
Outcomes Report
2010 and Beyond Panel
Calgary Roundtable

Prepared by: The 2010 and Beyond Panel Secretariat

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Key Findings

Key findings are items that were brought forward a number of times or ideas that received general support by the roundtable participants.

1. High performance does not exist in isolation and any new HP model should take into consideration how it relates with the whole HP system.
2. The definition of high performance should be at the Train to Win level of the Long-Term Athlete Development Model, and include Olympic and non-Olympic results and medals.
3. Being the best in the world can be a vision for HP sport, applied appropriately in the context of different sports.
4. A major improvement would be having people (athletes/coaches) and programs in one physical place: otherwise known as sport institutes.
5. HP should be led outside of government.
6. HP leadership should be based on collaborative partnerships and agreements.
7. There is strong support for a continued OTP approach to HP.
8. There is strong support for targeting of HP resources (consistent with an OTP approach).
9. There is virtually unanimous support for a central independent, one-window body to coordinate and lead HP sport.
10. We need professional development and employment opportunities for coaches.
11. We need to make better use of the university/college system/facilities
12. We need some rethinking of the athlete funding system; for example, a mix of guaranteed income, a means test for supplementary support and tax reform for sponsors.
13. Many players in the HP system are already making changes to align themselves with “a better way” and with what a new HP leadership model could do.
14. We must not lose the assets in VANOC (people, expertise) that will disappear once the Paralympic and Olympic Games are over.
15. The Minister of Sport should be thanked for his leadership on HP sport in Canada.

A. Introduction

On October 6, the 2010 and Beyond Panel held its fifth and final roundtable at the Delta Airport in Calgary. The purpose of the roundtable was to bring together leaders from the sport community to provide input to the Panel on a better way forward for high performance (HP) sport in Canada. The following report captures the key findings along with the key themes and perspectives that were expressed during the roundtable.

B. Summary of Discussions

A number of common themes and observations emerged over the course of the roundtable. These themes or outcomes can be summarized as follows:

a. Vision for HP Sport in Canada

There was an interesting discussion of the vision for HP sport in Canada. Some participants felt that the vision absolutely has to be that Canada will be the best in the world. Others suggested that for some sports like soccer, this is not a realistic vision and that it is more important to know the actual level where Canada competes and to have a longer term strategy to get to be among the best in the world.

The sector needs an organization that speaks to the dreams of kids, that has an inspirational vision and mandate. We need to think about how we get young people and universities in the HP sector and how we get corporations to share the dream and to mentor and support athletes. Our key message should be that we are in the building leaders business and our medium is sport.

b. How do we achieve this vision?

Participants suggested that for a lot of athletes the key to improvement is the provision of a combination of services that can be provided in one physical location. They pointed to the concept of sport institutes, which bring together a:

- Range of sports,
- Mix of coaching expertise
- Competitive training environment,
- Number of services like nutrition and psychology

The question was asked how this compares to what the Canadian Sport Centres (CSCs) are actually doing now? The answer was that the institute concept brings together people and programs in a single venue. In some locations the CSCs don't have the facilities to do this; they are more about the people but not

the places. The comment was also made that if there was better linkages between the CSC's it would be possible to have greater specialization at facilities.

The question was asked how the CSCs could be better linked together. The suggestion was made that they could have contractual agreements to move them in the same direction and that an independent technically-based lean agency would be able to help with this. One challenge with integration is that the CSCs were originally created as independent organizations with separate, independent boards. These boards are important in terms of the local connection and it could be difficult to convince the local boards to fold in favor of a national board. It would certainly be possible, however to link them together through a unifying vision and through contracts as opposed to governance. The point was also made that these facilities are currently linked better than most people would suggest.

In terms of how the CSC's determine their sports of focus, the sports themselves decide where they would like to train. These decisions are often predicated on geographical needs (winter sports) and the availability of year round facilities.

Currently the CSCs provide services to the top category of competitive athletes, providing the finishing touches as they compete internationally. A better resourced and integrated system of port centres could also go deeper in the HP system. By doing so the Canadian HP system would "Avoid the need for world class remedial programs"

To begin to implement the sport institutes model requires leadership and a sustained interest in HP sport. There also needs to be a strategy to ensure that the provision of services matches the ultimate endeavor – HP success. As an example of missed opportunities of the past, in 1976 a critical report was released that was written by Roger Jackson that suggested the creation of a system of national institutes of sport, but Canada did not act. Canada has an incredible amount of expertise and the key is to bring those people together, working in a common direction.

