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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts

### **AMATEUR SPORT WINS BIG WITH NEW SPORTSFUNDER LOTTERY**

VANCOUVER – Amateur sport in B.C. will benefit from an expected \$20-million boost over the next six years as a result of a new SportsFunder suite of lottery games introduced today, Tourism, Sport and the Arts Minister Olga Ilich announced.

“This lottery will create opportunities for underprivileged children who want the chance to play sports and give athletes who need help covering tournament expenses the chance to reach their dreams,” said Ilich. “Revenue will also help ensure that everyone in B.C. who wants to play sports is able to participate.”

Proceeds from this new suite of lottery products will be directed to support amateur sport programs in the province, with the goal of providing more opportunity for B.C. athletes and individual sport development. SportsFunder is the first cause-specific lottery in the BC Lottery Corporation’s history.

“As we prepare the province for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games, we are also strengthening B.C.’s athletic community to show the world we’re leaders in sport participation – from beginners all the way up to our elite competitors,” said Ilich.

New revenue from the SportsFunder lottery is in addition to funds currently available through the Direct Access Grant Program, and will support four key areas:

- Kidsport: Supporting this Sport BC organization, which helps overcome financial obstacles that prevent some young people from playing sports;
- Sport Travel Program: Supporting the ability of teams and athletes – especially those in remote areas of B.C. – to attend competitions;
- Coaching: Supporting the training and development of coaches – including elite coaches – across B.C.; and
- Game Plan/Team BC: Providing additional resources for leading-edge sport technology, high-quality coaching, athlete development and better equipment will give B.C. athletes a better shot at winning medals.

“I’ve been there. The tournament fees, equipment and travel expenses add up, whether an athlete is competing at the community level or internationally,” said Olympic gold medalist Daniel Igali, representing amateur sport. “This new SportsFunder money is good news, both in terms of relieving some of that financial burden, and also in terms of taking more athletes to the next level with better resources, better coaching and better technology.”

The additional resources provided to B.C. amateur sport through the SportsFunder lottery games will be directed through Sport BC, provincial sport organizations and Pacific Sport Centres. These agencies cover all parts of the province and will define the process and the appropriate delivery agents to ensure all communities can benefit from the new funding.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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