

# STRIVE



HELP BUILD  
AN OLYMPIAN

COMPETE, LEARN AND SHARE  
AT LILLEHAMMER 2016

INNOVATIONS  
4 GOLD

CANADIAN OLYMPIC  
ACTIVITY CHALLENGE



FOUNDATION  
FONDATION



## FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the weather turns colder, it's natural to shift our main focus to the endeavors of our winter athletes. Already this season we have seen great success both on the ice and the snow. Despite the winter conditions, our summer athletes are hard at work preparing for the upcoming Olympic Games in Rio next summer. High-performance sport is a 24/7 lifestyle for Team Canada.

Their preparation includes physical training, of course. They also work closely with sports psychologists and a wide variety of health care professionals including doctors, physiotherapists and nutritionists. These are all elements that we expect our athletes to undertake every year in preparation for every kind of competition.

But the Olympic Games are different. They are bigger; there is more media attention, there are more athletes, more family and friends in attendance. And so consequently the preparation required needs to be bigger and broader. The Olympic Excellence Series was designed with this in mind. To help prepare the athletes, coaches and officials for all of the other factors that are seemingly outside their control; including how to deal with media, familiarization with the host city and country, venues and training facilities as well as team building exercises.

Knowing what to expect at competition, to be able to put things into perspective and concentrate on the competition at hand are vital for the success of our athletes. Your donations make programs like the Olympic Excellence Series possible. Thank you! Your support truly makes a difference to Canadian athletes, coaches and officials.

For the past 10 years, the COF has been lucky to be the charitable beneficiary of Gold Medal Plates events. These wonderful events raise significant funds for the Foundation and we are pleased to be involved. The fall 2015 event season was a wonderful success and we're grateful for this partnership.

We hope that you enjoy this edition of Strive. As always we try to share with you the impact that your gift has on Canadian sport, and the many athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers. We love to hear from you, so please share your comments with us by sending an email to [foundation@olympic.ca](mailto:foundation@olympic.ca).

Happy Holidays!

Leanne Nicolle, Executive Director

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**Executive Director:**  
Leanne Nicolle  
**Design:**  
Keith Jones/voc

We would love to hear from you! Please send your comments to:  
[foundation@olympic.ca](mailto:foundation@olympic.ca)  
[olympicfoundation.ca](http://olympicfoundation.ca)  
Canadian Olympic Foundation

Canadian Olympic Foundation  
21 St. Clair Avenue East,  
Suite 900  
Toronto, ON M4T 1L9  
416-324-4282 or  
888-377-7073

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## OLYMPIAN PROFILE

# Nathan Smith

The Calgary native etched his name in the history books last season with a podium finish in the men's 10km sprint at the 2015 World Championships. With the silver-medal achievement, Nathan became the first Canadian man to earn a medal at a biathlon worlds.

He followed that performance up with a gold medal in the men's pursuit at a World Cup race in Russia two weeks later. The Canadian Olympic Foundation chatted with Nathan in advance of the upcoming race season.

"It will be hard to improve significantly on last season's results," says Nathan, noting that his results were unprecedented for both himself and his country. "But I obviously hope to feel strong throughout the entire season and take home a few medals."

Mission accomplished – at time of publication, Nathan and mixed relay teammate Rosanna Crawford had already earned second place in their opening race.

At 29 years old, Nathan is a veteran of Team Canada and appears to be just hitting his stride. And to him, it's surprising.

"I never expected to be competing in to my late 20's," he laughs. "Growing up in Calgary, I spent most weekend's cross-country skiing with my family in Kananaskis. When I was around 9 or 10, I got involved with Foothills Nordic, a local ski club. A couple years into that my parents suggested that I try biathlon. I had no idea what it was, but I liked skiing, and the idea of shooting a rifle while skiing seemed like a pretty fun idea."

Never the strongest athlete, Nathan loved the challenge of biathlon and training with his teammates. He tried out for and made Biathlon Canada's development program in high school and has been on an upward progression through the sport ever since. He made his Olympic debut at Sochi 2014.