In reference to the institutes model, one participant used the analogy of a racing team. When racing among the best we need a Ferrari level pitstop not a Ford Taurus pitstop. We need to have a consistently high level of service available across the country.

There was strong support for the creation of an agency, one that articulates a national dream and vision – a one-stop shop for HP sport in Canada. It was noted that an important part of any vision is the ability to act on it, with appropriate resources. Some of the participants spoke about the power of the Olympic rings, and how the Olympic rings can open doors like nothing else. Individual NSOs do not always have the sway to go out and engage major corporate partners but the Olympic rings could more easily attract such partners.

OTP has been an important step in the right direction. To have ongoing success, however, it will require two things: organizations including MSOs will have to give up some of their power and ownership to one HP agency, and this agency will have to engage with the provinces. HP sport is highly dependent on

the quality of provincial and the club programs; without engaging the provinces a new agency will not be as successful. Another important strategy will be to add universities and colleges into the mix over the longer term. Currently, the most significant disconnect in HP sport in Canada is between the national level organizations and the community sport level where schools, clubs, and universities operate. One role for Sport Canada in the HP system would be to collaborate with the Provinces to help align the different orders of government, as well as sports at the University level.

There was strong support of the notion that clubs and universities need to be part of the HP system, as they are part of the “HP box”. Universities, for instance, have an excellent network of sport facilities that most of the NSOs cannot currently access. Maybe part of the contribution from the universities could be the use of their facilities for HP sport. As it stands, a number of NSOs have high performance units in universities.

The universities are an important component because athletes often have to make a life decision to sacrifice everything for sport or to have an education. Some type of alignment in terms of a champion type policy statement and integration might be useful to provide the impetus to support our athletes. Even very simple things like scheduling classes are very important for Canadian athletes. In the States, athletes have the opportunity to train full time and go to class full time – they don’t have to make a life decision between training and school. Canada has a very significant retention issue from 18 to 23 years.

In the view of participants, a key to achieving the HP vision is the establishment of an independent agency. It was suggested that this agency could draw on the Canadian Sport for Life model and the common language that the LTAD has developed to talk about sport without focusing on people/organizations. Through this language it is possible to look at the whole system; at what age the individual enters the system, and what it takes to address the HP stages of the system. There was general agreement that high performance begins in the train-to-compete stage and is then focused on the train-to-win stage.

One participant provided interesting information on what has recently happened in British Columbia, including progress towards a single agency model. Currently, although the sport leadership is as fragmented as anywhere else, sport leaders are all prepared to give up something in order to gain something (an agency). As a group, they did an environmental scan and looked at how other countries are organizing in sport and healthy living, and they set out to determine how to be more strategic and how to deliver good value for public and private funds. They began with a functional analysis and ended by looking at nine models that could deliver these functions including a collective, not for profit, in government, out-of-government and other models. BC sport leaders came up with two preferred models: an independent not-for-profit which would provide strategic leadership, and an independent not-for-profit that would do the HP leadership, planning and programming. The critical functions they identified included:

- **Single lead agency** – one collective voice, key to this is that people have to sit around the table and be willing to give parts of their own function for the collective good.
- **Multiyear strategic planning and direction ability**, looking 3 or 4 years or two quadrennials down the road.
- **Strategic investment of funds** – The agency needs to have a full range of funding mechanisms to ensure stability, including private funds. It means being able to match the funding to the plan.
- **System accountability and leadership** – When Legacies Now began its work it was given a budget but not HP accountability or recognition; the new agency needs to have both.
- **Diversified revenue sources and systems** – depends if you want the agency involved in collective private sector engagement on behalf of its stakeholders. There are currently many groups/foundations competing for the same funding pie.
- **Collaborative sector presence** – there needs to be a steering mechanism working with the whole sector.
- **Telling the story and demonstrating value** – there should be an evidenced based methodology for the objective delivery of sport and telling the story of success and excellence.
- **Cross sectoral alignment** – being able to align with other sectors through the coherence of a single agency for HP sport.

The next step in BC is the functional analysis of what the MSO and PSO community are going to be willing to contribute and what they will give up as part of the process of creating an agency.

