

For Immediate Release:

Monday, Aug 29, 2011

New Airbag Training Venue at COP Offers Year-Round Training Access for Freestyle Athletes

Venue supports athletes from grassroots to elite levels

CALGARY, A.B – Snowboarders and freestyle skiing athletes from across the province now have a permanent, year-round airbag training facility at WinSport's Canada Olympic Park (COP) that will allow them to perfect their aerial maneuvers before attempting them on snow.

Complementing the existing freestyle ski and snowboard facility designed for the winter months, WinSport Canada has purchased an 11 X 17 metre airbag that has been set up on the east side of the hill that will allow athletes at all levels to train at the Park on a year-round basis. Using a unique plastic in-run that simulates snow, athletes start from the top of the 30 metre in-run and slide there way to the bottom where they meet an adjustable jump that differentiates between 55 and 72 degrees. The adjustable 'single air kicker' was created so athletes from all skill levels and backgrounds can utilize the facility without having to push their boundaries to an unsafe level.

"Having access to year-round training facilities like the new WinSport Canada airbag plays a critical role in the pursuit of excellence for Canada's freestyle skiers and snowboard athletes," said Canadian Olympian and current World Champion freestyle skier Warren Shouldice. "This new training opportunity will provide athletes from the grassroots to elite levels the chance to work on, and perfect their aerial maneuvers in a safe and controlled environment before attempting them on snow. The airbag venue complements the existing freestyle facility here at Canada Olympic Park and is another step that WinSport Canada has taken to centralize resources and encourage young Canadians to discover, develop and excel at sport."

The new airbag facility, which represents the next major addition to WinSport's plan to create the nation's first Canadian Sport Institute that will provide world-leading training and competition facilities for Canadian athletes in southern Alberta, is the only one of its kind in the province.

President and CEO of WinSport Canada, Dan O'Neill, said the new airbag training facility is yet another piece to the puzzle. "As we continue to take strides in becoming the first Canadian Sport Institute, venues such as the new airbag facility play a key role in the bigger picture. As an organization, our goal is to provide Canadian athletes with the resources they need so they can achieve their dreams of reaching the podium."

Freestyle ski athletes in Alberta in the past practiced their freestyle routines on a water ramp, or have had to make the trip to B.C. to utilize an airbag.

WinSport Canada

The Canadian Winter Sport Institute provides world-class sport facilities where Canadian athletes can discover, develop and excel. WinSport Canada owns and operates Canada Olympic Park in Calgary, AB, the Bill Warren Training Centre located at the Canmore Nordic Centre, the Beckie Scott High Performance Training Centre on Haig Glacier, AB, Camp Green on Farnham Glacier, BC, and funds two-thirds of the operating costs of the Calgary Olympic Oval. A not-for-profit organization, WinSport Canada supports national sport organizations, encourages educational opportunities and subsidizes the operation of unique training and recreational facilities used by the nation's top athletes and the general public. For more information please visit www.winsportcanada.ca.

For more information, please contact:

Brendon Arnold

Media Relations Manager

WinSport Canada

T: 403-247-5601

C: 403-461-9074

E-mail: brendon.arnold@winsportcanada.ca