

CANADIAN COUNCIL
OF THE BLIND



LE CONSEIL CANADIEN
DES AVEUGLES

a lack of sight is not a lack of vision

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 1, 2010

2010 Canadian Vision Impaired Curling Championship Organizers share grassroots curling message in efforts to grow the sport in the world.

Ottawa - On Saturday February 6th from 2-5 p.m. the Canada Council of the Blind will be kicking off its weeklong Annual Blind and Vision Impaired Championship by hosting an event at the Ottawa Curling Club. Delegates from 25 Embassies located in Ottawa will be in attendance to help promote grassroots curling. Several of the embassies will be trying the sport for the first time

One of the main missions of the championship is to demonstrate the ability of blind and vision impaired to all Canadians and to encourage participation at the local level. The organizers and athletes involved are also working very hard to make this sport a recognized sport with the Paralympics as soon as 2014.

"We had originally hoped blind curling would at least be a demonstration sport at the 2010 Vancouver Paralympics," said Bob Comba, Team Canada Lead. "It takes time and a lot of support to get three continents and eight countries involved."

Kick off ceremonies will also include a performance by Ottawa's own Lucas Hanneman, 22 year-old vision-impaired jazz guitarist. Hanneman's music career has been on the rise in recent years taking awards at many festivals and contests.

Nine teams from coast to coast will be participating. Team Canada (Kelowna, BC) will be back to defend their championship title. "They're all out to be the team to knock us off the top and some day our reign of being Team Canada will end," said Team Lead Bob Comba, "but until that day comes we'll continue to do our best."

Even though many may assume that it would be near impossible to curl having ten percent vision or less, it proves to be a sport that can be mastered even by effort, coupled with clear communication and teamwork. All members throwing a stone and sweeping are vision impaired. The only members of the team who are sighted are the coach and the guide. "They train the same way all curlers do. They work hard on developing their skills and learning the strategy of the game." said Walter Koop, Team Manitoba Coach. "It is very rewarding for me as a coach to watch them play and to see all the hard work pay off."

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More Information on Vision Impaired Curling at: <http://ccbnational.net/>

More info on Lucas Hanneman can be found at www.lucashaneman.com

Venue Details: Ottawa Curling Club, 440 O'Connor Street Ottawa, Ontario
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