In general, everybody was willing to give something up and many of the local and regional boards are willing to disband or change for the good of BC sport. The starting point was that everybody was willing to make sacrifices and to make a contribution. There wasn't a gun to the head, but there was a real opportunity - the provincial Premier launched the process by saying that we have to change the way the sector does its job.

One participant emphasized the need to work with international sport medicine bodies. They emphasized that support services need to be appropriately and directly organized through a national institute that has the appropriate support and sport science/medicine services.

c. Targeting

Participants noted that we can't be the best at everything – for example, in rowing there is a focus on the events in which Canada has a hope to win. Trying to do everything is a recipe for mediocrity. The key point, in one participant's view, was that it's okay to stand up and say that we want to be the best in the world and that we have to target those sports in which we have a chance to succeed. Support should be based both on history and future performance. This participant expressed the belief that Olympic (and Paralympic) sports are the only ones that should be supported, but there was not widespread support for this perspective. Most participants felt that Canada's HP program (OTP, a new agency) should include non-Olympic sports, world championships and the like.

As a counterpoint to the focus on Olympic sport, it was noted that team sports will normally focus on world championships and there are very different types of goals for team sports and for individual sports. At the same time, since in most sports the Olympics are every 4 years and the world championships are in the alternate 2 years it's not necessarily an incremental difference in funding to support both since they are both targeting the same athletes.

The observation was made that there was a business plan laid out in the original OTP report that gave clarity in terms of what needed to be decided to achieve medals. As a result, some sports are being left behind, not forever but at least until the priority OTP goals are achieved. In the future, we need to look beyond individual sport parameters. In terms of where we go with new sports these decisions have to be based on HP outcomes and not on our emotions – we need to determine the greatest likelihood of success (medals). If we can show that a business plan achieves success we will then have the ability to attract more resources to drive further success.

The question was asked as to how targeting relates to the public interest. The response was that some of the strongest sporting nations in the world, such as the US, China and Australia share a broad culture of appreciation for what sport can do for society, a culture that extends to high school sports and an interest in physical activity. The concern was raised that if we target specific sports, if we limit our investment to specific sports we might do harm to the public asset of sport. At the same time, the success of athletes in targeted sports inspires the public and engages them in a number of ways that are good for society.

Another participant talked about the need for the professionalization of coaches. To achieve success, we have to have people on the ground who are passionate and who are recognized as making a real difference. We need to be able to attract and retain coaches through meaningful and stable employment opportunities.

d. Resources and Innovation

Participants suggested that broadening the base of what we do as an HP sector is important. The question is how do we get new resources into the high performance community and to support innovation? The point was made that many other sectors in Canada are struggling with the same kinds of questions.

In terms of commercialization, Canada's HP system has struggles and gaps. We don't have huge companies to spin out technologies, to bring innovation into the sport community and turn such innovation into useful, practical HP products. It was suggested that translating innovation into products for new markets will help to increase our understanding of the human machine and will help athletes to perform better. An example of technology from other sectors that could be used in the sport sector is real time sensors, real time telemetry. It could be a useful method to engage the industry sector and sponsors.

To really do innovation well in the sector would require collective will and communication. As a sector we need to connect the little pockets of innovation together. So how do we bring the universities onboard to help? The view was expressed that as a sector we don't currently do this. Most coaches have no idea who to approach and how to do get involved in innovation. All the NSOs are fighting to survive and don't have a collective innovation presence to do things like talk to athletes about altitude training and other potential technical and innovative strategies.

e. The Private Sector

Engaging the private sector will also be a big issue post 2010. It is important to understand what corporations want out a relationship with HP sport. What would bring corporations back into the game in the post Olympic market? Do we know what will get this done?

The observation was made that sponsorships are mostly set up around events but that the public will never get engaged if we only focus on events that occur every so often. Two days after the Olympics are gone the sponsors are gone because they see the sponsorship as being linked to a specific time and place. The rings have limited shelf life. There needs to be continuity and the central thing should be around the athletes because they have a continuing presence, the athlete story has a lasting presence and meaning unlike the specific games story. Currently, the public doesn't really know Canadian athletes.

So how do we as a sector engage the public, corporations and governments? The general view of participants was that we are currently failing to make the connection between athletes and events. We have to look at connecting sponsors more directly to athletes and the pursuit of excellence.