A member of the Canadian senior men's team, Nathan lives and trains year-round in Canmore, Alta. The team trains six days a week during the off-season.

"We live pretty simply. In the off-season, I train from 8AM to noon, then go home to eat and nap. At 4PM I head back out for the second work out of the day. I'm home for dinner, and then repeat the process the next day."

During the racing season, which spans from mid-November to March, Nathan spends most of his time on the road throughout Europe. It can be grueling.

"I often race three or four times a week," says Nathan. "It's a lot of on-the-go. We travel, then spend a day familiarizing ourselves with the course and acclimatizing to the time change. The day before a race, we do some intensity training to fire up our bodies, and then it's time to race."

For the first time in over 25 years, Canada will host a biathlon World Cup event this season– right in Nathan's backyard. The event, which runs from February 3-7, 2016, is a mark of Canada's recent success and a commitment to its continued growth.

"Medaling at the World Cup in Canmore is a big goal for me," says Nathan. "I've never competed at home in an event of this magnitude and I'm looking forward to taking advantage of my familiarity with the course. I'm really excited."

So are we!



### Top

Nathan shoots during the men's biathlon 15k mass-start event at the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games.

### Above

Nathan competes in the men's 12.5k pursuit race at Sochi 2014.

Lee Jin-man  
Kirsty Wigglesworth



CANADIAN OLYMPIC  
ACTIVITY CHALLENGE  
COMMITTED TO 60 MINUTES A  
DAY OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

# Join the movement



**Top**  
Two-time Olympic  
fencer Sandra Sassine  
teaches students  
about her sport.

Earlier this year the Canadian Olympic Committee launched the Canadian Olympic Activity Challenge, focused on getting children active 60 minutes a day, in the classroom, outside or at home. Developed in conjunction with National Sport Federations, the Canadian Olympic Activity Challenge introduces children to eight Olympic and Pan Am sports and include activities to get them moving.

The resources include:

- > A Teacher's Guide that contains helpful tips on motivating fitness, and making physical activity fun;
- > A Canadian Olympic Activity Tracker that offers children a place where they can record their daily physical activity. The Activity Tracker is organized into three sections; Gold, Silver and Bronze. These represent the three categories of exercise recommended in the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines: strengthening activities, moderate activities and vigorous activities. It also encourages students to try new activities;
- > Canadian Olympic Activity Challenge Cards that feature an Olympic or Pan Am sport. The sport is described in basic terms, including its origins and inclusion in the Olympic Games. Each sport profiles a featured country that is associated with the sport and a featured Canadian athlete. The Canadian Olympic Activity Challenge Cards also include a follow-up classroom activity, which allows teachers to connect the activities to language, arts or social studies learning. The current cards feature the sports of fencing, badminton, rugby, canoe/kayak, swimming, softball, speed skating and athletics.

To find out more about the Canadian Olympic School Program and to access the Canadian Olympic Activity Challenge resources for free, please visit [olympic.ca/education](http://olympic.ca/education).



The ability to analyze performance is key to training and improvement and is relevant to every high-performance athlete

# Innovations 4 Gold

**Top**  
Mark de Jonge celebrates his T02015 gold medal victory in the men's K-1 200m.

Michael P. Hall

There's science behind sport. New innovations are made every day—whether it's mechanical, to improve equipment for speed or efficiency; or biological, to assist athletes with training or prevent injuries and encourage recovery.

The Canadian Olympic Foundation recognizes research and innovation as an important component of Canada's athletic success and is playing our part through Innovations 4 Gold (I4G). I4G is an initiative from Own the Podium that drives the development of cutting edge performance enhancement technology for Canadian Olympic and Paralympic sports.

In February 2015, the Canadian Olympic Foundation granted \$250,000 to Own the Podium for I4G projects. The COF's donation was one part of a larger gift from Canadian Tire and various sport partners who teamed up to make a meaningful impact on sport innovation. The gift, totaling \$1 million, was then generously matched by the Government of Canada to amplify the total figure to \$2 million.

