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CANADIAN BIATHLETES RECEIVE BOOST OF SUPPORT FOR DRIVE TO PODIUM WITH NEW COACH AND TEAM SPONSOR

—Geret Coyne promoted to Head Coach, Millennium Geomatics joins team with two-year deal—

Calgary—Canada's high-performance biathletes received a boost of support in their quest for the international podium. Geret Coyne has been promoted to head coach of the World Cup Team, while Millennium Geomatics will support the journey to 2010 for the nation's top biathletes with a two-year partnership, Biathlon Canada announced on Tuesday in Calgary.

Geret Coyne will take over the reigns as the new head coach of Biathlon Canada's World Cup squad. Coyne, who has been involved with the national program for nearly two decades, has served as a development coach for 16 years following a four-year stint competing internationally for Canada. Coyne has coached at all major international events since 1992, including the 1994 Olympic Winter Games. The Canmore, Alta. native has helped guide Canadian biathletes to the last four Olympic Winter Games.

"I am not here to reinvent the wheel, but to build on the programs we already have in place," said Coyne after being fittingly introduced and welcomed to the team by World Cup medallist and leader of the Canadian Biathlon Team, Zina Kocher, during a media conference in Calgary. "As a coaching staff, we are going to deliver a high level of consistent instruction. We will continue working extremely hard as a group, and edge our way back onto the international podium. It is going to be a great journey and exciting challenge."

Jean Paquet, of Val Bélair, Que., and Matthias Ahrens, of Canmore, Alta., will join Coyne as national team coaches, focusing on the junior and senior national development level athletes. Paquet, who competed internationally in Canadian colours for 16 years including the 1992 Olympic Winter Games, transitioned into a coaching role five years ago while working with many of the nation's best biathletes out of the National Training Centre in Valcartier, Que. Matthias Ahrens, who competed at the international level for Germany between 1978 and 1984, has been coaching Canada's junior and development level athletes over the last four years at the Canmore Nordic Centre. Tom Zidek, of Canmore, Alta., completes the full-time coaching team as the assistant coach and head wax technician. Zidek is a former national team athlete, and has been a valuable part of the technical staff for the past three seasons, with leading edge waxing results.

After being officially introduced as the new head coach on Tuesday, Geret Coyne announced the addition of another critical new team member to the Canadian Biathlon Team that will provide a boost of support in the nation's top biathletes' pursuit of excellence.

Millennium Geomatics Ltd. committed to providing financial support needed to develop Canadian biathletes into international leaders as an official sponsor of Biathlon Canada over the next two competitive seasons.

"This is truly an exciting day for our program that will allow Canadian biathletes the opportunity to continue working their way back onto the international podium," said Joanne Thomson, executive director, Biathlon Canada. "Millennium Geomatics shares our vision and commitment to be being the best, and with their support, we can deliver more resources Canadian biathletes need to win. We are delighted to have them on our team."

“We are extremely proud to extend our financial commitment to help these great athletes achieve success on the world stage,” said Mark Kocher, president, Millennium Geomatics Ltd. “It is our hope that this contribution will help support these dedicated athletes achieve even more elite performances along their journey to 2010 and beyond.”

Millennium Geomatics will join the restructured coaching staff and the nation’s best athletes at the Summer Biathlon North American Championships that will be staged at the Canmore Nordic Centre, September 4-7, 2008. Combining roller skiing with rifle shooting, the critical summer event will be used to select the World Cup Team and the IBU Cup Team which will head to Europe in November.

Founded in 2003, Millennium Geomatics Ltd. focuses on being flexible and responsive to client’s needs while having the industry strength to deliver on time and on budget. Millennium Geomatics Ltd. offer ground-based and satellite surveying techniques, project accuracy and high-performance data collection capabilities. This digital data is then fully integrated using internal programs to create the final product for the client.

Biathlon Canada, the governing body for biathlon in the country, oversees the Canadian Championships, Eastern and Western Canadian Championships, and North American Cups held in Canada. The organization’s mandate is to provide national level programs for the continuous development of biathlon athletes from the grassroots to the elite level. For more information on Biathlon Canada, please visit us at www.biathloncanada.ca on the Internet.

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