One participant suggested that in terms of branding HP sport, you could look at what NASA did. They linked the billion dollar effort in space with the people and scientists and astronauts involved and they demonstrated to the public that there was a broader payback from their investment. We similarly need to more visibly demonstrate what is involved, and the benefits of athletes on the podium.

f. Sport Philanthropy

To date, there hasn't been a much in the way of sport philanthropy in Canada. This is the mandate of the Olympic Foundation, with a focus on long term funding that is sustainable for the athlete. This funding is focused on programs like OTP. Canadians do relate to athletes and their efforts;; second to watching the games Canadians have expressed a willingness to support athletes.

The Olympic Foundation was recently created by the COC to support HP and to meet the technical and coaching needs of athletes. Ninety percent of the funds that they have raised to date have been for the OTP program. One effort, for example, was to get Canadians to give \$20.10 to support our athletes leading up to the 2010 Games. The Foundation has tried to build a brand around competitive passion and belief in what the athletes are trying to accomplish.

One of the advantages of the Foundation is that they are unhooked from the games and so they are doing a number of things to raise money in terms of monthly giving or larger individual gifts. They are supporting OTP summer and Winter - OTP determines where the money is allocated. To date, about \$10m of support has gone through the Foundation and this money is allocated through OTP.

The COC has representation on the Foundation's Board as chair and one other representative on the board. Altogether there are 11 board members, 2 from the COC and 9 who are independent. The foundation is linked to the Paralympics through the COC, but the Paralympics also have their own foundation.

Individuals and organizations who make a donation are not entitled to use the rings in their advertising since the rings carry a marketing benefit that is not philanthropic. At the same time, however, there is a recognition and appreciation component for donors, such as invitations to games or to meet athletes in a manner consistent with laws governing charitable organizations.

g. Building the Pool of Athletes

Some participants suggested that long term sustainability is the key to long term success and that a top down approach is important but if our results are going to be sustainable than we have to create a continuous pool of athletes for future games.

h. The Need for a Bold Step

Participants suggested that there have been ongoing talks since the 1960s about what Canada can and should do in the field of HP sport, which has consumed a disproportionate amount of time compared to the limited progress achieved. Many believe it is time for a bold step, and that the sport sector is ready to do so.

i. The Importance of HP Sport

Another participant suggested that sport is the one sector that brings everyone together in Canada. Sport builds national pride and that the real measure of success if not just medals but how many people are inspired by excellence. As such, the Olympic team should be as much about pride and development than medals - how do you inspire young people to value excellence and achievement like their athletic heroes?

j. The Importance of Having a Champion

There was general support for the view that the HP sector needs a champion, such as an independent agency. Participants felt that Sport Canada is not able to function as champion – they have a mixed mandate and different organizational culture. The champion needs to engage the public, our MPs and Senators and PM to join together in saying that we should be the best in the world

k. The Sector's Contribution

Participants agreed that the sector can and is already making a contribution to achieve the vision for HP sport. At a local level, there are many examples of cooperation and collaboration to improve performance and efficiency. For instance, in Calgary the CSC and WinSport have combined people expertise with facilities. WinSport is constructing a large HP area, which will serve the needs of the Calgary Sport Centre and other partners. By coming together they have created new opportunities. These kinds of agreements are based on mutual benefits

One issue that was identified was around who would pay for the operations of HP centres. Currently, OTP is paying for the operations of facilities like Whistler. Having an independent agency funded appropriately is perhaps a way to avoid some of the jurisdictional issues that plague HP centres like the CSCs. However, there are still a number of facilities that all require funding from OTP or from some other external agency.

One example that was given of the potential contribution from the sector was the current effort in Ottawa to rationalize the administrative and physical needs (space, IT) of different organizations. There is also the potential to rationalize a number of smaller NSOs into larger umbrella organizations or, at a minimum, for them to share services through service agreements. The caveat was raised, however, that individual sports might be able to attract a greater total amount of corporate sponsorship dollars than could be raised by umbrella organizations. This point was contested however, as there is little evidence either way.

