

Going for the GOLD

BEING THE BEST

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**Going for the Gold:
Being the Best**

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Introduction

When we sat down to brainstorm the contents of this issue, Canada was in the midst of hosting the Winter Olympics and Paralympics in Vancouver. Our conversation centered around what it takes to be the best and compete at a world level. The inspiration of the Olympic and Paralympic athletes present and demonstrate many principles and values that can be paralleled in our organizations. Preparation, hard work, commitment, and a passion for what one is doing – these are ideals that create results on the field of sport and in our workplaces.

Jeff Palamar, one of our contributors, has had the opportunity to join Team Canada as Ombudsman for the Paralympic Games. In this publication, Jeff shares his reflections from his post in the Athletes' Village at Whistler. For ten days, Canada welcomed approximately 600 athletes from 44 countries to compete on the world stage. Each of these Paralympians faced and overcame unique challenges to compete at the highest level. The entire Paralympic experience focused on the inspirational nature of sport and related opportunities for people with physical disabilities.

Our organizations also face numerous challenges each day. The principles by which these athletes approach their sport can also apply to our work. Setting goals, being persistent, pushing ourselves, conquering and overcoming challenges, honing and refining our practices to build skill and strength of the team – applying these principles can also move an organization forward. In the end, the intrinsic and external rewards are evident – going for the gold is a worthy objective.

For this issue, we focus on practical strategies you and your organization can employ to become the best in your field. We also profile and acknowledge the Paralympics and the Canadian Paralympic Committee and the work they do to help our athletes achieve their dreams. Enjoy!

Meet Our Experts

Jeff Palamar — Partner, Taylor McCaffrey LLP



Jeff Palamar is a partner with Taylor McCaffrey LLP in Winnipeg. He practices in the areas of employment, labour and administrative law, including human rights, sports and civil litigation. He solves problems, mostly for employers. Jeff was a longtime instructor with the University of Manitoba's Continuing Education Division in Human Resource Management.

Jeff is the Chair of KidSport Manitoba and honorary legal counsel to Team Canada Volleyball. He was the Ombudsperson with the Canadian Paralympic Committee for the 2008 Beijing Games, and has been selected again for the 2010 Vancouver/Whistler Games.

Sherry Panciera — President, North Star Human Resources Inc.



Under Sherry Panciera's leadership as President and CEO, North Star has earned its well deserved recognition as a leader in the applicant tracking industry and has experienced overwhelming success by helping organizations leverage applicant tracking technology to recruit and hire more strategically, efficiently, and cost-effectively.

North Star recently launched its state-of-the-art New Release Applicant Tracking Software, which has received many 'best in class' accolades and has far-exceeded the expectations of not only other industry experts and critics, but also the client base North Star currently serves.

Diane A. Panting — Vice President, Aon Consulting



Diane Panting, CHRP, CCP, IPMA-CP is Vice President, Aon Consulting, Winnipeg serving clients in Western Canada. She focuses on the strategic development of people and leadership perspectives in support of organizational success. Diane partners with clients of all sizes from all sectors identifying and developing client specific solutions related to total rewards, employee/ executive compensation and incentives, HR strategy and program delivery and performance management. Aon Consulting is a local, national and international human resources consulting firm with expertise in compensation and rewards, benefits, pensions, employee communication and strategic human capital initiatives.

Wendy Phaneuf — Managing Director, The Training Source



When she established The Training Source in 1997, Wendy addressed a gap in the market – to help organizational leaders create workplaces where employees thrive and perform at their best each day. Along with her team of highly experienced and skilled consultants and trainers, Wendy offers creative, practical solutions to common workplace issues – decreasing employee morale, diminished productivity, team inefficiency and employee retention challenges.

In 2006, Wendy was honoured with the Manitoba Woman Entrepreneur of the Year award for her dedication to providing exceptional programs and services to her valued clients.

