



## **RBC Training Ground: A major boost to Canada's Olympic talent pipeline**

### ***2019 introduces seven new locations and first-ever National Final***

**TORONTO, January 22, 2019** — RBC Training Ground, a program developed in partnership with the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC), Canadian Olympic Foundation (COF), CBC Sports, and the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network (COPSIN), continues to enhance its search for Canada's future Olympians.

Entering its fourth year, the RBC Training Ground program is a nation-wide talent identification and athlete-funding program dedicated to finding and supporting the next generation of Canadian Olympians. To date, the program has tested over 5,500 athletes at 71 free local events in 35 different communities across 10 provinces.

In 2019, RBC Training Ground is excited to announce the first-ever National Final hosted in Calgary, Alberta. This national event will bring together the top 100 high-potential athletes from across the country to compete for funding and consideration from Canada's National Sport Organizations (NSOs). Based on the National Final results, and sport-specific testing results, up to 30 high-performing athletes will be selected as RBC Future Olympians – receiving funding and resources to pursue their Olympic dreams.

RBC Training Ground will also add seven new qualifier locations to the lineup, including a premier event in the Yukon. The national search will visit 34 Canadian communities overall – giving even more young Canadian athletes the opportunity to explore their Olympic potential.

#### Quick Facts:

- RBC Training Ground is open to Canadian athletes between the ages of 14–25;
- The 2019 Training Ground season will kick off on Sunday, February 3 in Halifax, Nova Scotia;
- RBC Training Ground's first-ever National Final event will take place in September 2019 in Calgary, Alberta;
- Seven new qualifier locations include: Waterloo, Ontario; Trois-Rivières, Quebec; Regina, Saskatchewan; Thompson, Manitoba; Fort McMurray, Alberta; Boucherville, Quebec; and Whitehorse, Yukon;
- Since 2016, RBC Training Ground has tested over 5,500 elite young athletes across the country, identifying 600 high-potential athletes;
- Since the program's inception, more than \$1.3M in funding has been provided to 87 RBC Future Olympians to help support their Olympic dreams;
- Participating NSOs include: Athletics Canada, Freestyle Canada, Canada Snowboard, Speed Skating Canada, Cycling Canada, Rowing Canada, Rugby Canada, and Canoe Kayak Canada.

**Quotes:**

“At RBC, we proudly support Canadian Olympic athletes at every stage of their careers. The talent pool of Canadian athletes with Olympic potential continues to grow, and through RBC Training Ground we are able to tap into, build, and support this talent. With a new National Final and seven new qualifying locations – including our first Northern event in the Yukon – 2019 is going to be another great year for this program.”

- **Mary DePaoli, Executive Vice-President and Chief Marketing Officer, RBC**

“Heading into its fourth year, RBC Training Ground continues to create incredible opportunities for young Canadian athletes. By partnering with eight National Sport Organizations and the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network, RBC continues to fill a gap within our sport model – finding new talent, expanding the pool of next generation athletes, and financially supporting top performers.”

- **Eric Myles, Chief Sport Officer, Canadian Olympic Committee**

“CBC Sports is proud to be an integral part of RBC Training Ground and its ongoing support for future Olympians from across the country. As Canada’s Olympic Network, we provide Canadian high-performance athletes with a year-round platform to showcase their talent to a national audience through our digital and broadcast coverage, including weekly staple *Road to the Olympic Games*. We are eager to share the journeys of RBC Training Ground hopefuls as part of our coverage again this year.”

- **Chris Wilson, Interim Head of CBC Sports**

“The most exciting aspect of the RBC Training Ground program is that we are seeing athletes emerging as national and international performers in sports that some of them would not have considered if it were not for RBC Training Ground. The strength of collaboration across the eight partner NSOs, and the Canadian Sport Institute Network, has definitely been enhanced through this program, creating a much more aligned sport system in Canada.”

