

2010 Arctic Winter Games

Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise today to recognize the nearly 400 athletes, coaches, cultural performers and staff who represented the Northwest Territories at the 2010 Arctic Winter Games in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

It was my pleasure to attend the Games this year along with a number of my colleagues who were there to cheer for Team NWT. I wish to thank those Members for supporting our youth and volunteers

Mr. Speaker, although there were many highlights during the Games, and all of our teams and competitors did very well, a few events really stand out.

The NWT Speed Skating Team dominated the field because of their excellent preparation and coaching. In doing so, they proudly demonstrated a sense of fair play and sportsmanship that was second to none. They were gracious, courteous and helpful to their competitors and acted as excellent ambassadors for the NWT. I was very impressed with the maturity and dedication to their sport that these young athletes showed.

During the Games, I received word of a convoy of ten vehicles driven by parents with elders who traveled from Déline to Grande Prairie to support their athletes. That is team support that most coaches can only dream of. Especially since, because of the uncharacteristic warm weather, it was questionable whether the ice roads would still be open when they had to return to Deline.

Mr. Speaker, MACA has a great tradition of recognizing parents and other family members who travel to the Games to support our team at an appreciation breakfast. This is our way of saying thank you for those many early morning practices, long weekend competitions, fund raising and countless other duties family members carry out to support their youth in sport.

This year, MACA was pleased to host more than 200 supporters at the breakfast. It was a phenomenal turnout and a good indication of how important sport and physical activity programs are in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, the 2010 Arctic Winter Games Host Committee and its nearly 3,000 volunteers did a fabulous job in Grande Prairie. This group included a small but dedicated group of volunteer officials from the NWT. They were outstanding hosts and organizers and showed us all why northerners have such a great sporting tradition.

To Team NWT Chef de Mission Doug Rentmeister and his mission staff, coaches and other support staff – thank you. You did an excellent job. I would also like to recognize the contributions made by MACA staff before and during the Games.

Mr. Speaker, Team NWT included nearly 400 athletes, cultural participants, coaches and mission staff from 27 communities. Many of the athletes took home medals, 107 Ulus to be exact, but all of them were champions for their hard work and dedication to a healthy lifestyle.

My Speaker, I wish to invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating all participants. We are looking forward to the 2012 Games in Whitehorse, Yukon.

Thank you.