

Press release

## The European Youth Olympic Winter Festival in 2011 is supported by Czech sports stars and with Jacques Rogge at the opening

(LIBEREC, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2010) - The Opening Ceremony of the 10th European Youth Olympic Winter Festival on 13th February 2011 in Liberec Tipsport arena will be personally attended by Jacques Rogge, the President of the International Olympic Committee. This top sporting event for youth under 18 years of age in the Liberec Region will also be supported by elite Czech athletes. The patrons of each Festival discipline are, amongst others, Lukáš Bauer, Šárka Záhrobská and Tomáš Verner. They christened the official mascot of the 2011 Festival the Icicle “Rampich” at the press conference in Liberec today.

At the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EYOWF in the Liberec Region between 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> February 2011, European youth sports, the Olympic movement and sports diplomacy will intersect. There will be 1 500 participants from 49 European countries and the Opening Ceremony of this event, which involves eight traditional winter disciplines and which is hosted in three skiing centres in the region (Liberec, Jablonec nad Nisou, Kořenov-Rejdice), will be personally attended by the President of the International Olympic Committee, Jacques Rogge.

**Milan Jirásek**, the President of the Czech Olympic Committee, explains: “*Mr. Rogge, who in the 1990s ranked among the founding fathers of Olympic Festivals, has already sent his written confirmation. Apart from attending the Opening Ceremony, he also plans to visit some of the sporting venues. His presence will be an excellent acknowledgment of the importance of this event.*” The visit by the President of the IOC will not be the only significant diplomatic activity. Milan Jirásek adds: “*The most notable one is undoubtedly the meeting of the Executive Committee of the European Olympic Committees, which takes place on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> February 2011 in the Clarion Grandhotel Zlatý Lev in Liberec. It will be attended by the complete directorate of the European Olympic movement, presided by the EOC President Patrick Hickey.*”

The Faculty of Natural Science-Humanities and Education of the Technical University of Liberec has also taken an active part in support of the Festival. In cooperation with the EYOWF 2011 Organising Committee and supported by the Czech Olympic Committee it hosts a conference entitled “Europe – Youth – Olympism”.

### Best Czech Athletes Patrons of the Festival

EYOWF 2011 is a prestigious competition for young athletes under 18 years of age, future stars of world sport. Medals will be awarded in eight sport disciplines: Alpine Skiing, Cross



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Country Skiing, Biathlon, Figure Skating, Ice Hockey, Nordic Combined, Ski Jumping and Snowboarding.

The Festival's Organising Committee has asked the best Czech national athletes in winter sports to support the Festival and thereby obtained the finest possible patrons. They are: for Alpine Skiing **Šárka Záhrobská**, Cross Country Skiing will be represented by **Lukáš Bauer**, **Veronika Vítková** agreed to be the patron of Biathlon, **Tomáš Verner** is the patron of Figure Skating, Ice Hockey will be supported by **Marek Schwarz**, Nordic Combined will have its patron in **Pavel Churavý**, and **Roman Koudelka** will be the patron of Ski Jumping. The patronage of Snowboarding goes to **Michal Novotný**.

*"All these celebrities will lend their name to an event which will affect the future of Czech sport. There was not one refusal. Linking the Festival with leading athletes will undoubtedly raise public awareness of this competition. Additionally, in connection with the Czech sport elite, young athletes will realise what a long and trying journey to stardom lies ahead of them so as to be able to match the performance and results of their famous role models,"* adds **Roman Kumpošt**, Honorary President of the EYOWF 2011 Organising Committee.

Lukáš Bauer – the best Czech cross country skier, three-time Winter Olympic medallist, did not hesitate for long before offering his patronage. *"I fully support the Winter Festival in the Liberec Region. I have taken part in the Olympic Games four times and I know what a fantastic sporting and social event it is. For young athletes, it will be the greatest tournament in their lives so far and at the same time a momentous motivation for their future careers. Skiing needs new role models and I believe that EYOWF 2011 will produce respectable successors for our generation with Northug, Cologna, Piller Cotter and other fabulous competitors,"* Lukáš Bauer adds his wish.

### **Rampich the Icicle revealed!**

**Today, at a gala press conference in the Clarion Grandhotel Zlatý Lev in Liberec, the patrons Lukáš Bauer, Tomáš Verner, Roman Koudelka and Marek Schwarz christened the official mascot of the EYOWF 2011 in the Liberec Region – Rampich the Icicle. The author of the design is graphic studio ListDesign from Liberec.**

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