

Hespeler hosts country's best

By Andy Hourahine, *Get Active*

Sports

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Canada's Olympic dream is less than a year away. For the world, it means an international movement that combines sport and education, positioning sport as a model for peace and harmony. For our nation, it is a chance to come together and shine as the world looks on.

But unless you are planning on making the 4,500-kilometre trek to Vancouver, what can the games mean for our city of Cambridge?

What a community and individual gets out of local amateur sport has a direct relationship to what is put in. If we take the time to learn about the sport and athletes, the experience of watching them in action will be far more thrilling.

This effort fuels the fires of our coaches, volunteers and athletes. It lets them know what they do is important beyond the obvious daily grind.

Cambridge is home to many winter sports featured in the Olympics. By learning about, participating in, or supporting these sports, we create a home base for the Olympic values.

Bringing the values and the Olympic dream a little closer to home in March is the Cambridge Speed Skating Club.

Short track speed skating is a thrilling sport for both spectator and participant. From the mass start, through the tight corners of the oval to the dramatic finishing sprints, this ice sport is a sight to behold.

In March, thanks to the efforts of our locals, Cambridge plays host to the Canadian 2009 Canadian Age Class Short Track Speed Skating Championships, known to speed skaters simply as "Canadians".

Hosting the event is significant for the Cambridge Speed Skating Club and for our community. Each year in a different part of the country, young short track speed skaters come together at the peak of physical performance to compete for glory against the best of the best from across Canada.

Given the strength of our local skaters, you can be sure that there will be a number of our athletes trading in their black and green Cambridge suits for provincial colours and facing off in two weeks at Canadians against strong teams from Quebec, Alberta, and more.

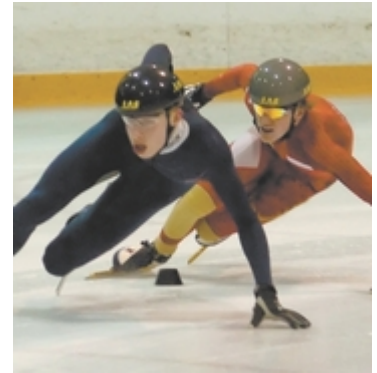
We need to show our local support so mark your calendars.

This year's Canadians will be held at the Hespeler Arena, March 27-29. Racing starts at 9 a. m. daily and finishes at approximately 5 p. m.

Racing starts at 9 a. m. daily and finishing at approximately 5 p. m. The Cambridge Speed Skating club would love to extend the invitation to watch the races, at no charge, to everyone in our community. If you are new to watching the sport, lots of great information about watching can be found at www.cambridgespeedskating.ca.

By supporting our sports, we can create a prosperous sporting community and help kindle the flame of national Olympic pride.

Andy Hourahine is a community liaison for Active Cambridge – an organization with a goal of increasing participation in sport and physical activity throughout the community



Members of the Cambridge Speed Skating Club practise at the Hespeler Arena.