Own the Podium has used a portion of this funding to work collaboratively with the Sport Innovation (SPIN) Engineering Group to further the development of their successful multi-sport measurement (MMS) system.

The wearable device helps athletes and coaches track, analyze and refine motion and activity to enhance performance.

"The SPIN MMS system has played a huge role this year, in my preparation for the Rio Olympics. Seeing actual data from my races has been incredibly beneficial for me in planning my ideal race plan," says London 2012 Olympic bronze medal-kayaker Mark de Jonge. "The system has really opened my eyes to every detail of my race and has allowed me to fine-tune everything."

The ability to analyze performance is key to training and improvement and is relevant to every high-performance athlete. The MMS system has already helped athletes in a number of sports – on the water with canoe/kayak and rowing, on the track with athletics and on the ice with speed skating and sliding sports.

There are currently over 100 MMS units in the field. This technology promises to improve and increase the training effectiveness of our athletes and yield positive impacts on Canadian performance at Rio 2016, PyeongChang 2018 and beyond!



# Help Build an Olympian



CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAY SEASON WITH THE CANADIAN OLYMPIC FOUNDATION

For the second year in a row, the Canadian Olympic Foundation (COF) kicked off the holiday season on Giving Tuesday with the annual Help Build an Olympian campaign.

Recognized as the “opening day of the giving season”, Giving Tuesday takes place after Black Friday and Cyber Monday. It’s a day that celebrates the power of giving back. It’s a day where you can make an impact in your community. The movement began in the US, but over the last few years has made its way north; today over 3,000 Canadian charities participate.

Help Build an Olympian was inspired by our supporters’ desire to have a greater impact on shaping the Canadian sport system. Daily training, year-round coaching, proper nutrition, breakthroughs in technology in sport science, national and international competitions, and state-of-the-art equipment are all essential in propelling our athletes to the top of the podium. Donors are once again able to symbolically direct their donation to the athlete development pillar of their choice.

The tagline for the 2015 online giving campaign is **‘They have the will. We help them find the way.’**

This powerful statement represents the passion and dedication of our aspiring Olympians, and the role that the COF plays in helping them achieve their podium dreams.

HBC Foundation, Canadian Tire Corporation and Petro-Canada are once again on board as matching partners. Through their annual commitment to the COF, these three companies will quadruple our donors’ impact.

Donors to the Help Build an Olympian campaign will also gain exclusive access to downloadable benefits. We have designed a limited edition 2015 donor e-certificate to mark your contribution to the campaign. If you’d like to make a donation in a loved one’s name, the certificate can be printed and is ideal to tuck into a stocking or under the family tree!

We invite you to visit the campaign to learn more about what it takes to build Olympians at [HelpBuildanOlympian.ca](http://HelpBuildanOlympian.ca). Proceeds will go to the Canadian Olympic Foundation to support the next generation of Olympic athletes through programs offered by the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network and National Sport Federations.





## CANADIAN ATHLETES SHOW SUPPORT IN TORONTO

# adidas #runmore 10k



adidas Canada put a 25-hour day to good use on November 1st when they hosted the adidas #runmore 10k in Toronto. Adding the adidas banner to the latest trend in novelty runs, the #runmore 10k event put a cool spin on a classic 10k road race by holding the event at 1 a.m. the night that clocks fall back by one hour. Never has daylight savings time been used more productively!

Six hundred runners hit the pavement along the Toronto Waterfront to raise funds for the Canadian Olympic Foundation. The event raised over \$20,000 for aspiring Olympians!

Olympic beach volleyball athlete Martin Reader and Olympic hockey star Tessa Bonhomme lent their voices to the cause as co-emcees while Denny Morrison, Melissa Tancredi, Diana Matheson and Jared Connaughton, among others, led a warm-up, handed out medals and ran the course.

To celebrate their late-night accomplishments, runners were greeted at the finish line by a DJ, food trucks, and beverages.

The adidas #runmore 10K was adidas Canada's first foray into road races. The COF and adidas look forward to more similar events in the future!

