

THE LEADER'S

OLYMPIC
SALUTETHE OLYMPIC FLAME
COMES TO MANITOBA

The 2010 Olympic Torch Relay began in Canada on October 30, 2009 and concluded at the Opening Ceremony signaling the start of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games on February 12, 2010. It was the longest Olympic Torch Relay to ever take place in a single country.

On its journey to Vancouver the Olympic Flame passed by some of the most pristine and stunning landscapes in the world. Some of those landscapes were right here in Manitoba, as excited Manitobans gathered to share this experience as the flame travelled through dozens of communities.

The Torch crossed the Ontario-Manitoba border on January 5, entering the province at Falcon Lake. Over the next memorable few days the Torch visited the following Manitoba communities:

- Falcon Lake
- Richer
- Ste. Anne
- Steinbach
- Dugald
- Oakbank
- Selkirk
- Winnipeg
- Gimli
- Peguis
- St. Laurent
- Oak Bluff
- Sanford
- Brunkild
- Carman
- Roland
- Winkler
- Morden
- Elm Creek
- Oakville
- Portage la Prairie
- Dakota Tipi
- Long Plain
- Gladstone
- Neepawa
- Minnedosa
- Forrest Station
- CFB/BFC Shilo
- Brandon
- Sioux Valley
- Dakota
- Virden

Some highlights of the Olympic Flame's Manitoba trek included a ride in a classic car in Steinbach before officially passing the centre of Canada and entering Winnipeg. The flame eventually made its way to the Forks where 15,000 spectators watched the lighting of the cauldron.

After short stops in Gimli, Peguis and St. Laurent on January 6, former Olympian Eddie "the Eagle" Edwards carried the Olympic Flame in -35°C weather on January 7. The flame then travelled to Winkler for an afternoon celebration before ending its day in Portage la Prairie. Although the cold weather moved celebrations indoors in both communities, it didn't dampen the spirits of the thousands of residents who participated.

January 8 marked the flame's last day in Manitoba. Phil Fontaine, former head of the National Assembly of First Nations, carried the Torch through Long Plain Reserve before it travelled to Neepawa and Brandon.

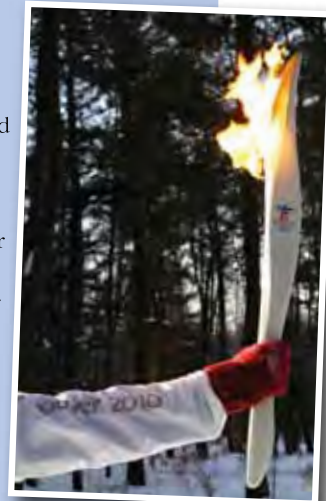
We are proud of these communities for being part of the over 1,000 across Canada to take part in this historic event!



TORCH RELAY IN BRIEF:

- Over 100 days in length.
- Over 1,000 communities and places of interest where torchbearers carried the Olympic Flame.
- Nearly 200 celebrations hosted by communities in every province and territory.
- Approximately 90% of Canada's population was within a one-hour drive of experiencing the Olympic Flame.
- Over 45,000 kilometres were travelled.
- Extensive tour of the North including a visit to Alert, Nunavut, the northernmost permanently inhabited community in the world.
- 12,000 people had the honour of being an Olympic Torchbearer and helped carry the flame to Vancouver.

Source: <http://www.vancouver2010.com/more-2010-information/olympic-torch-relay/about-the-olympic-torch-relay/>
Photo source: "© VANOC/COVAN"



TEAM MANITOBA

As proud as Manitoban communities were to take part in the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay's journey across Canada, we are even more proud to have produced a few of what the Olympic Games are, after all, truly about – the athletes themselves. The following athletes all got their start in Manitoba, and it is possible that many had their earliest sport experiences at municipal recreation facilities.

JENNIFER BOTTERILL

WOMEN'S HOCKEY

HOMETOWN: WINNIPEG, MB

This veteran of three previous Winter Olympics (Turin, Salt Lake City, and Nagano) is one of the most decorated female hockey players on the planet. A member of the national team since 1997, she helped her team to a gold medal win in both Turin and Salt Lake City, a silver in Nagano, and another gold in Vancouver.

CAROLYN DARBYSHIRE

WOMEN'S CURLING

HOMETOWN: ARBORG, MB

Darbyshire won two Alberta championships in 2007 and 2009 as second for skip Cheryl Bernard. She also won one Manitoba championship in 1985 as second for her mother, Merline Darbyshire. She won a silver medal in Vancouver curling with Bernard's team.

