



For Immediate Release

October 21, 2008

Aboriginal Apprentice Coaches Named for 2009 Canada Summer Games

The Coaches Association of Saskatchewan along with the Saskatchewan Amateur Wrestling Association and Basketball Saskatchewan Inc. are pleased to announce that Jonathon (Brook) Smith and Corey Matthews have been chosen as the Aboriginal Apprentice Coaches who will participate in the 2009 Canada Summer Games in Prince Edward Island.

Brook Smith, a coach at the Prince Albert Wrestling Club and teacher at the Ahtahkakoop First Nation will apprentice under mentor coaches Shane Bradley from Saskatoon and Dan McGee from Regina. Smith, a band member of the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario and a resident of northern Saskatchewan, has won a CIS national championship and two national titles as a wrestler, and for the past 10 years has been a wrestling coach in the north. Brook promotes Aboriginal wrestlers to participate in provincial and national championships as well as multi-sport games competitions.

Corey Matthews, a basketball coach who teaches at Scott Collegiate in Regina, will apprentice under the Canada Games Male Head Coach Nathan Schellenberg. Matthews has been a driving force behind rejuvenating basketball at Scott Collegiate in Regina's north-central area. Since becoming a coach at Scott, Corey has achieved a 47-19 record and his team has been in three of the last four Regina city finals, winning championships in 2004 and 2007. As someone who grew up in Regina's inner city, Matthews has become a role model for student athletes.

Matthews and Smith will work with their sports' Canada Games program over the next 10 months to help prepare Saskatchewan athletes for the 2009 Canada Summer Games.

"These individuals are excellent young coaches and this will be an exciting opportunity for them. The experience they will gain will not only benefit them as coaches but it will also have a positive impact on Aboriginal participation and development in their sport," says Mark Bracken, Manager of Coaching for the Coaches Association of Saskatchewan.

The Aboriginal Apprentice Coach Program is an exciting new initiative that is being piloted for the 2009 and 2011 Canada Games. The program is designed to provide Aboriginal coaches from across Canada with the opportunity to develop their coaching skills while working under a mentor coach in a multi-sport games environment. The program is offered through a national partnership between the Canada Games Council, the Coaches Association of Canada and the Aboriginal Sport Circle of Canada. In Saskatchewan, the Aboriginal Apprentice Coach Program is sponsored by the Aboriginal Coaches and Officials Program (ACOP). The aim of ACOP is to foster leadership development for the continued growth of Aboriginal people's participation in sport and introduce youth to sport in a fair, ethical and safe manner. Aboriginal coaches and officials demonstrate leadership and dedication in preparing young people to succeed in sport and become community leaders. The Aboriginal Coaches and Officials Program is made possible by Sask Sport Inc., Saskatchewan Lotteries, Canadian Heritage and the Canada Games Building Dreams and Champions Legacy Program and is administered by the Coaches Association of Saskatchewan.

Provincially, the Coaches Association of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Games Council, Saskatchewan Amateur Wrestling Association and Basketball Saskatchewan Inc. will play a key role in ensuring the success of the Aboriginal Apprentice Coaches Program.

For more information on the Aboriginal Coaches and Officials Program and the Coaches Association of Saskatchewan visit www.saskcoach.ca.

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