### Olympians in attendance

Martin Reader  
Tessa Bonhomme  
Denny Morrison  
Jared Connaughton  
Dylan Moscovitch  
Bruny Surin  
Gillian Apps  
Robin Gayle  
Diana Matheson  
Melissa Tancredi  
Melissa Humana-Parades  
Rhian Wilkinson  
Paul Poirier  
Donna Vakalis

### Top

Four-time Olympic medallist Denny Morrison hands out a finisher's medal.

### Above

adidas #runmore 10k participants take their mark at the start line.



## YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES

# Meet Canada's Young Ambassador

### Above

Various shots courtesy of Eric Mitchell and his YOG Lillehammer 2016 journey.

Eric Mitchell

### Eric Mitchell

I was 2 years old when I first put on a pair of skis, 8 when I took my first jump and 17 when I competed in my first Olympic event.

My journey through sport has progressed like so many others, with an unwavering belief that I could be the very best in the world. I wanted to leave my mark on the world, and I thought the way to do it was with a gold medal around my neck. However, when I marched into the Olympic Stadium, my home crowd blazing I realized that I was part of something so much bigger than just sport, and that representing my country at the Olympics was an honour I could not take lightly.

Currently I am 23 and come February I will once again be marching, although this time it will be with the Lillehammer 2016 Youth Olympic Team. As Canada's Young Ambassador I will be focused on ensuring our athletes get the absolute most out of what will likely be their first experience at a large multi-sport games.

The Youth Olympic Games (YOG) has three foundational pillars; Compete, Learn & Share. I will be paying particular attention to the latter two, Learning

& Sharing. Helping the team navigate activities such as Olympism, Education, Well-Being and Healthy Living, Social Responsibility and Expression. I believe that the IOC has created a utopia for developing athletes and I am very excited to get our team to make the most of it!

Plain and simple I want to help this incredible group of young athletes, who may well be wearing that gold medal around their neck sometime soon, learn as much about themselves and their role in sport. More than anything I will be incredibly proud if I am able to help empower the next generation of champions to make their mark through the power of sport.

**About the author:** Eric Mitchell is an Olympic ski jumper, having competed at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games. He'll be traveling to Lillehammer, Norway in February for the fourth edition of the Youth Olympic Games. Stay tuned for more great content from Eric!

Follow Eric on Instagram and Twitter @EricJumper



# NEXT GENERATION ATHLETE

# Kim Boutin

Kim Boutin is one to watch. And the short track speed skating community knows it.

Kim was named 'Short Track Rising Star of the Year' in 2015 by Speed Skating Canada. The 20 year-old sensation from Sherbrooke, Que., joins the likes of Kalyna Roberge, Marianne St. Gelais and Valérie Maltais, who each won the award in years past.

"I am happy that my federation believes in my abilities. It's a nice show of confidence, and tells me to carry on in the sport."

Though she's new to the senior national team, Kim has been speed skating for 15 years.

"I enjoyed skating immensely, without feeling the need to perform. The fact that I was having so much fun was what really drove me to get better at it."

A natural athlete, Kim split focus between soccer and skating until she was 14 years old – at which point she chose soccer.

"I was offered a spot on the national soccer team, so I moved to Montreal to train at the National High Performance Soccer Centre. It was a great experience for me, and a great environment to develop, but at 14 years old I didn't feel mature enough for the experience. I still felt like a kid, and I missed my family."

It was her relaxed and happy attitude toward skating that eventually brought her back to the track. Today Kim is one of the seven females on Canada's national short track team. She trains five days a week for six hours a day and attends CEGEP part-time.

"I used to judge others who didn't go to school in order to focus solely on sports. I can now appreciate why the best in the world sacrifice their professional careers in order to compete in their sport. It's super demanding," says Kim. "It took me some time to find a pace that suited my comfort zone."