CLARA HUGHES

SPEED SKATING

HOMETOWN: WINNIPEG, MB



One of only four athletes to medal in both Summer and Winter Olympics, Hughes won one gold, one silver and one bronze in speed skating in Salt Lake and Turin, and two bronze in road cycling in Atlanta. She is both an Officer of the Order of Canada and Member of the Order of Manitoba, and was Canada's flag bearer for the Vancouver

opening ceremonies. Hughes won a bronze medal in the last race of her career, the women's 5,000 metres in Vancouver.

MEGAN IMRIE

BIATHLON

HOMETOWN: FALCON LAKE, MB

A veteran of several Canadian championships, Imrie first grew interest in biathlon after watching the Canadian Championships in Falcon Lake as a six year old.

MIKE IRELAND

SPEED SKATING

HOMETOWN: WINNIPEG, MB

Having previously competed in Turin, Salt Lake City, and Lillehammer (and qualifying for Nagano but unable to compete due to injury), Ireland is a medalist in several World Spring Championships. He has been speed skating since the age of 5, and announced his retirement at the Vancouver Winter Olympics.

DUNCAN KEITH

MEN'S HOCKEY

HOMETOWN: WINNIPEG, MB

Keith was born in Winnipeg but moved to Fort Frances, Ontario at age 2, then to Penticton B.C. at 14. He was drafted by the Chicago Blackhawks in the second round (54th) overall in 2002 after starring at Michigan State. He is currently second among NHL defencemen with 50 points, and was part of Team Canada's gold medal win over the US in Vancouver.

CINDY KLASSEN

SPEED SKATING

HOMETOWN: WINNIPEG, MB

Klassen is Canada's most-decorated Olympian with six medals: a gold, two silver, and two bronze from Turin, and one bronze from Salt Lake. She was also named Canada's top athlete in 2006.

JON MONTGOMERY

SKELETON

HOMETOWN: RUSSELL, MB

Ranked fifth overall in World Cup points, Montgomery won his first World Cup event in 2008 in Cesana, Italy. He grew up playing hockey and baseball in Russell. His hometown helped raise money for him to train this summer through 'Mission Mont-

gomery.' It paid off in Vancouver with a gold medal win in Men's Skeleton.

JOHN MORRIS

MEN'S CURLING

HOMETOWN: WINNIPEG, MB

Morris is a two-time Canadian champion and three-time Alberta champion. He won gold at the 2008 World Championships and silver in 2009 as vice-skip for Kevin Martin. His father Earle represented Manitoba at the 1980 Brier. He won a gold medal in Men's Curling in Vancouver as part of Martin's team.

KYLE PARROTT

SPEED SKATING

HOMETOWN: MINNEDOSA, MB

Parrott started speed skating at age 11, and he left Minnedosa for Calgary to train at the Olympic Oval at age 17. His father helped found a speed skating club in Brandon. He finished 9th in his first World Single Distance Championship in 2009, and is currently ranked second in Canada in the 1000m.

DANIELLE POLESCHUK

SKI CROSS

HOMETOWN: WINNIPEG, MB

Currently 8th in the World Cup ranking, Poleschuk spent two years on the national alpine team, but later moved to the relatively new sport of ski cross. She grew up in three cities: Winnipeg, Fernie, BC and Calgary. She also plays field hockey and golf, with a handicap of 12.

SHANNON REMPEL

SPEED SKATING

HOMETOWN: WINNIPEG, MB



A veteran of the Turin Winter Olympics, where she won silver in the Team Pursuit event, Rempel is currently ranked 3rd overall in the 1,000m and fifth in the 1,500m.

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BRITTANY SCHUSSLER

SPEED SKATING

HOMETOWN: WINNIPEG, MB

Schussler is a 2009 World Champion in Team Pursuit and had 11 Top-10 finishes in the '08-09 skating season. She was Manitoba Youth Athlete of the Year in '02-03 and won a provincial high school soccer championship. She has been speed skating since the age of seven.

JONATHAN TOEWS

MEN'S HOCKEY

HOMETOWN: WINNIPEG, MB



Toews was named Chicago Blackhawks captain in July, 2008 at just 20 years old, becoming the third-youngest NHL player to wear the 'C'. He is also the first Canadian to win gold at the Worlds and World Juniors in the same season (2007, 2008). Toews was part of Team Canada's gold medal win over the US in Vancouver.