The point was raised that the structure of government funding actually supports individualism and differentiation in sports. As an example, with LTAD swimming and skiing would get a portion of funding for each sport discipline, while gymnastics gets one portion of funding and cycling gets only one pot of money for all of its disciplines, so there are currently financial disincentives for cooperation. If all of the potential sources of money were in a single agency with a bigger vision it would be easier to identify and remove these barriers to cooperation.

Another important development has been the creation of the team sport strategy which has brought together 15 or 16 team sports into a team sport coalition. The tenor of the conversations at the original team sport meeting was the need to look at shared services because most of the team sports are administratively overtaxed. The observation was made that sometimes meager times for organizations force them to become more effective and to focus on priorities.

In addition to the team sports, Winter, Summer and Heritage sports have also come together. The idea was raised that the next step could be the formation of a council of CEOs to talk about the future of the sector.

I. Unintended Consequences

The caveat was raised that it is important to be aware of unintended consequences, and that a focus on HP sports in terms of scale could lead to a decrease in opportunities at the grass roots level. For example, the Australians are studying the impact of their investment in sport to determine the cost-benefit of their investments and the HP results achieved (medals). They are looking at the ROI on their investment.

m. Characteristics of an Agency

One participant stated that form should follow function, and to look at the compelling story for the proposed agency's function. Is this agency going to create a bigger pie?

Another participant stated that OTP is operating well and that its success is its most compelling argument. On this basis an agency should look to reduce gaps and duplication, while increasing efficiency, spending better, diversifying funding sources and leveraging public and private partnerships. The agency should also enable better multiyear planning, leadership, more functional accountability; it should create a single window and enable collaborative sector leadership. It should bring together technical expertise and it should be nimble in its decision-making.

One idea that was raised was that the organization should actually focus on the idea of mentorship rather than leadership. This argument was predicated on the basis that OTP currently provides assistance and mentorship, and that sports have their own leadership within their organizations. There was general agreement that the proposed agency should be able to work with sports where the organization of the NSO is not functional and where things need to be fixed. The agency should be able to undertake a governance review and suggest areas for improvement.

It was suggested that an HP agency would have three top characteristics, it:

- Needs to be considerate of the whole sport system;
- Needs to have buy-in from its key stakeholders based on collaborative leadership; and
- Needs to have a clear focus on HP and clarity around its mission and vision.

It was suggested that there is a range of options for an agency, at one end of the spectrum is the big "all in" reconfiguration of the system model, the other end is the simple coalition model such as the team sport coalition or the shared services model. Another option is to start with OTP which is operating well, and then work on evolving OTP towards this big vision. It is important, however, to have an ongoing conversation within the sector to continue to evolve and obtain the best results from an HP agency.

There was general agreement that technical experts should make the decisions on HP funding allocation. The role of the agency should be to convert top talent into world champions.

Participants noted that it continue to be important to identify partner organizations at the provincial and to undertake to look at effective relationships with regional sport centres and other about partnerships. Partnership building should be a key function in a new agency.

Finally, there was agreement that the relationships with athletes and coaches are paramount and that they need to be able to contribute to the accountability of the organization.

n. The Role of Sport Canada

There was agreement that whatever agency is developed there still needs to be alignment with Sport Development which is seen as Sport Canada's role. Participants said that Sport Canada should also look at things like:

- Facilities and infrastructure
- Alignment with what the provinces are doing
- Coaching strategies
- Hosting strategies
- Ensuring alignment with sport development
- Policy issues on women, aboriginals, languages

There was also support for the notion that the current approach to HP sport within Sport Canada is a significant hindrance to the sector and that the transition to an agency will be critical in order to better serve athletes, coaches, organizations and ultimately Canadians

The idea was also raised that Sport Canada should look after horizontal equity and getting sports up to a certain level of operation and that the proposed agency can do the vertical or HP elements of the system. Whatever the role for Sport Canada, it was clear that the understanding in the room was that the new agency should have control over all funding related to results and that Sport Canada would not be responsible for the HP programs of national teams.

There was a longer discussion of the role of OTP and its relationship with Sport Canada. Basically, there are currently two main pots of federal HP dollars with two parallel systems of accountability, one in government and one in OTP. The argument was made that it is important to bring these two pots of funding together. The new agency could then begin to engage and align with the provinces looking at coordinating athletes support, innovation and technology, CSCs, coaching, facilities and HP directors.

o. What are the Roles for Key Organizations

There was strong agreement that VANOC has built a very strong sport marketing team and that it is important that this asset not disappear after the Games. In addition, the communications group is also very strong and there was strong support for the role of senior VANOC people in the future of a new agency.

