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THE PASSING OF EUGENE REIMER A MAJOR LOSS TO SPORT COMMUNITY

June 13, 2008, ABBOTSFORD - Staff, directors and members of PacificSport Fraser Valley and the Abbotsford Sports Hall of Fame are deeply saddened by the news of Eugene Reimer's passing. An accomplished Paralympic athlete and valued community member, Reimer will be dearly missed by many.

"Eugene has brought honour to his city, his province and his country. He overcame a serious disability and competed against the best athletes in the world who had better, up-to-date equipment than he -- and he beat them all. He is a true champion," says Jack Robertson, former city councillor, Abbotsford Sports Hall of Fame director and long-time champion of sport initiatives in Abbotsford. "He was 'Mr. Fitness' long before it became a fad to keep fit. He was embarrassed when people praised him but in my opinion, he had no equal. Eugene will be sorely missed by all who knew him."

As an organization dedicated to helping athletes win medals for Canada, for PacificSport, Reimer represented the true essence of what it means to be a high performance athlete. "Eugene's athletic career was nothing short of spectacular. To this day he still holds two unbroken records which he set back in 1972 during the Paralympic Games in Germany," says Linda Palm, PacificSport General Manager. "But it's what he did afterward, post-sports, that is truly remarkable. Eugene touched so many lives with his community outreach and mentorship; he just never stopped giving of himself and his talents." She recalls Reimer's success as the chair of the 2002 BC Disability Games, "Under Eugene's leadership, the games were the most successful in terms of participation and funds raised."

In 2004, Reimer personally spearheaded a fundraising campaign to assist local para-equestrian athlete Lauren Barwick. Thousands of dollars were raised to financially assist Barwick in her quest to the 2004 Paralympics in Athens, Greece where she finished seventh in the Championship Test and sixth in the Freestyle Test.

"Eugene's passion for sport inspired thousands of disabled athletes and helped to fuel many important initiatives. Within our community he was proud and supportive of all Abbotsford athletics. He was a charter member of the Abbotsford Sports Hall of Fame (ASHF) and an executive member since its establishment in 2003. We will miss his wisdom at the Board table," says Ed Regts, President of the Abbotsford Sports Hall of Fame.

Reimer's long list of accomplishments contained many firsts including being named the Outstanding Canadian Male Athlete of the Year (1972), the first time a disabled athlete received such notable recognition. In 2000, the BC Sports Hall of Fame established the Eugene Reimer Award and honoured him as the first recipient. Eugene Reimer was a community icon, a sport hero and inspiration to all who knew and loved him – he was the quintessential role model.

PacificSport – Powering Sport Performance

The network of PacificSport Centres, in partnership with Canadian Sport Centre Pacific, delivers sport performance programs to help athletes and coaches win medals for Canada. Working in support of our national, provincial and regional sport partners PacificSport is creating a stronger system for the development of athletes, coaches, performance enhancement teams and sport performance facilities.

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