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MISSION MONTGOMERY



Even before Jon Montgomery's gold medal win in Vancouver, his community was already planning a homecoming he would never forget. Last June, the Town of Russell welcomed the world-class athlete back home for a celebration called *Mission Montgomery*. The campaign, which continued right up to the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, saw the community rally behind the soon-to-be golden boy – encouraging him every step of the way. As we saw on the evening of February 19th, that support paid off. The 30 year-old Montgomery won gold in the Skeleton competition by beating Latvian competitor Martin Dukurs by only a fraction of a second during his fourth and final run down the winding track while reaching speeds up to 144 km/hour.

Community members watched the celebration take place in Whistler on their big screens, but couldn't wait to join in on the party and paint the town red for their special home-grown athlete. Montgomery's homecoming festivities took place Sunday, March 14th in Russell, with a parade, a salute to Jon, a free community barbeque and entertainment. Premier Greg Selinger was in attendance and the community of Russell extended an invitation to neighbouring communities to participate in the parade. An estimated 6,000 people came out to celebrate Jon and enjoy the 107 parade floats!

Montgomery has since recognized the community support he's received from Russell many times, including on national television minutes after his win. His Dad, Councillor Eldon Montgomery, was in Vancouver for the race and perhaps summed it up best when asked whether there is a lesson to be learned from his son's huge win: "Well, I believe the lesson to be learned is that once you start something, you finish it and I think Jon finished it tonight."

That same could be said for the community of Russell, in that they finished what they set out to do: support and encourage one of their own until the very end, to ensure the final outcome was nothing short of a complete success.

Mission accomplished!

"Once you start something, you finish it and I think Jon finished it tonight."
- Eldon Montgomery

HOW SPORT HELPS COMMUNITIES

The Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport commissioned the report "What Sport Can Do-The True Sport Report" on behalf of the True Sport Movement – Canada's national movement for sport and community. The entire report can be viewed at <http://www.truesportpur.ca/>. Here are a few highlights of how sport can benefit your community:

HEALTH

- Sport can increase the number of active Canadians, and increasing physical activity levels by just 10 per cent would save Canadians over \$150 million annually in direct health costs alone.
- Participation in sport can stem the tide of child obesity – 10 per cent of Canadian children aged 7-13 are currently at risk of disability, disease

and premature death because they are obese.

CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- Youth involved in sport are more likely than non-athletes to eat healthily and weigh less, and less likely to smoke, use drugs, engage in sexual activity, or feel bored or hopeless.
- Girls experience particular benefits from sport due to its protective effects against osteoporosis, anxiety, depression, suicide and adolescent pregnancy.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Sport can help to strengthen communities by building social capital and fostering greater inclusion of marginalized groups like the disabled.
- Sport can help to facilitate the integration of newcomers.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Sport plays a significant role in the economy of Canadian communities by providing jobs and enhancing skills and productivity.
- Sport contributes to economic development and renewal. For example, in 2004 Canadian households spent \$15.8 billion on sport.

ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY

- Many investments in community sport are investments in green space, with users often becoming advocates for their protection, proper maintenance and expansion.
- New greener standards for sport and recreation facilities are helping to ensure that sport is doing its part to make our communities more sustainable.

THE TRUE LEGACY OF THE OLYMPICS

Every year, millions of Canadians come together through sport. In every province and territory, community sport inspires friendship, learning, health, and personal growth. Canadians tell researchers that after the family, sport is the most powerful influence on young people's development.

One of the legacies of any Olympic Games is the reinvigorated interest in the importance of sport at the community level. A by-product of this is, of course, renewed interest in the importance of sport facilities. The AMM has been focusing on the need for recreation infrastructure for some time, because we know that despite the indisputable positive benefits of sport, recreational

facilities are often neglected while other pressing infrastructure needs – such as roads and water treatment – take precedence. Across Manitoba, many recreational facilities are several decades old and municipalities simply don't have the money to fund repairs, let alone new construction.

Here is an outline of what is happening, and what still needs to happen, to ensure this renewed interest translates into a real legacy – more recreational facilities and opportunities for Manitobans:

- There has been some promising movement, including the two-year, \$500 million Recreation Infrastructure Canada (RInC) Program announced in the 2009 Federal Budget. This fund begins to address the demand for a tripartite

recreation infrastructure program that the AMM and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities have been calling for. However, the Province needs to make sure that Manitoba's share of this fund can benefit communities throughout Manitoba, not just those with big projects on the go.

- The Province of Manitoba also made a four-year commitment in its 2009 Budget to double funding for recreation centres to over \$60 million. However, there are still opportunities for improvements to other recreation infrastructure programs such as the Community Places Program, since the \$50,000 maximum is still in place.
- Aside from recreation infrastructure, the AMM is also lobbying for

“The road to excellence, and the path to every podium, begins at a community playing field, pool, rink or track.”

