

Looking for future Olympic stars with RBC Training Ground

- **More locations, more sport associations, more athletes have the chance to chase their Olympic dreams**
- **RBC extends its 70 year commitment to support the next generation of Canadian Olympians until 2024**

TORONTO, January 12, 2017 — Who is Canada's next Olympic star? Building on the success of Team Canada at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, RBC, in partnership with the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC), the Canadian Olympic Foundation (COF), CBC Sports and the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute (COPSI) Network are renewing the search for future Olympic athletes through RBC Training Ground.

"RBC Training Ground offers a tremendous opportunity for young athletes to open their minds to a sport they may not have considered," said Curt Harnett, three-time Olympic medallist and RBC Training Ground advocate. "Growing up I was focused on a hockey career, and was lucky enough to have a high school coach who introduced me to cycling. Just a few years later, I was standing on the Olympic podium with a silver medal around my neck and grateful to my coach for seeing my potential."

Athletes between the ages of 14 and 25 are invited to attend an RBC Training Ground event to measure their speed, power, strength and endurance. Each athlete will try to hit performance benchmarks set by national sport organizations (NSO) scouting for young talented athletes with Olympic medal potential.

In its first year, RBC Training Ground travelled across the country and tested 400 athletes at four regional workout events, with 94 young Canadians meeting NSO benchmarks. Of those, 25 athletes earned funding and support to spark or accelerate their Olympic dreams. For 2017, RBC Training Ground builds on that success with more qualification events in more cities and has partnered with five additional national sport governing bodies. This will give more than 2,500 yet-to-be-discovered athletes the chance to further fuel their Olympic dreams.

The search begins in Langley, British Columbia on January 15 and travels across the country with more than 25 local qualifiers taking place in Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada. Top athletes from the local qualifiers will be invited to attend RBC Training Ground regional finals hosted in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Athletes interested in participating at the free local qualifiers can register at www.rbctrainingground.ca.

Eleven NSOs will be represented at RBC Training Ground events to assess each athlete's potential for their high-performance programs. Returning NSOs Athletics Canada, Bobsleigh Canada Skeleton, Canoe Kayak Canada, Cycling Canada, Rowing Canada, and Rugby Canada will be joined by new partners Alpine Canada (Ski Cross), Canadian Freestyle Ski Association, Judo Canada, Triathlon Canada and Water Polo Canada.

At each local qualifier, participants will be identified, based upon their athletic performance, to attend a regional final where up to 100 athletes will perform in front of national and provincial sport officials. Select athletes from the regional finals will be identified for additional testing with various NSOs. Once the next level of analysis is complete, up to 40 athletes will receive additional assistance such as funding, resources, coaching and/or mentorship through the COF and RBC. The support will be administered through the select NSO. In addition, the top athlete from each regional final will receive a trip to the 2018 Winter Olympic Games in PyeongChang, South Korea. Similar to familiarization trips taken by Canada's top Olympians, this opportunity will help prepare and encourage the athletes when they, hopefully, make future Olympic Games.

CBC Sports will produce broadcast features to introduce Canadians to the athletes and their stories uncovered at RBC Training Ground events across the country. These features will follow the journey of the top athlete from each of the five main regional events as they train in their new sport and begin the transition from relative unknown to a potential member of Team Canada. Olympian and former national women's soccer team member Karina LeBlanc will attend the five main regional events on behalf of CBC Sports and will appear within the network's weekly TV program, *Road To The Olympic Games*, online at cbcsports.ca and via CBC Sports' social media platforms with reports from each event.

"CBC Sports shares our partners' commitment to support Canada's athletes and we are excited to continue to play a role in identifying future Olympians through RBC Training Ground," said Greg Stremlaw, executive director, CBC Sports, and general manager and chef de mission for CBC/Radio-Canada's coverage of PyeongChang 2018. "We showcase high-performance sport year-round to help ensure fans know Canada's athletes before they reach the top of the podium."

Program partners CBC Sports, the COF and the COC have joined RBC in committing to RBC Training Ground for five years. For more information about RBC Training Ground and the local qualifiers, go to www.rbctrainingground.ca.

Renewing an historic partnership

RBC and the COC today announced that RBC has renewed its sponsorship as the premier national partner in the banking and insurance category until the end of 2024. RBC's commitment will focus on supporting the next generation of Canadian athletes through RBC Training Ground and other athlete development initiatives such as the RBC Olympians program.

"RBC is proud to extend our support for Canadian athletes and to help discover our next generation of Olympic hopefuls for many years to come," said Mary DePaoli, chief brand and communications officer, RBC. "We have been a long-standing partner with the COC for 70 years and this sponsorship is a great source of pride for our employees, our clients and our company."

- 3 -

“RBC’s commitment to the Canadian Olympic Team is unparalleled in its longevity and generosity,” said Chris Overholt, chief executive officer of the COC. “Canada’s largest financial institution has helped thousands of athletes go to Games and compete against the best in the world since 1947. Now looking ahead, we couldn’t be more grateful for their renewed support in developing the next generations of Olympians. RBC is a critical part of the team’s past and future success.”

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Jackie Braden, RBC Brand Communications, 416-974-6286, jackie.braden@rbc.com

Brian Findlay, Stellick Marketing Communications, 416-603-9452 x301,

bfindlay@gotoguys.net

Jessie Barrett, Communications, Canadian Olympic Foundation, 416-324-5012,

jbarrett@olympic.ca

Simon Bassett, publicist, CBC Sports, 416-205-8533, simon.bassett@cbc.ca