For immediate release

Events, venues announced for Ontario ParaSport Games

Cobourg – Jan. 21 – Hundreds of parasport athletes from across Ontario will compete for medals this spring in eight major events during the three-day 2014 Ontario ParaSport Games in Northumberland County.

At a news conference, Games Organizing Committee Chair Paul Macklin today announced the long-awaited list of events and venues for the first major sports competition ever held in the county.

"We know spectators are in for some wonderful experiences at these Games, and we're even adding a few surprise attractions," he said.

Handcycling, blind golf and amputee golf are three up-and-coming parasport events that will make their official Games debut this year.

They join traditional parasport medal competitions in sledge hockey, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, boccia and para-equestrian events. In addition, this year's demonstration sports will be archery and power–lifting.

"The Ontario Games, initiated in 1975, follow changing trends in parasport," Macklin said. "We want to keep them fresh, and relevant to competitors. After all, the athletes are what the Games are all about."

Blair McIntosh, CEO of Sport Alliance Ontario, praised Northumberland games organizers for "an amazing job" living up to their chosen theme: "Raising the Bar – Together."

"The sports and participants in these games will benefit from all the great work being undertaken by the volunteers who will ensure the care and comfort of the participants remains a priority," he said. "That will give the athletes the opportunity to compete to the best of their abilities."

One surprise side-attraction during the week the ParaSport Games come to Northumberland is the addition of training camps for para-athletes who engage in national-level competition.

Games Organizers say the list may not be complete, but national team training camps are confirmed for sitting volleyball (Cobourg), paracycling (Brighton, Colborne) and soccer (Port Hope).

Here's a quick summary of the eight medal events and locations:

Sledge hockey, Cobourg Community Centre; **wheelchair basketball**, East Northumberland Secondary School/Cobourg Community Centre; **wheelchair rugby**, St. Mary Catholic Secondary School, Cobourg; **boccia**, Town Park Recreation Centre, Port Hope; **blind golf and amputee golf**, Dalewood Golf and Country Club, Township of Hamilton; **para-equestrian**, Maplewood Stables, Township of Hamilton; and **handcycling**, Colborne/Brighton, Keeler Centre is the main staging area.

The Games will run from May 30 to June 1 at several county locations where accessible sport facilities are available within a 30-minute bus trip from athlete villages. The Games make-up is determined by Sport Alliance Ontario.

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For further information, contact:

Don Sellar
Promotions Chair,
2014 Ontario ParaSport Games
905-885-5613
dsellar@sympatico.ca
www.2014parasportgames.ca

Kate Campbell
Director, Communications
Northumberland County
905-372-3329 x2335
campbellk@northumberlandcounty.ca
www.northumberlandcounty.ca
www.investnorthumberland.ca

About Northumberland County: Quick Facts

Located an hour east of Toronto, Northumberland County is a thriving community strategically positioned along Highway 401 with access to both Toronto and eastern Ontario. As the upper tier of municipal government for the region, the County weaves together seven diverse yet complementary municipalities. Northumberland County Council is comprised of the Mayors of each of these seven member municipalities, representing:

• Township of Alnwick/Haldimand
• Municipality of Brighton
• Town of Cobourg
• Township of Cramahe
• Township of Hamilton
• Municipality of Port Hope
• Municipality of Trent Hills