– “What Sport Can Do,” The True Sport Report

©Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport, September 2008

WHERE OLYMPIC DREAMS BEGIN



For those unconvinced of the huge impact the presence of community recreation facilities have on budding world-class athletes, the words of Jennifer Botterill may change their minds. The winner of an amazing four medals (three gold and one silver) representing Team Canada in women's hockey over the course of four Olympic Winter Games has come a long way from the winter afternoons she'd spend at the outdoor rink at the Wildwood Community Club with her dad, Cal, some 20 years ago.

“It was a long time ago now,” recalled the 30-year-old, who first made Canada's national team as a teenager in 1997. “But I like to revisit that moment every time I go home. (The rink) was literally at the end of our street and I'd go down and shoot pucks with my dad. When you're out there, it was such a different stage (from the Olympics), but you were still smiling and enjoying it. That's why I started playing.

“I can remember all of it very vividly – putting on your skates and walking over chopped bits of ice on the path on the way out, stepping on the snow. And it was cold. But I loved just getting out there and shooting pucks. Sometimes it was pickup games and sometimes you were on your own.”


Little boys who were weaned on outdoor rinks grow up dreaming about winning the Stanley Cup, of course. So what did a little girl from Wildwood dream about?

“I wanted to go to the Olympics,” Botterill replied. “I didn't know what sport. But I was that kid watching the Olympics on television.”
Reprinted with permission from Randy Turner, Winnipeg Free Press

assistance in controlling the operating costs of community facilities. The high fees charged by Manitoba Hydro, for example, should be reduced considering the limited budgets of these publicly-owned and-operated facilities.

- As for municipalities who build new facilities, they are facing another issue - increased costs due to the Provincial requirement that government-funded buildings meet or exceed LEED silver certification.
- Finally, the AMM is lobbying for sufficient resources for recreation practitioners to ensure high-quality recreational programming is available throughout Manitoba.

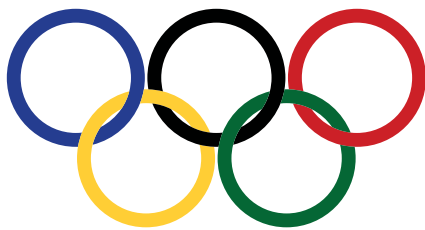
Manitoba athletes did enjoy some success at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. Their success can be attributed to many factors such as genetics, determination, work ethic, intelligence teamwork, and many other qualities.

It's even possible that their Olympic dreams first took flight many years ago... at a community recreation facility. 

Congratulations to all Canadian Athletes!



Throughout Manitoba, communities showed their Olympic pride this February, like in this example from the RM of Glenella



Clara Hughes photo courtesy of Ariane Colenbrander

Jon Montgomery photo courtesy of Duncan Rawlinson at <http://www.thelastminuteblog.com/>

Jennifer Botterill, Jonathan Toews and Shannon Rempel photo courtesy of Wikipedia

FORSYTH PLASTICS

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Thank you Manitoba Athletes ... FOR GIVING US SUCH WONDERFUL 2010 OLYMPIC MEMORIES



JENNIFER BOTTERILL
GOLD (Women's Hockey)

CAROLYN DARBYSHIRE
SILVER (Women's Curling)

CLARA HUGHES
BRONZE (Speedskating - 5,000 m)

MEGAN IMRIE
15TH (Biathlon - 4 X 6 km Relay)

MIKE IRELAND
16TH (Speedskating - 500 m)

DUNCAN KEITH
GOLD (Men's Hockey)

CINDY KLASSEN
12TH (Speedskating - 5,000 m)

JON MONTGOMERY
GOLD (Skeleton)

JOHN MORRIS
GOLD (Men's Curling)

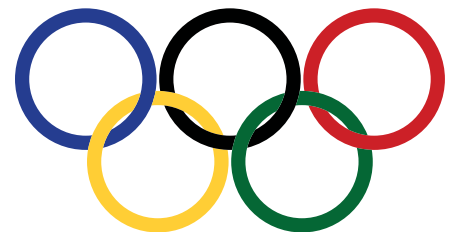
KYLE PARROT
24TH (Speedskating - 1,000 m)

DANIELLE POLESCHUK
19TH (Ski Cross)

SHANNON REMPEL
21ST (Speedskating - 1,000 m)

BRITTANY SCHUSSLER
5TH (Speedskating - Team Pursuit)

JONATHAN TOEWS
GOLD (Men's Hockey)





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