



2011 Western Canadian Hatha Yoga Championships: The Road to the Olympics Not A Big Stretch

Vancouver, BC (January 6, 2011) – The Canadian Yoga Federation presents the 2011 Western Canadian Hatha Yoga Championships (<http://bit.ly/yogachamp>) on January 22, 2011 at Vancouver's South Hall at 8273 Ross Street. The 8th annual event aims to demonstrate and educate the general public as to the life-renewing benefits of yoga. All funds from the event send the top two champions, male and female, Youth and Adult categories to Los Angeles in June 2011 to represent Canada at the World Hatha Yoga Championships.

Special Guests will include: Ida Ripley, Six-Time Canadian Champion; and Mari Dickey, 2010 Western Canadian Hatha Yoga Champion. Judges: Cynthia Wehr, 2007 US & World Yoga Champion; Brad Colwell, President of Canadian Yoga Federation; Lisa Ingle & Michael Harris, US National Judges. Event Master of Ceremonies: Craig Villani, Principal Teacher for Bikrams Teacher Training in Los Angeles.

Yoga sport competitions are now seen across the globe, and have been occurring in India for more than 100 years. The focus of the 2011 Western Canadian Hatha Yoga Championship is to create an environment where Men, Women, and the ever-growing popular Youth category (ages 11 – 17 yrs) showcase the physical demands of this tremendous spectator sport. Yogi entrants are judged on technique and difficulty of the pose, grace, stillness, and transition as they perform five mandatory postures, and two optional advance postures in 3-minutes.

“The purpose of the hatha yoga championship is not to beat your opponent, but to improve yourself,” states Brad Colwell, President of Canadian Yoga Federation & owner of Bikrams Yoga Metrotown. “This enables the yoga community to inspire themselves to do better and inspire true sportsmanship, but also to bring the 2011 Western Canadian Hatha Yoga Championship to new people who haven't yet been introduced to the practice and its life-renewing benefits.”

The event sets an important stage to further the Canadian Yoga Federations goal to align with worldwide Federation of Yoga Associations and continue the global support and momentum for Yoga to become an Olympic event. Yoga is making strides closer to achieving Olympic status, and Canada is at the forefront.

The 2011 Western Canadian Hatha Yoga Championship is from noon to 4 pm on January 22, 2011 at the South Hall, 8273 Ross Street, Vancouver, BC. Adults early-bird tickets \$10 (until January 17); afterward and at the door \$15. Children 12 and under are free.

- 30 -

Canadian Yoga Federation (CAN Yoga) promotes development of Yoga Asana (yoga postures) as a sport. CAN Yoga has been established to serve as the governing body for the sport of Hatha Yoga in Canada; to align with similar organizations around the world to create an international yoga federation to be sanctioned by the International Olympic Committee; to encourage and educate Canadian Athletes, specifically youth, in the legitimate application of Yoga Asana as a system of exercise. 5.5% (1.4 million) of Canadian adults now practice yoga, an increase of 15% from the prior year and 45.4% from 2003. The fastest growing segment is 18-34 age group, which grew 25.7% in one year. [2005 Statistics Canada]