Her training schedule doesn't leave any time for a job and Kim is fortunate to receive carded athlete funding from Sport Canada. Speed Skating Canada provides the majority of high-performance resources, like coaching, travel and sport medicine, but she covers some of her equipment costs – and speed skating



blades and boots run her about \$3,000 per year. It's more than manageable, but not every skater's story is as fortunate as Kim's.

"I have seen a lot of skaters having to stop skating just before making the jump to the national team," says Kim. "These skaters often fail to make the national team on their first try. It's so unfortunate because often one year of training was all they were missing to perfect their technique in order to be selected the following year. But that particular year is the most difficult one from a financial standpoint."

Kim finished tops among Canada at the 2015 World Championship and she's looking to build on that success this season. It's a long road to Pyeongchang 2018 and it requires keeping perspective. But for a speed skater... she's in no rush.

"At the end of the season, what matters is not the number of medals won or the number of kudos I received, but rather my journey, my improvement. I want to see how much I have grown up."

#### Below

Kim is all smiles after her second place finish at a World Cup short track speed skating race.

© Graham Hughes

# Upcoming competitions

Please see the calendar below for some of the upcoming sporting events across Canada.



**Right**  
Alex Gough speeds down the course during her first run at the women's luge World Cup race in Austria.

Kerstin Joensson

DATES	SPORT	TITLE	CATEGORY	LOCATION
November 28-December 6, 2015	Alpine Skiing	Lake Louise Winterstart World Cup	World Cup	Lake Louise, AB
December 4-6, 2015	Wrestling	Canadian Wrestling Senior Team Trials	Senior National Championship/Trials	Sherwood Park, AB
December 5-6, 2015	Freestyle Skiing	Nakiska FIS Ski Cross World Cup	World Cup	Kananaskis, AB
December 15-19, 2015	Luge	Luge World Cup/Sprint World Cup	World Cup	Calgary, AB
January 18-24, 2016	Figure Skating	Canadian Tire National Skating Championships	National Championship	Halifax, NS
February 1, 2016	Cross Country Skiing	FIS Cross Country Ski World Cup	World Cup	Calgary/Canmore, AB





## DONOR PROFILE

# Karen Blair

Karen Blair and her husband Steven Leckie co-founded Gold Medal Plates (GMP) in 2004. GMP is a culinary competition with the goal to raise substantial funds for Canada's high-performance athletes, while celebrating Canadian excellence in cuisine, wine and the arts. GMP began in one city and quickly grew to host events across the country while raising funds to support athletes and subsequently, became the largest fundraiser for the Canadian Olympic Foundation.

This year, Gold Medal Plates celebrated their "10 Years Strong" anniversary and has raised over \$10 million to support our Canadian athletes.

After attending the Vancouver Games in 2010, Karen and Steven felt further inspired by our athlete's tenacity. They learned about a gap in funding within the Canadian sport system and wanted to ensure the next generation coming up behind the current level of national athletes would be set up better for future podium success. As Karen believes strongly in the power of sport, she wanted to make a significant change.

"In order to be competitive on the international scale a decade from now, Canada has to change our focus to not only help the top 12 in the world but the next generation. We need to support and identify these aspiring athletes who are trying to reach the next level before the podium pipeline dries up".

Therefore in 2013 GMP formed a partnership with the Canadian Olympic Foundation to further invest in the

next generation of Olympians. Together we created the Future Olympians Fund, a \$4 million campaign to support athletes who are five to eight years away from competing at the Olympic Games. The campaign provides unprecedented support for young high-performance athletes and makes an impact by addressing their financial barriers.

"We need to make sure that young Canadian athletes are being identified and supported, otherwise the burden is on the parent and not all parents can provide the kind of support that is needed. As well, Canada needs to more effectively and fairly support coaches below the national level and that is what the Future Olympians Fund has been established to accomplish."

Since 2004, Karen has helped the COF raise over \$12 million for Canadian Olympians. Thank you Karen for being a true patriot and for helping to transform Canada through the power of sport!

**Top**  
Karen Blair and Olympic wrestler Ohenewa Akuffo enjoy themselves on stage at the Gold Medal Plates event in Toronto.

Ron Ng





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