



Team Canada Mission Staff Nominated for the 2019 Winter Deaflympics
Four High Performance Coaches Selected

ASL Version

Montreal, November 2nd, 2018 – The Canadian Deaf Sports Association (CDSA) and Team Canada’s Chef de mission for the 2019 Winter Deaflympics, Danny Daniels, are pleased to introduce Team Canada mission staff.

After the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf officially announced that the 2019 Winter Deaflympics would be held in Italy, and discussions between the Chef de mission, Team Managers and CDSA personnel, a team of four high performance coaches was put together.

“I congratulate the appointment of coaches for Ice Hockey, Curling, Alpine Skiing, and Snowboarding for the 2019 Winter Deaflympics. I also would like to point out Team Canada’s excellent Team Managers. I look forward to working with coaches and Team Managers to prepare the Canadian Team for these Deaflympics in Italy,” said Team Canada’s Chef de mission, Danny Daniels.

CDSA is pleased to introduce these coaches of international calibre:

Michael Merriman (Saskatchewan), Head Coach for the Canadian Ice Hockey Team

- ✓ Four-time Deaflympian on the Canadian Ice Hockey Team (1995, 1999, 2003, 2007)
- ✓ Four-time medallist with two gold medals and one silver medal
- ✓ Certified high performance coach with Hockey Canada
- ✓ Coached the Notre-Dame Athol Murray College’s hockey team for 9 years
- ✓ 23 years of experience in coaching and education for different sports programs in high school
- ✓ He will have three assistant coaches: Gerard McDonald (Manitoba), Patrick Bergeron (Quebec) and Casey O’Brien (Saskatchewan)

Taina Smiley (Alberta), Head Coach for the Canadian Women’s Curling Team

- ✓ Highlights of her career:
 - 2013 Olympic qualifications *Road to the Roar* in Kitchener, Ontario
 - 2014 *Roar of the Rings* in Winnipeg, Manitoba
 - 2014 Scotties Tournament of Hearts in Montreal, Quebec
- ✓ Certified level 3 coach in curling
- ✓ Coach for 12 years. She worked with high performance athletes from junior to adult
- ✓ Won a bronze medal at the 2017 World Deaf Curling Championships in Sochi, Russia, as well as a gold medal at the 2018 Canada Deaf Games in Winnipeg, Manitoba
- ✓ Assistant Director of the St. Albert Curling Club, in Alberta

Katie Witt (British Columbia), Head Coach of the Canadian Men’s Curling Team

- ✓ Took part in over 20 Provincial Championships in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia with Women, Mixed and Senior teams, including the Scotties Tournament of Hearts in 1990 and 1991
- ✓ Certified coach in competition/development
- ✓ Highlights of her coaching career with Deaf curlers: Double gold medallist at the Deaf National and Provincial (BC) Championships in 2018
- ✓ Finalist for the 2016 Female Coach of the Year in British Columbia
- ✓ Received the Anita Cochrane Coach of the Year Award from Curl BC twice in 2013 and 2016

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Mark Ballard (Alberta), Head Coach of the Canadian Alpine Skiing and Snowboarding Team

- ✓ Former skier on the World and European Cups
- ✓ Certified level 4 coach
- ✓ Former coach of the Canadian Snowboarding Olympic Team
- ✓ Professional coach for 15 years

“Preparations for the Canadian Team are going well. Training for curling has already begun, and we’ll announce soon a national selection camp for alpine skiing and snowboarding. We’ll also send an official invitation to ice hockey players to be on Team Canada at the 2019 Deaflympics as well as the 2021 World Deaf Ice Hockey Championship that will be held in Canada,” said CDSA Executive Director Alain Turpin.

More information on the mission personnel:

- [Nomination of Team Canada’s Chef de mission Danny Daniels](#)
- [Nomination of Team Canada’s Team Managers](#)

About CDSA: The CDSA is a non-profit organization dedicated to the development of high-performance Deaf and hard of hearing athletes. Through direct financial support, the CDSA helps athletes participate in international sport events sanctioned by the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf and the Pan American Sports Committee for the Deaf.

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