venue:

So far Igls, Austria. It was just redone and the start houses are really nice with heated floors and I like the set up for racing. It's also one of the most stunning places we travel to. However, we haven't had a race there yet, but I think Whistler is going to take the cake.

Favourite Vacation Spot?

I don't think I have a favourite vacation spot. I love to go see new places and experience new cultures and try new things. I loved going on safari on the Masai Mara in Kenya and diving the Blue Hole in Belize, and rafting the Colorado river through the Grand Canyon.

Favourite Book?

You're asking a girl who reads close to a hundred books a year to pick just one. I am a sucker for a good young, adult fantasy with a good heroine, but I'll read just about anything that catches my attention.

Favourite Movie?

Fern Gully

Favourite Olympic/Paralympic Moment?

My whole Olympic competition was such a blur that there aren't a lot of moments that stand out in my head. However, I do remember getting off the track after the race and seeing my family in the stands cheering me on and that is a moment that means a lot to me.

Inspiration?

My Mom is my inspiration. She is the strongest, most driven, generous and caring person I know.

Favourite Colour?

Purple

If I had to do maintenance on my car what could I do?

Get a new one. My car is 10 years old and starting to fall apart.

Before a race, I will listen to what song?

Whatever tickles my fancy on that particular day. One week I will listen to Eminem and the next it will be Pennywise or Fleetwood Mac.

Favourite Muscian?

I think I've established I'm a variety kind of person. I will listen to a band/musician for a while and get bored and move on to something new or back to something old that I haven't listened to in a while. I can listen to punk, classic rock, pop, country, metal, rap and alternative all on one playlist.

Favourite Christmas gift as a child?

I don't remember a lot of the things I got for Christmas as a child. My memories are all of white Christmases in Fernie, B.C.. My brothers and I waking my parents up at 6 or 7 in the morning and racing for our stockings, and how my parents made us take turns opening gifts. My favorite part of Christmas is spending time with my family.

My ideal Christmas day includes?

Waking up in Fernie, B.C., spending the morning opening presents with my family and having eggs benny and brioches and the non-alcoholic versions of the eggnog drinks my grandad used to make (equals parts eggnog, orange juice and ginger ale), in the afternoon go out skiing with the family, come home and have big Christmas dinner with close family and friends that also spend Christmas in Fernie.

My favourite holiday food is?

My Grandmas brioches that she only makes at Christmas.

If I could rule the world for a day I would? Pass the responsibility on to someone else. I have enough trouble ruling my own life.



GET YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFTS AT CLA

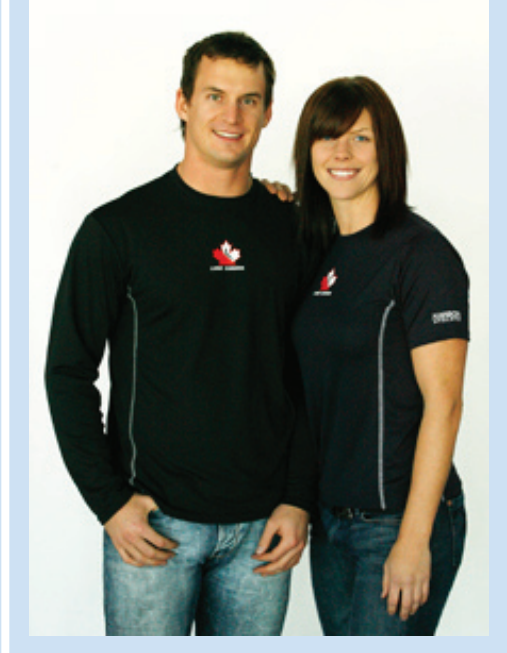


Running out of time to do your holiday shopping?

Buy your friends and family national team Karbon clothing, and support a Canadian luge athletes' journey to the international podium at the same time.

The Canadian Luge Association is selling a variety of clothing merchandise including short and long-sleeve Karbon shirts. Short sleeve shirts are \$25, while the long sleeve shirts are \$30. CLA pins are also available for \$6.

Clothing can be purchased in all sizes through the CLA offices immediately, by contacting Tim Farstad (Calgary)



403-202-6582 tfarstad@luge.ca, or Nicole Simon (Whistler) 604-402-1478 nsimon@luge.ca

Get your new national team clothing today, and help the Canadian team climb onto the podium at the same time.

ALA ADMINISTRATION IN HANDS OF JASON HEGERFELDT

The Alberta Luge Association is pleased to welcome Jason Hegerfeldt as its new administrator. Jason, is a graduate of Mount Royal College's Sport Administration program, has been an employee in CODA's sport department for the last six years where he focused on working with the sliding sports in the Ice House and at the Bob Niven Training Centre. Please join us in officially welcoming Jason to the luge community.



