



ROWING
CANADA
AVIRON



ROWONTARIO, Rowing Canada Aviron and Canadian Sport Centre Ontario partner to foster high-performance development in Ontario

ROWONTARIO (RO), Rowing Canada Aviron (RCA) and Canadian Sport Centre Ontario (CSCO) have partnered to create the groundbreaking “Pond to Podium” project to foster rowing’s high-performance development in Ontario. This is a brand new program that will be the foundation of a true development pathway for future Olympic-level athletes and coaches in Ontario.

“We are proud to be considered Canada’s number one Summer Olympic sport by Own the Podium and we see this development centre project as another important step to ensure that rowing stays at the top of the medal charts in the future,” said Peter Cookson, Rowing Canada Aviron High Performance Director. “The athletes that will be identified by this program are our future Olympians and 2015 Pan American Games competitors, and the Ontario centres will play a large role in the development process of these young rowers. We are grateful to the Canadian Sports Centre Ontario and Own the Podium for recognizing the potential of this program for our sport.”

The focus of the program will be to identify, target and develop Ontario athletes - in the Training to Compete stage of the Long Term Athlete Development plan - with podium potential. The Welland International Flatwater Centre has been named as the host site of the newly created National Development Centre-Ontario. The NDC-O has been created to provide these athletes the guidance and coaching required to move forward in their athletic careers. As the host of the NDC-O, the City of Welland and the Welland Recreational Canal Corporation, through their continued support of rowing and the development of the WIFC, will play an integral part in our ability to deliver this program.

In addition to the Welland centre, four Talent Development Centres will be selected through a bidding process with planned opening dates in September 2010. Each of the centres will service up to 25 up-and-coming Ontario athletes.

“The ‘Pond to Podium’ High Performance sport program initiative is a once in a lifetime opportunity for rowing in Ontario,” explains Derek Ventnor, Executive Director of ROWONTARIO. “The level of investment being made by the Government of Ontario will provide us with the first real opportunity to develop a true pathway to the podium for Ontario athletes and coaches. This collaboration between a Canadian Sport Centre, NSO and PSO is the first of its kind in Canada at this scale and will be used as the benchmark by several sport agencies including Own The Podium, Sport Canada, the Canadian Sport Centre Ontario, and the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion for future funding programs across the Canadian sport sector. We are very happy and proud to be selected as the first sport to be given this opportunity.”

A total of six coaching jobs have been created as a result of this project. Former Ontario Provincial Coach, Phil Marshall, has been appointed (effective July 1, 2010) the Lead Coach of the National Development Centre – Ontario. A National Development Centre assistant coach and four Talent Development Centre coaching positions will be added this summer.

Rowing Canada currently has one of its National Training Centres in London, Ontario, which services its women's senior and under-23 programs. The National Development Centre - Ontario will be the link between the Talent Development Centres and the RCA National Training Centres.

This new initiative has been made possible with new funding from the Province of Ontario – administered through CSCO. Own the Podium funding is also being utilized by RCA to support this program. Rowing has been ranked as a Tier 1 sport at the national level and is also a Tier 1 Sport of the CSCO's Ontario High Performance Sport Initiative Program. CSCO selected rowing to be the pilot sport for this new initiative based on meeting specific criteria established for the program.

“The CSCO developed and launched the Ontario High Performance Sport Initiative earlier this year and we are excited to have rowing as the pilot sport in Tier 1 of this program. We believe that providing a clear performance pathway for athletes and coaches will help Ontario lead the way to the podium at the 2015 Pan Am Games and beyond,” said Debbie Low, President & CEO of the CSCO. “The partners have worked extensively over the past few months to align and pool the available funding resources to create the best possible system for rowing in Ontario.”

A management team, with representatives from each of the partners, will guide and monitor the progress of the program.

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Talent Development Centre bidding documents and “Pond to Podium” coaching jobs can be found at the following link:

www.rowontario.ca