- **Kurt Innes, National Technical Lead, COPSI Network**

“The RBC Training Ground initiative has provided aid in two important ways for rugby. Firstly, through the extensive cross-Canada qualifiers, we are able to connect with young athletes from all walks of life, and provide opportunities for them to engage with a new sport either recreationally, or possibly as a pathway to international competition. Secondly, the funding support available to targeted athletes allows us to ensure we can provide support to our aspiring national team members, further enhancing the number of athletes competing for selection to major events. RBC Training Ground has chosen to invest in the development of tomorrow’s national team members, which is imperative in ensuring rugby can continue to be an Olympic contender for years to come.”

- **Adam Kleeberger, Lead Development Strength and Conditioning Coach, Rugby Canada**

Registration and event information for all local RBC Training Ground events is available at [RBCTrainingGround.ca](https://www.rbc.com/training-ground).

### **About RBC**

Royal Bank of Canada is a global financial institution with a purpose-driven, principles-led approach to delivering leading performance. Our success comes from the 84,000+ employees who bring our vision, values and strategy to life so we can help our clients thrive and communities prosper. As Canada's biggest bank, and one of the largest in the world based on market capitalization, we have a diversified business model with a focus on innovation and providing exceptional experiences to our 16 million clients in Canada, the U.S. and 34 other countries. Learn more at [rbc.com](https://www.rbc.com).

We are proud to support a broad range of community initiatives through donations, community investments and employee volunteer activities. See how at [rbc.com/community-sustainability](https://www.rbc.com/community-sustainability).

### **About COC**

The Canadian Olympic Committee leads the achievement of Team Canada's podium success and advances Olympic values in Canada. Independent and predominantly privately funded, the Canadian Olympic Committee delivers resources that Canada's elite athletes need to perform at their best and give their everything every day. By sharing our athletes' stories, we inspire all Canadians through the power of sport: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

### **About CBC Sports**

CBC/Radio-Canada is Canada's Olympic Network through 2024 and Canada's Paralympic Network through 2020. The national public broadcaster is committed to showcasing Canadian and international athletes and sports across all platforms under the CBC Sports and Hockey Night in Canada brands, including on television, online at [cbcsports.ca](https://www.cbcsports.ca) and via the CBC Sports app for iOS and Android devices. CBC Sports prides itself on telling the story of the high-performance athlete's journey every step of the way, ensuring Canadians always know the people who represent them before they see them atop the podium.

### **About COPSIN**

The Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Sport Institute Network (COPSI Network) is a key contributor to Canada's world leading Olympic and Paralympic podium performances. Our Mission is to provide a world-class, multi-sport daily training environment for athletes and coaches through expert leadership, services, and programs.

The COPSI Network provides technical expertise to support the execution of the RBC Training Ground program. Our team of sport experts lead the delivery of the technical aspects of the program through organization, set-up, execution and the data analysis required for Canada's national sport organizations (NSOs) to successfully

- 4 -

identify athletes with Olympic potential. Working with our partner NSOs, the COPSI Network also plays an advisory role in establishing testing protocols and facilitating athletes being selected for the sports that best suit their individual athletic abilities. The six participating members of the Network (Canadian Sport Institute Pacific, Canadian Sport Institute Calgary, Canadian Sport Centre Manitoba, Canadian Sport Institute Ontario, Institut national du sport du Québec, and Canadian Sport Centre Atlantic) are key collaborators in hosting and promoting RBC Training Ground.

- 30 -

**For more information, please contact:**

Michelle Yao, Senior Manager, Brand Communications  
RBC  
Tel: 647-618-3792  
Email: [michelle.yao@rbc.com](mailto:michelle.yao@rbc.com)

Josh Su, Specialist, Public Relations  
Canadian Olympic Committee  
Tel: 647-464-4060  
Email: [jsu@olympic.ca](mailto:jsu@olympic.ca)

Tanya Koivusalo, Publicist  
CBC Sports  
Tel: 416-205-8638  
Email: [tanya.koivusalo@cbc.ca](mailto:tanya.koivusalo@cbc.ca)