CANADIAN LUGE ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DE LUGE

FEEDING THE TALENT POOL - CLA SEARCHES FOR GIFTED ATHLETES



The Canadian Luge Association will continue its national recruitment initiative in an effort to continue developing world-leading luge athletes with a recruitment camp at Canada Olympic Park in Calgary:

January 3, 2009
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

January 4, 2009
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Part of the Canadian Luge Association's aggressive recruitment strategy, the camps target Canadian youth who demonstrate athletic ability to the sport. Athletes will participate in a series of dry-land and ice training.

Starting in the Ice House at Canada Olympic Park, the young athletes will learn the mechanics of the sled and basic movements of the sport. The camp will also include a series of physical testing in the gym and a presentation to complete the full introduction to luge.

Camp coaches will be looking for athletes with strong overall fitness, those who demonstrate a keen interest in sport and a willingness to learn.

Interested participants can register online at http://www.luge.ca/recruitment_camps.cfm for \$30.

RACKING CANADIAN PERFORMANCES ON THE WORLD STAGE

Live results of Canadian athletes performing at the Junior and Senior World Cup can be viewed at www.fil-luge.org on the Internet.

World Cup	
January 3-4	Königssee, Germany
January 10-11	Cesana, Italy
January 17-18	Oberhof, Germany
January 24-25	Altenberg, Germany
February 6-8	Lake Placid, U.S.A. (World Championships)
February 13-14	Calgary, CAN
February 20-21	Whistler, CAN



Junior World Cup	
January 9-10	Winterberg, Germany
January 16-17	Igls, Germany
January 23-24	Aldersbach, Austria
February 9-15	Nagano, Japan (Junior World Championships)



JUNIOR CANUCKS OFF TO MEDAL-WINNING START



Canada's junior luge athletes are off to a blistering start to the season.

A quartet of Calgary-based athletes, including Tristan Walker, Justin Snith, Stefan Rath and Arianne Jones, teamed up to capture the silver medal in the opening team event of the season in Königssee, Germany earlier this month.

"It was an awesome day and really cool to be part of this win for Canada," said Stefan Rath, who drove the men's singles sled in the team event. "Each one of us had really good runs and we are really happy with our performance."

In an effort to make luge racing more exciting for teams and spectators, the International Luge Federation introduced the team competition three years ago. Every team consists of a doubles team, one female and one male sled, who each complete one run for a combined final time.

Walker and Snith have been leading the way for the young Canadian team. The Canadian duo also won a bronze medal in men's doubles at the season-opener on the Junior World Cup in Cesana, Italy.

Coach Kyle Connelly was thrilled with the medal-winning results, but it is the overall performance of the team in the opening events of the season that shows promise for the future.

"I was thinking back and I can't remember a day this good for the junior luge team since 2004 on our home track in Calgary," said Kyle Connelly, head coach, Canadian Luge Team, and 2002 Olympian following the team's silver-medal victory in Germany. "As a coach, I couldn't ask for anything more out of the team. It was a great day and I'm very happy for the athletes."

The Canadian juniors will be back on track, January 9-10, 2009 in Winterberg, Germany.

MONICA GORHAM TO BRING THE FUN BACK IN LUGE

Monica Gorham is parking her sled to focus her energy on instilling the Olympic dream in the minds and hearts of young Canadian kids taking up the sport of luge.



The 22-year-old Gorham, who recently retired from her career as an athlete, has accepted the position of Novice Head Coach and will work with athletes between the ages of nine and 14 years old.

"It is definitely a new step for me in the luge world, but I wasn't ready to walk away from the sport entirely," said Gorham, who calls Calgary home. "I love the sport so much and this is a great way for me to keep luge a part of my life."

Gorham's passion for the sport always extended well beyond the track during her seven-year competitive career, which included four as a junior and three more at the senior level. When not sliding on the track, training in the gym or pulling the starts in the Ice House, Gorham was often found teaching young kids a variety of sports at Canada Olympic Park's summer camps.

"I really enjoy working with the kids and sharing in their excitement when they are introduced to the sport for the first time," said Gorham. "I enjoy trying to find ways to relate to them and keep the sport fun."

If athletes under Gorham's guidance don't work up an appetite by working hard, Gorham's coaching strategies will make them hungry for not only the podium, but for food as well.

"We need to keep it fun by trying to teach them to be like floppy, loose pancakes on their sleds rather than stiff and solid waffles," said Gorham, who adds she is enjoying the next stage of her life in the sport. "I'm not sure my goals as a coach right now. It would be fun to work my way up to the development team or as an assistant with the juniors one day but this is all new for me."

Where Gorham's coaching career goes is anyone's guess, but for now, she's content bringing the fun back to the sport of luge.