There was also agreement that the OTP program has had great positive impact on the sector and on its culture and mindset around excellence. Participants did note however that team sports have a reservation about how funding decisions are made concerning team sports. In many ways, the team sport coalition was put together to deal with this issue – the importance of non-Olympic events, world championships and world cups. Criteria that are too focused on the number of medals is also a challenge because team sports are counted as receiving only one medal for an entire team while other sports like swimming receive many more for each individual performance.

Of the two constructs or models that were brought forward in the written submissions, some participants suggested that the COC model doesn't seem logical and that building on the OTP approach makes more sense. The COC model was described and explored in greater detail. Concern was expressed that the COC does an excellent job at Olympic preparation including pregame training, access to Olympic venues, games mission and the preparation of athletes when there is a sudden change in their routines when it comes to the Olympic Games. The COC model proposes to integrate what the OTP has done on the technical side with the day to day operations associated with the Olympics, which might get in the way of the good work being done by the COC.

There was a strong view that, post 2010, the sport sector will have to rely on funding from the Government of Canada. As such, the view was expressed that the sector is going to have to think about how this new entity will generate funds. There was agreement that however a new agency is structured, OTP and COC will have to work together; they are going to produce far better if they work together and there is an affinity. The view was put forward that OTP has been a godsend for HP sport, and agreement that the COC could be a good speaker for HP sport in Canada. Participants suggested that the COC should play a key role in promoting the dream and inspire Canadians, and that OTP should be the driver for technical excellence.

Participants also noted that it is important to find an ideal structure to avoid politics and conflicts of interest. There needs to be independence, in terms of who is on the board of the HP agency and recipients should not have anything to do with the decision-making structure on funding allocations.

The view was expressed that there have been many reservations about the governance of the COC but that there have been significant changes in the COC governance over the past few years. The view was expressed that there is far more autonomy and independence than there was before

The concern was expressed that Paralympic sports are not included in the COC's current proposal.

p. Athletes Support

The point was raised that the Athletes Assistance Program is currently applied in the same way for a 16 year old living at home and a 28 year old that has dependents. Athletes with significant sponsorship revenue get the same support as those with none. The issue was also raised regarding the potential for cross carding for athletes involved in different sports.

The observation was made that the tax treatment on athlete support is very important, and that it will therefore be important to maintain the tax exemption in any new HP model. From an equity point of view, it was noted that there is significantly increased costs of competition for Paralympic athletes and that this is not necessarily reflected in the current carding

Participants discussed the merits of having a more adaptable and responsive athlete assistance program. It was suggested that a mix of approaches such as a guaranteed minimum support level combined with a means test for supplementary support and tax reform for sponsors would better serve athletes and the HP sport system.

Annex I: Participants

| | Name | Organization |
|----|--------------------------|--|
| 1 | Dale Henwood | Canadian Sport Centres |
| 2 | Robert Rouselle | Alpine Canada |
| 3 | Lloyd Bentz | Host province: Alberta Min. Tour./Parks/Rec. |
| 4 | Paul Delparte | Hockey Canada |
| 5 | Bill France | WinSport Canada |
| 6 | Stephen Norris | CSC- Calgary |
| 7 | Roger Jackson | Own the Podium - Winter |
| 8 | Carla Qualtrough | Canadian Paralympic Committee |
| 9 | Donna Atkinson | Rowing Canada Aviron |
| 10 | Richard Way | LTAD |
| 11 | Johnny Misley | Hockey Canada |
| 12 | Peter Judge | Winter Sports Caucus (Freestyle) |
| 13 | Eric Petursson | Diving athlete, AthletesCAN |
| 14 | Pierre Lafontaine | Swimming Natation Canada |
| 15 | Keith Bennett | Whistler 2010 Sport Legacies Society |
| 16 | Wayne Parrish | Basketball Canada |
| 17 | David Armour | Canadian Olympic Foundation |
| 18 | Don Wilson | Bobsleigh Canada |
| 19 | David Legg | Mont Royal University |
| 20 | Tim Walzak | BC Innovation Chair in Sport Technology |
| 21 | Caroline Assalian | Canadian Olympic Committee |