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View from the Village:

By Jeff Palamar

Inspiration for Success



with whatever immediate challenge is at hand, knowing there are untold others that also require attention. It is critical to be calm, focused, and dedicated to finding solutions that may not be ideal, but are suitable and the best possible ones available at the time. It is a world of spontaneity, reaction, and resolution.

To succeed at a Games, you must be well prepared, patient, and imaginative. You need to be able to focus on the ultimate goal, understand what can best be done in all circumstances, and accept that reality is what it is. It is like that old TV show *The West Wing*, with one incredibly intense situation after another to be analyzed and resolved. It doesn't last just an hour including commercials though. It consumes 10 solid days (with months of preparation beforehand), and overall is an experience that is unforgettable.

The intensity of the Games and the challenges that arise are comparable to those facing my clients and me as a labour and employment lawyer. The same principles and successful solutions apply. We must prepare as best we can. Rather than fear conflict, we must recognize it as a given and develop a way to work through it. Rather than blindly follow protocols, processes, and the way things have been done in the past, we must use our common sense and imaginations and problem solve. We need continually to ask ourselves what are we trying to accomplish and how do we reasonably achieve it?

Collective agreements are required by law to have grievance and arbitra-

I recently had the honour of being the Ombudsperson for Team Canada at the 2010 Paralympic Winter Games in Vancouver and Whistler. I lived in the Athletes' Village in Whistler and truly enjoyed my time with the athletes, coaches, and supporting personnel. At these first Paralympic Winter Games hosted on Canadian soil, our Canadian Paralympic Team had its strongest finish ever and the Games were deemed the best ever Winter Paralympic Games by International Paralympic Committee President, Sir Philip Craven.

My Ombudsperson "job description" required me to solve any and all problems, including anything to do with the sports themselves, such as play disputes, protests, appeals, harassment or interpersonal disputes,

and doping concerns. My "real" job, though, was to help in any way I reasonably could to make the Games better for individual athletes and Team Canada as a whole.

Fortunately, much of my work was in dealing with the potential for problems – working through "what if" scenarios – instead of resolving actual problems that erupted. The athletes, coaches, and mission staff were extremely well prepared and very ready to compete – evident by the excellent performance of the team. The few actual disputes we had were resolved very smoothly.

As for many organizations, the working environment at a Games is intense and constantly urgent. Time is far too short. Everyone is juggling several tasks and is driving forward

tion processes to allow the orderly and civilized resolution of disputes. I am a fan of such mechanisms, even in non-unionized workplaces, as they recognize that disputes will occur and that there must be a proper way to address them. We need to prepare for the possibility of disputes and accept that they allow an opportunity to make advancements. Disputes are not necessarily always “zero-sum” games, where one party wins and the other loses. Rather, they show how real life has (surprise!) not gone exactly as imagined when considering policies, procedures, or rules of conduct.

Commonly, employers looking for certainty ask me to provide black and white answers for future problems and to help draft policies that prescribe hard and fast courses of action. While I am a supporter of considering issues and options beforehand and plotting out a general course of action in preparation of facing a dilemma, I advocate against a one-size-fits-all solution with rigid protocols. The action taken in a given situation really should depend on the actual circumstances at hand.

As no two sets of facts are identical, why should we impose the same result? How can we possibly contemplate all possible scenarios in advance? The simple answer is that we can't. It's natural, expected, and healthy for issues to arise, and it's

Rather than blindly follow protocols, processes, and the way thing have been done in the past, we must use our common sense and imaginations and problem solve.

essential to formulate the solution based on the unique circumstances.

We should always do the best we can in preparing and be flexible enough to recognize that some degree of ad hoc problem solving will be needed to succeed. I think an employer does a much better job at showing its vitality (and ability to succeed) by being prepared to recognize that:

1. It will do the best job it possibly can to prepare for the future;
2. Problems will arise and conflicts will exist, foreseen or not and regardless of best efforts, and that it's natural and healthy as it allows systems to progress and evolve;
3. The focus needs to be on getting the immediate job done as best as possible in all circumstances,

for the good of all concerned; and

4. While in hindsight, a better solution may have existed, it must move forward, learn from what's been done and seen, accept that things can always be better, and strive for continuous improvement. It also must ensure strong communication and that processes are in place to review and revise existing policies and procedures based on the recent experience.

