



HOLD FOR RELEASE

Friday, February 9, 2007
5:00 PM PST

FEMALE COACH MENTORSHIP PROGRAM LAUNCHED

Fort St. John, BC – BC's Minister of State for Act Now BC, Gordon Hogg, officially launched the Female Coaching Mentor/Apprenticeship Program during the Northern BC Winter Games at Fort St. John Friday. A joint initiative of the BC Games Society, the Coaches Association of BC and ProMOTION Plus, the program is designed to assist and support women coaches in their pursuit of higher levels of coaching certification.

"Apprenticeship has been in existence from the earliest recorded dates in history, and continues to be one of the most effective ways of transferring skills and knowledge from mentor to apprentice," said Minister Gordon Hogg. "This innovative program will increase training and certification opportunities for British Columbia's talented young female coaches, and will raise the profile of women in sport."

The program pairs up experienced coaches (male or female) with women apprentices who are interested in pursuing a career in coaching and/or in developing their training to a higher level. One of the foremost goals of the program is to address the inequity in the number of female coaches in the sport system by increasing the number of qualified female coaches starting at the club and provincial level and moving toward the national and international level. The format will benefit both the selected apprentice coaches and their mentors.

The program is currently accepting applications from women coaching in the sports that are included in the Kimberly/Cranbrook 2008 BC Winter Games. A maximum of 10 mentors and 10 female apprentice coaches will be selected to attend the Games. The pairs will work together beginning in May, 2007. Coaches in sports included in the Kelowna 2008 BC Summer Games will have the opportunity to apply to the program in the next few months.

"The opportunity to partner in this opportunity will mean more women will become leaders in the sport community," said Kelly Mann, President and CEO of the BC Games Society. "Coaching is an integral component in a young person's sporting life. We take seriously our responsibility to help get that leadership right." BC Games provides opportunities for the development of athletes, coaches and officials in preparation for higher levels of competition in a multi-sport event.

The Coaches Association of BC (CABC), which facilitates the development, certification and education of coaches across the province, will provide its coach development expertise to the program. “We’re pleased to be an integral part of this very important program,” said CABC Executive Director Gordon May.

“We feel it is important to support the various demographics in coaching to meet everyone’s particular needs. There is an inequity between the number of male and female coaches in the sport system, and this program will help address that.”

“We have been interested in the development of a coaching program for female apprentices for quite some time and know that BC Games Society and CABC are the perfect partners for delivery of the program,” said Beverley Siver, Executive Director of ProMOTION Plus. “This program has been designed to remove challenges that women sometimes face in pursuing coaching, in addition to providing the opportunity to improve their skills and upgrade their certification levels.”

ProMOTION Plus, which is administering and overseeing the Mentor/Apprenticeship Program, promotes opportunities for active participation in physical activity and sport by all girls and women.

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MEDIA CONTACTS

BC GAMES SOCIETY: Angella Goran
angellag@bcgames.org
250-812-3887

CABC: Jan Mansfield
news@coaches.bc.ca
604-714-5391

ProMOTION Plus: Beverley Siver
bev@promotionplus.org
604-737-3120