



National Games Begin

Special Olympics athletes seek gold in London, Ontario

July 9, 2010 – Team Alberta is off to the Special Olympics National Games.

The team, composed of more than 100 athletes from all across the province, will leave from Calgary and Edmonton on Monday, July 12. From July 13 to 17, these athletes will represent the province in the eight official summer sports of Special Olympics.

“These are truly incredible and inspiring athletes. They’ve earned the right to go to these games,” Special Olympics Team Alberta chef de mission John Byrne said. “They qualified last summer at the Provincial Special Olympics Games in St. Albert, and have trained very hard to make it this far.”

More than 1,400 athletes, coaches, and mission staff, representing all ten provinces and Yukon and Northwest Territories, are expected to gather for this five-day sporting event, as will more than 1,000 volunteers and event officials. Athletes will compete in eight official sports, including athletics, five- and ten-pin bowling, powerlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, soccer, softball, and swimming. This national competition will serve as the qualifying event for athletes to become members of the national team that will compete at the 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens, Greece.

Special Olympics is a charitable, volunteer-based organization that provides sport training and competitive opportunities for individuals with an intellectual disability. Special Olympics’ mission is to enrich the lives of Albertans with an intellectual disability through sport.

Throughout the province, more than 3,000 athletes with an intellectual disability participate in Special Olympics programs that are organized in more than 30 communities through the efforts of 1,500 volunteers.

For regular updates and a complete list of athletes, please visit our Team Alberta Blog at <http://www.specialolympics.ab.ca/team-alberta-2010-blog>

For more information, please contact:

Special Olympics Alberta

Olav Rokne

Public Relations Co-ordinator

(w) 780-415-8351

(c) 780-289-6528

orokne@specialolympics.ab.ca