Working with the 2010 Canadian Paralympic Team and being in front of a home crowd was life changing. Having 60,000 people cheer for us and our hopes of success as we marched into BC Place for the opening ceremonies was soul stirring and monumental. The experience reinforced that we all have our challenges and our opportunities. We should care about doing the best we can – competing honourably and fairly and enjoying the journey as we strive for our own podiums. Very few of us will ever win medals, but the real success comes from the effort and advancement. Plan your work, work your plan, accept it as less than perfect and commit yourself to do better every day. This applies to sport, to business, and to all aspects of life. When you meet challenges (and you will), consider Paralympic athletes and their achievements, and you will be inspired to succeed. ❖

Labour and Employment Law

Jeff Palamar

Direct Phone: 204.988.0364

Direct Fax: 204.953.7203

Email: jpalamar@tmlawyers.com



TAYLOR McCAFFREY LLP
BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS

9th Floor, 400 St. Mary Avenue

Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4K5

www.tmlawyers.com

If You Are Not Recruiting Online...

By Sherry Panciera

Get In the Game!

The 2010 Olympics have given us a unique opportunity to see the world's best athletes perform and compete against one another on television and online. As I was following the Olympics and Paralympics, it occurred to me that there are many lessons we can learn from watching the world's top athletes – their dedication, desire, and discipline to prepare and perform at the highest level are the same mindsets and behavioural traits required to be successful at almost anything. This applies to all aspects of running a business – including the critical function of recruiting. Not every person or organization has the reputation of being best in the world, but what we can do is learn from the best and then make the decision to be the best with the (sometimes limited) resources we have available to us.

Birds of a feather flock together...

As I was growing up, my parents' advice was to always take pride and do my best at whatever I took on, surround myself with people who are the best at what they do, and learn as much as I could from them to become the best person I can be. Now that I am older and wiser, I understand the value of this advice. And as the saying goes, "birds of a feather flock together," meaning people of the same character tend to associate with one another. If I am one of the best at what I do, then chances are that I will attract people



who are also the best at what they do. I can learn from them (and vice versa) and this increases my chances of success!

So once you have made the personal decision to be, and surround yourself, with the best, how do you then attract and recruit the best into your organization?

In this day and age, a candidate's first step in seeking employment quite often involves researching online job vacancies as well as learning about potential employers by visiting their website. An organization's career/employment website

is often the candidate's first impression on what you have to offer as an employer. For example, if my name is Shaun White and I am a 24 year-old, two-time Olympic gold medalist snowboarder seeking my next career endeavour, would I be more attracted to an organization with an interactive careers website that offered informative job postings and allowed me to submit and monitor my application online, or, would I be more impressed with an organization that has either no careers website or just a basic page that directs candidates to drop off, fax, or email a resume to a general mailbox without any confirmation of receipt?

...what we can do is learn from the best and then make the decision to be the best...

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Yes...24 year-olds are using the Internet and likely to seek employment online – that is not likely a surprise! What may surprise you, however, is the online adoption rate of other age demographics and the percentage of people you may be missing by not having an engaging online employment presence.

The graph below is from Generations Online study by Pew Internet & American Life Project, published in January 2006.

