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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts

PREMIER HONOURS TOP B.C. ATHLETES OF 2005/06

VANCOUVER – Premier Gordon Campbell paid tribute to 80 top B.C. athletes representing 42 sport disciplines at the 2007 Premier’s Athletic Awards.

“It takes extraordinary commitment, discipline, and talent to reach provincial and national levels of competition,” said Campbell. “It’s exciting to think that some of the athletes we’re honouring today will go on to represent British Columbia and Canada in 2010 and at future Olympic and Paralympic Games. I congratulate each and every one of them and wish them every success as they reach for their highest level of athletic achievement.”

The Premier’s Athletic Awards recognize top female and male athletes in each of the sports participating in the 2005/06 BC Athlete Assistance Program. These awards honour athletes who, through their commitment to hard work and excellence, have left their mark on sport in B.C.

“Our athletes rely on the co-ordinated support of government, provincial sport organizations, coaches, volunteers, families and friends to help them reach their highest potential,” said Tourism, Sport and the Arts Minister Stan Hagen. “Our government’s recent doubling of the BC Athlete Assistance Program to \$1.4 million, together with other programs such as Own the Podium and Road to Excellence, are tangible supports B.C.’s athletes can count on as they strive to reach their goals.”

On Jan. 31, government announced it has doubled funding to the BC Athlete Assistance Program (BCAAP), from \$700,000 to \$1.4 million annually. The BCAAP is an athlete-centred program of financial assistance funded by the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts. It seeks to recognize and support high-performance athletes striving to represent British Columbia, their post-secondary institutions and Canada in athletic competition.

Athletes who have previously received funding through the BC Athlete Assistance Program include Carey Price (MVP, 2007 IIHF World Junior Ice Hockey Championship), Daniel Igali (Olympic gold-medalist wrestler), Paul Gauthier (Paralympic medallist, Boccia), and Dianne Cummins (Olympian, Athletics).

A commemorative plaque with each athlete’s photograph and list of achievements will be displayed at the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame and Museum for one year.

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1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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