

Business News

Swedes like what they see

Olympic committee tours Mount Washington to check out training facilities

This month three members from the Swedish International Olympic Committee toured the Comox Valley and Mount Washington Alpine Resort to scope out team training locations for the years prior to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The visit was a big success.

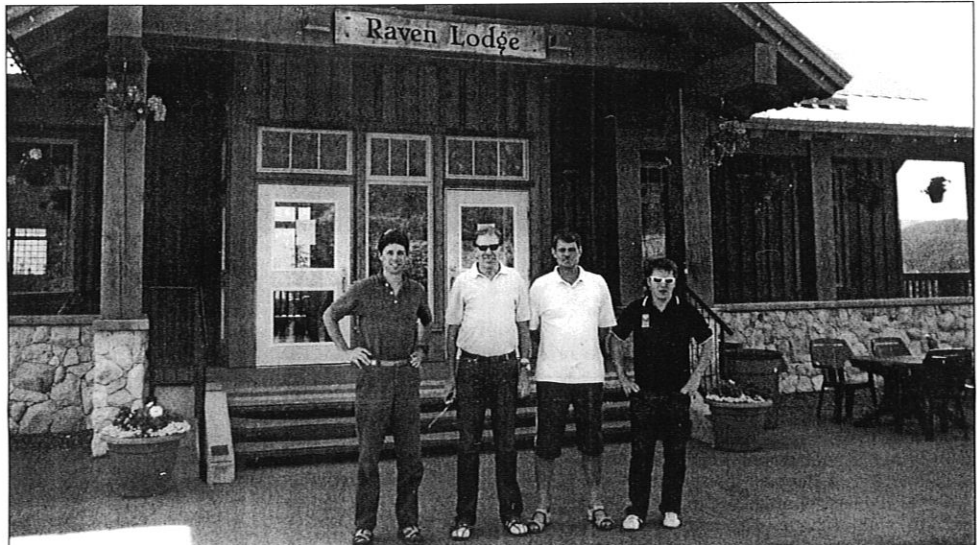
"They felt that our site and the combination of site technical factors more than met their needs and that the additional Island attractions, proximity to Whistler were big bonuses," said Len Apedaile, President Strathcona Nordic Ski Club & Spirit Committee Member.

If the Swedes decide to train here the Valley could see up to 60 athletes from their cross country and biathlon teams. They may also consider sending their alpine team here.

"With our conditions being so similar to the Olympic Nordic sites in Whistler and Callahan, plus the fact that we are so close to those centers, the Comox Valley is a highly desirable location for teams," said Apedaile adding, "We will see international teams training for 2010 in the Comox Valley over the next four years, in both summer and the winter. It's an incredible opportunity for the Valley economically as well as from the media interest this will garner."

Last year the Comox Valley Spirit of BC Committee, which includes staff from Mount Washington and the Vancouver Island Mountain Sports Centre, produced a targeted team attraction piece on the strategic advantages the Comox Valley offers teams preparing for 2010. This piece was taken by members of the Committee to the Torino Olympic Games and was provided to the Swedes as part of the Committee's team attraction marketing efforts.

"With the success of the Swedish visit the challenge for the Comox Valley will not be if teams will train here, but how to manage the number of interested teams," said Lara Greasley, Marketing and Communications Manager with Comox Valley Economic Development Society which supports the Comox Valley Spirit of BC Community



Welcoming Swedish Delegation: From left to right, Len Apedaile - President Strathcona Nordic Ski Club & Spirit Committee Member, Peter Reinebo - Sports Director, Swedish Olympic Committee, Inge Braaten - Head Coach, Swedish Cross Country Ski Team, Stefan Eklund - Head Coach, Swedish Biathlon Team

Valley goes after the torch

The Olympic Torch Relay is an event steeped in significance as the thread that binds the Olympics of Ancient Greece to the Olympics of today.

"We want the torch to come through the Comox Valley," said Marilyn Tevington, Chair of the Torch Committee, a sub committee of the Comox Valley Spirit of BC Community Committee. "We are looking for individuals with specific torch relay experience to be a part of our Torch Committee so we can secure our community's participation in that event."

"The committee needs very specific skills to make this a reality," said Tevington, "We know there are people in the Valley who have been involved with events of this calibre before, and we'd like to speak with them."

Anyone with previous torch relay experience is encouraged to submit their resume for consideration to the Comox Valley Olympic Torch Community Committee, in care of the Comox Valley Economic Development Society, #102-2435 Mansfield Drive, Courtenay.

Committee.

The team attraction excitement didn't stop with the Swedes. Last week John Watson, Economic Development Officer with CVEDS and a Comox Valley delegation, which included Mayor Bates from Cumberland, traveled through China and Taiwan to attend the China International Fair for Investment and Trade and extensive business meetings.

Thanks to some terrific contacts, the delegation was able to secure a meeting and presentation with the Taiwanese International

Olympic Committee to present the Valley's team training opportunities for their Skating and Nordic Teams.

"This was a fantastic opportunity for the Comox Valley to meet with the Taiwanese," said Watson. "The Comox Valley has a long and warm cultural relationship with the Taiwanese, and to have their team consider the Comox Valley in the lead-up to 2010 is significant."

With the 2010 Olympic Winter Games just over 1240 days away, the Comox Valley can expect to see more exciting Olympic connections in the coming months.