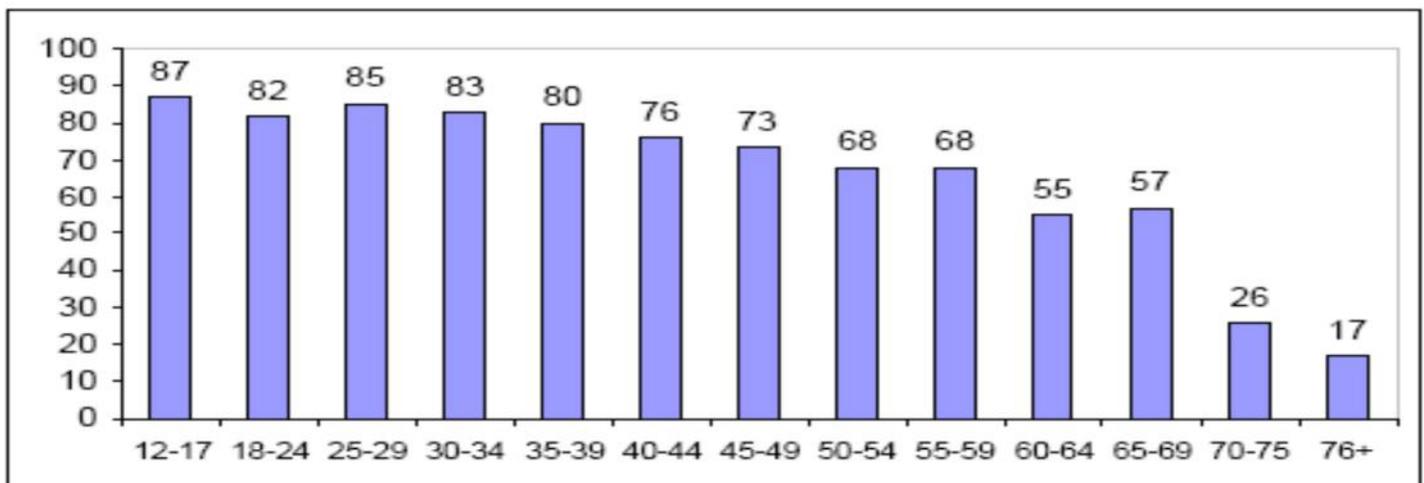
Keep in mind the best online recruiting tools don't have to cost a fortune. Equipping your corporate careers website with applicant tracking technology can be affordable, cost-effective, and should decrease your overall recruiting expenses. For example, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) reports the average cost per hire is \$377 when utilizing online strategies in

comparison to \$3,295 when utilizing a newspaper strategy.

I challenge you – have you made the decision to be the best and go for the gold?...to strive to own the po-

dium?...to perform at the highest level, with the limited resources you have? Looking to attract, recruit, and surround yourself with best? ***If you are not recruiting online...get in the game!*** ❖

Chart: Share of Americans online by age (Teens Oct-Nov. 2004, margin of error = ± 3%. Adults Jan-June 2005, margin of error = ± 1%)



Building an Olympic Team:

Fuelling the Games with Food

By Wendy Phaneuf



group and individual conversations about expectations and the importance of success.

Care was taken to celebrate significant milestones with the athletes and other patrons – ensuring members of the culinary team were clear on the value they were contributing. Mike specifically mentioned how the positive and continual recognition motivated the team to achieve the vision.

2 Roles Must be Clear

Although industry protocols were used to define jobs, role clarity was communicated continually. From onboarding, through training, day-to-day coaching, and feedback, leaders focused on ensuring everyone understood their roles in achieving the mission and how their jobs impacted others.

Mike noted the focus taken on ensuring the team was selected not just on technical skills and knowledge, but upon the behaviours necessary to be successful in a high profile, fast-paced environment. During the Games, these positive and flexible behaviours were vital to ensure members of the team came together and achieved the vision.

3 Processes Must be Well Defined and Employed Effectively

The company contracted to meet the Games' culinary needs began the planning process two years ago. The quantity of food and complex dietary requirements presented a significant challenge – menus, ingredients, preparation, and cooking require-

What does it take to build a world class team? For those responsible for feeding thousands of athletes, coaches, employees, and volunteers at the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Village in Whistler, British Columbia, this was a critical question. For two months, a team of dedicated chefs took on the monumental challenge of leading 180 people from across the globe (from dishwashers to celebrity chefs) to achieve one goal – *to fuel the games with food*.

