

## MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 2, 2009



## March 4 flag-presentation marks official one-year countdown to 2010 Ontario Winter Games

A flag-presentation ceremony to be held in host communities throughout Muskoka will take place on March 4 at 11 a.m., marking the official one-year countdown to the 2010 Ontario Winter Games. A similar ceremony in Sudbury will occur on Friday March 6, time TBD.

Along with members of the GOC (Games Organizing Committee) and local community chairs, representatives from Bracebridge, Georgian Bay, Gravenhurst, Huntsville, Lake of Bays, Muskoka Lakes, Sudbury and the District Municipality of Muskoka will gather at their respective municipal offices to receive the official flag bearing the 2010 Ontario Winter Games logo and acknowledge the positive impact the event will have on the area during the year leading up to the games.

“Muskoka and its partner communities will benefit greatly from the Ontario Winter Games,” said Scott Aitchison, Games Chair. “Not only in 2010, but before and after the Games, shining a positive light on our region and its citizens, demonstrating what we can achieve and leaving a legacy of dedication to both sport and tourism.”

“The McGuinty government supports Ontario’s athletes in amateur sport,” said Margaret Best, Minister of Health Promotion. “With the natural beauty of the Muskoka region and optimal weather conditions for winter sports, the 2010 Ontario Winter Games will be an excellent event.”

It is estimated that the games will generate between \$3 and \$4 million in economic benefits for the local economy.

The Ontario Winter Games is a unique multi-sport event that provides young athletes with development and competitive opportunities that prepare them for national and international competitions. The majority of the events will be held in Muskoka with some of the competitions – bowling, diving speed skating and squash – being held in Sudbury.

Approximately 3,300 athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers and are expected to converge on the region during the games.

–30–

### For further information, contact:

Scott Aitchison – Games Chair at (705) 644-4954 or [chair@2010ontariowintergames.ca](mailto:chair@2010ontariowintergames.ca) OR

Myke Malone – General Manager at (705) 783-9300 or [gm@2010ontariowintergames.ca](mailto:gm@2010ontariowintergames.ca) OR

Graydon Smith – Media and Promotions Chair at (705) 645-8900 or [media@2010ontariowintergames.ca](mailto:media@2010ontariowintergames.ca)



# BACKGROUNDER

## ABOUT THE 2010 WINTER GAMES



- Ontario Winter Games, held every two years in even numbered years, offer opportunities for young athletes to reach for their dreams.
- Ontario Winter Games is delivered by The Sport Alliance of Ontario (SAO) on behalf of the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion as part of its efforts to support amateur sport, physical activity and community development.
- Ontario Winter Games began in 1970 and showcases amateur sport.
- Athletes competing in the games range in age from 11 to 22 years.
- Ontario Winter Games features such sports as men's and women's ice hockey, five-pin bowling, badminton, biathlon, boxing, curling, diving, figure skating, gymnastics, indoor field-hockey, judo, kickboxing, ringette, shooting, skiing (alpine, freestyle and cross-country), snowboarding, speed skating, squash, synchronized swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, weight lifting and wrestling.
- SAO is a not-for-profit provincial sport management agency with the mandate to support personal and community development through sport opportunities.
- The Ontario Winter Games will get underway in the towns and townships of the District Municipality of Muskoka and the City of Sudbury from March 4 to 7, 2010.

