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National Ringette League Hits the Ice Across Canada

EDMONTON, ALBERTA--(CCNMatthews - Nov. 4, 2004) - Today marks the official announcement of the formation of the National Ringette League (NRL) by its Board of Governors. The league, which operates under Ringette Canada, consists of 16 teams in three divisions (Western - eight teams, Ontario - three teams and Quebec - five teams) and features Canada's elite ringette athletes.

"The NRL is a opportunity to showcase the sport that we as athletes love and it is also a chance to increase the number of competitive games we are able to play over the course of a season," said Alexis Snowdon, defence with both the NRL's Edmonton WAM team and Team Canada, "It has been my experience that when people see ringette being played at this level they are absolutely mesmerized by how much finesse the game has and how exciting and fast paced it is. I believe the NRL is the best way to expose our sport and raise its visibility."

Snowdon joins 24 other world champion Team Canada athletes on NRL rosters across the country. The league also includes Erin Cumpstone, catcher for Team Canada's softball team that placed fifth at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens. Cumpstone will be playing for the Saskatoon Wild.

"This is a very important milestone in the development of ringette in Canada," said Jim Dawson, president, NRL Board of Governors. "The NRL provides an environment where athletes and their coaches can benefit from participating in a competitive forum, while also providing the opportunity to foster growth opportunities for both the sport and its participants."

The objectives of the NRL are to move ringette into the mainstream of Canadian sports activity, encourage greater public

awareness of ringette, create more and better competitive opportunities for athletes, and achieve positive financial results at both a league and team level.

The NRL functions as a committee under Ringette Canada, the national governing body of ringette in Canada. It has an established Board of Governors which includes: Jim Dawson as president, George McKenzie as director of the Western Division, Glen Gaudet as director of the Ontario Division, Michel Savoie as director of the Quebec Division, and Keely Brown as an athlete representative.

Teams in the Western Division will play a 25 game schedule, which will be played over seven weekends during the season. Games will be played during five tournaments (Saskatoon - November 12-14, Edmonton - November 26-28, Regina - January 6-8, and Calgary - January 21-23, and Winnipeg - February 11-13) and teams will also participate in an interlock over two additional weekends.

Teams in the Quebec and Ontario Divisions will play an interlocking schedule, with Quebec teams playing 24 games each and Ontario teams playing 25 games each. Teams in the Quebec and Ontario Divisions will also participate in two tournaments during the season with results counting towards league standings. In addition to vying for league championship titles, teams will also be competing for a berth at the 2005 Canadian ringette championships being held from April 11-16, 2005 in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

For more information on the NRL, including schedules, team rosters and athlete profiles, please visit our website at www.nationalringetteleague.ca.

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