During the Olympic and Paralympic Games, Whistler Olympic Village provided everything that the athletes required to prepare, train, and compete. The culinary team prepared over 320,000 healthy meals for athletes, coaches, and workers; in a 24-hour period, they prepared and served over 12,000 meals to over 3500 people with diverse cultural and dietary requirements.

My good friend, and Retired Canadian Forces Chef, Michael Greer was privileged to be at the center of the activity. As part of a team of accomplished Canadian chefs, Mike led the receiving, storage, and provision of over 1.2 million pounds of raw ingredients necessary to meet the culinary needs of the Games. After he returned from Whistler, Mike and I spoke about team effectiveness and his recent Olympic and Paralympic experience. He offered the following insights:

1 Understand the Common Vision

For creating and reinforcing a clear culinary vision, Mike places credit on the team's Executive Chef. This well-known Canadian chef hosts his own television show, but his celebrity was downplayed for this task. This chef was an incredible motivator and leader, ensuring each employee understood the importance of his or her job. He held daily

ments had to be considered. Even with substantial planning, the team revised processes as events unfolded.

Mike spoke at length about how he and Senior Chef, Bill Pratt applied their Canadian Forces experience to the Games. As former Military chefs, the two were accustomed to leading large-scale culinary operations and were able to assist chefs and team members in understanding how to scale recipes and preparation processes to produce the substantial quantities of food required.

4 Communication Must be Strong

Mike acknowledged the Executive Chef for promoting and modelling the vital communication approach required to achieve goals. Daily meetings were held to share information, make corrections, and review special requirements. Leaders were tasked with communicating the ongoing game plan to their respective teams. Mike cited the importance of clear and strong communication in a fast-paced, 24-hour environment where timely information needed to be shared accurately across multiple functions and work shifts.

Team members were pulled from across the globe for their experience with similar large-scale events. The cultural and language diversity, coupled with the limited time for the

team to gel, required a specific focus on communication to ensure team success.

5 Team Relationships Must be Established and Fostered

Due to the unique circumstances of the Games, strong working relationships needed to be established immediately. Again, leaders played a key role in ensuring the trust and mutual respect required to foster productive relationships were present. Their ongoing dialogue centered around the unique opportunity to be a part of a world class event and they promoted a sense of “we’re all in this together.”

...the positive and continual recognition motivated the team to achieve the vision.

Opportunities to take in some of the Games, celebrate a birthday, or welcome or wish farewell to team members allowed people to connect on a personal level and strengthen relationships. Mike reinforced that all team members shared a common belief that this was a once in a life-

time experience and that this belief created a culture that encouraged teamwork and lasting friendships.

6 Leadership Must be Present at Every Level

The Executive Chef employed his well-honed leadership skills as the standard for the culinary team leaders and members. By ensuring everyone felt valued and recognized, he encouraged each individual to be a leader in his or her own role. Leaders walked their talk, working just as hard as everyone else.

What made this team different than other teams Mike Greer had worked with? They were all committed to going above and beyond to make the most of the unique opportunity.

Mike’s Olympic and Paralympic experience may be his once in a lifetime opportunity to create a world class team. Our discussion allowed me to see how these vital elements of team effectiveness were applied in extraordinary circumstances. I apply these same lessons with the teams I work with and you can enhance your work teams by focusing on these key elements. Are you ready to equip your teams to succeed at a higher level?

To read more, visit Michael Greer and Bill Pratt’s blog:

<http://billandmike.blogspot.com> ❖

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It's All About Accountability:

By Diane Panting

Executive Performance and Rewards



Our recent Olympic and Paralympic experience was a thrilling time for Canadians! We witnessed true commitment to excellence result in amazing achievements and rewards for the athletes. The rewards were plentiful: medals, recognition, intrinsic satisfaction, and personal bests for the athletes; being part something big and wonderful for the volunteers and organizers; and the inspiring, heartfelt, and engaging alignment with the Olympic experience for the fans.

What a great example for all of us – especially organizational leaders – of what it means to work hard, achieve the set goal, and reap the rewards of one's labour: performance transformed into rewards. There has been much public debate about what ex-

ecutives are rewarded for and why. This is especially the case when organizations do not live up to expectations, deliver poor performance, and, in some cases, fail. Despite these outcomes, executives in many of these organizations were receiving significant rewards of compensation and stock. This has led, in some cases, to a sense of entitlement and arrogance. Performance was lacking, but rewards were still provided. "The times, though, they are a-changing."

Some of the trends we are seeing in this challenging area of executive rewards are:

- The amount executives receive is a hot topic for shareholders and the public – especially when layoffs, pay cuts, unpaid leaves,

and plant closures are taking place.

- Perceptions that poor past performance and excessive risk taking are inappropriately rewarded.
- The pay differential between front line workers and executives has been growing and is so vast in many situations that common sense and moral principles beg the questions "How did this happen?" and "Who is responsible?"
- Stakeholders are demanding influence in how executive rewards are determined and paid.
- Top leaders are being presented with clearly defined employment contracts in response to the increased scrutiny, governance, and disclosure requirements.
- The bottom line: performance is driving rewards.

It all comes down to leadership taking accountability for the performance of the organization.

The world of executive compensation and rewards has become more complex. This applies to publicly traded companies, but also to privately held companies, not-for-profits, and public sector organizations, regardless of size. The road-map forward involves good design, good governance, and good disclosure. Boards must clearly define what performance is required – both qualitative and quantitative measures are key as well as “organizational morality” measures involving ethics, integrity, social responsibility, and trust. Managing risk effectively is greatly becoming a key performance area. As well, the medium-term (3 year) perspective is becoming more the time frame over which to consider results than the short-term (1 year).

Executive ownership in the organization, where possible, needs to be significant; accelerated execution of strategy is paramount.

The following executive performance and rewards assessment tool provides a practical lens through which to examine your approach to executive compensation, regardless of your sector, the size of your organization, or how you are governed. By answering each question with a yes or no, you will discover where you need to focus.

1. Does your organization have the tools, analytics, and data necessary to manage executive rewards in today's environment?
2. Does your organization have a current executive pay compensation philosophy and related guiding principles?

3. Have these principles been reviewed in light of the economic climate impacting your business?
4. Does your organization consider elements of innovation, collaboration, employee engagement, corporate social responsibility, and sustainability when determining executive/management performance?
5. Does your organization consider “organizational risk” or “reputational risk” when setting executive performance objectives?
6. Do you anticipate more scrutiny of your executive compensation plan?
7. Do you have executive employment contracts in place and have they been reviewed in the last 12 months?
8. Have the payouts from your executive compensation plans been in line with shareholder/stakeholder expectations over

- the past 24 months? Do you know?
9. Do you consider employee engagement and customer satisfaction as key elements of executive performance objectives and incentive payouts?

It all comes down to leadership taking accountability for the performance of the organization. Not dissimilar to the Olympics where the result determines the reward, period – no excuses! Striving for the best performance drives results and the intentional rewards. Being accountable means understanding what it takes to be successful, setting responsible goals to achieve the desired results, and rewarding positive outcomes in relation to the goals achieved. The bottom line is – be proactive, address this critical area now – and plan accordingly. ❖

AON CONSULTING

Aon Consulting is one of Canada's leading integrated human capital consulting and outsourcing firms. Fueled by the ideas of 36,000 colleagues worldwide, we help clients attract, retain and develop world-class talent. Driven by inspired and independent thinking, Aon Consulting is committed to delivering innovative and personalized business solutions with tangible value to help clients shape their organization into the workplace of the future.

Diane A. Panting | Vice President
Tel: 204.954.5512 | diane.panting@aon.ca | www.aon.ca

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Contact Our Experts

Jeff Palamar — Partner, Taylor McCaffrey LLP

T: 204.988.0364
E: jpalamar@tmlawyers.com
W: www.tmlawyers.com



Winnipeg Office
Taylor McCaffrey LLP
9th Floor, 400 St. Mary Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3C 4K5

International
Taylor McCaffrey LLP is a member of the State Capital Group and the Employment Law Alliance, a network of over 3,000 lawyers providing employment and labour expertise in more than 100 countries worldwide and all 50 U.S. states.

Sherry Panciera — President, North Star Human Resources Inc.

T: 204.294.9793
E: sherry@northstarhr.com
W: www.northstarhr.com



Winnipeg Office
North Star Human Resources Inc.
2 Sandstone Place
East St. Paul, Manitoba, Canada
R2E 0M3

US Office
North Star Human Resources Inc.
Unit 99
5415 E. McKellips Road
Mesa, Arizona 85215
USA

Diane A. Panting — Vice President, Aon Consulting

T: 204.954.5512
Toll free: 1.800.863.9589
E: diane.panting@aon.ca
W: www.aon.com



Winnipeg Office
Aon Consulting
One Lombard Place, Suite 1800
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
R3B 2A3

Aon Headquarters
Aon Corporation
200 East Randolph Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601
USA

Wendy Phaneuf — Managing Director, The Training Source

T: 204.831.5078
E: wendy@thetrainingsource.ca
W: www.leadingforloyalty.com
W: www.thetrainingsource.ca



Winnipeg Office
The Training Source
Unit 25 - 308 Westwood Drive
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
R3K 1G7

US Office
The Training Source
50233 Venice Court
Northville, Michigan 48168
USA



Going for the Gold:

Achieving Goals, Setting Records

The Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) is a non-profit, private organisation with 43 member sports organisations.

The CPC is responsible for creating an optimal environment for high-performance Canadian Paralympic athletes to compete and win in the Paralympic and ParaPanAmerican Games, and by promoting their success, inspire all Canadians with a disability to get involved in sport.

The Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games (March 12 – 21, 2010) was a historic moment in Canadian sport. It was the first Paralympic Games hosted by Canada and was the most successful Paralympic Winter Games for a Canadian team.

The 2010 Canadian Paralympic Team met its goal of finishing in the top three gold medal-winning nations. With 19 medals overall, including 10 gold, five silver, and four bronze, it set a new record for medals won by Canada at a Paralympic Winter Games.

Record breaking performances by Canadian Paralympians included: Colette Bourgonje, who won the first ever Paralympic winter medal on Canadian soil; Lauren Woolstencroft, who swept the podium in Para-Alpine skiing, winning gold in all five disciplines; the McKeever brothers' victory in the 20-km cross-country ski race to take Canada's first gold at a home Games; and Canada's second consecutive Paralympic gold in wheelchair curling. These wins and the performances of the entire 2010 Canadian Paralympic

Team captured the attention of the media and public across Canada and have inspired a generation of Canadians with a disability to get involved in sport.

Thanks to incredible performances and the unprecedented media and television coverage, goals for greater awareness and the recruitment of more persons with a disability into sport were also achieved.

A record 165 Canadian media attended the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games. Daily media coverage in national, provincial, and community newspapers and online exposed Canadians from coast-to-coast to Paralympic sport.

With 65 hours of television coverage by the Olympic Broadcast Media Consortium, viewers across the country followed the fortunes of a Canadian Paralympic Team for the first time. During the 10-day Games, 13.6 million Canadians tuned in to support Canada's Paralympic athletes.

With only 3% of persons with a disability active in sport, the legacy of these Games will be greater awareness, participation, and inclusion in local, provincial, and national sport programs – critical for Canada to continue to create Paralympic champions. These benefits will reach far beyond sport: Seeing Paralympians compete in high performance international sport has challenged preconceptions of disability, and will change attitudes to the benefit of persons with a disability in all walks of life. ❖

To learn more about the Canadian Paralympic Committee, visit its website at www.paralympic.ca.