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Mac Marcoux Named Canadian Snow Sport Athlete of the Year

Para-alpine gold medalist recognized for leadership with John Semmelink Award

Vancouver – In recognition of his continued domination in para-alpine skiing, his boundary-breaking drive for success, and community leadership, Paralympic and World Champion **Mac Marcoux** has been named the 2021 recipient of the **John Semmelink Memorial Award**.

The John Semmelink Award is the highest recognition for Canadian snow sport athletes, awarded annually to the Canadian snow sport athlete who, through integrity, conduct, and ability, best represents Canada in international sport.

Mac began skiing at age four with his family at the Buttermilk Mountain Resort in Goulais River, ON. At the age of nine, he began to lose his vision due to Stargardt's disease and now lives with just six percent of his peripheral vision. In 2007, he was declared legally blind, however that diagnosis has not stopped him from reaching for the pinnacle of the sport and continuing to push his limits.

At just 15-years-old the Sault Ste. Marie, ON born skier, made his first World Cup start finishing with a trio of podium performances in 2013. Mac then made his Paralympic debut at Sochi in 2014 and has since won five Paralympic medals, two gold, and three bronze. Marcoux was the 2014 Para-Alpine Crystal Globe winner in both speed disciplines, and he won his first of two overall Crystal Globes in 2018.

During the 2019/20 season, Marcoux and his guide Tristan Rodgers won eight gold medals including his 50th World Cup Podium.

This season Mac was featured in the short film *Blind Faith* produced by Origin Productions. *Blind Faith* is a testament to human will and the proliferation of Mac's attitude that what you can accomplish is only limited to one's own imagination. Mac continues to inspire those around him to not let anything get in the way of their goals.

"I am extremely honored to be nominated for the John Semmelink award" said Mac upon hearing of his nomination. "Though 2020/2021 has been a roller coaster of a year for the athletes worldwide, it has given me the opportunity to take a step back and focus on the small things that make the big differences. Together as a team we have managed to create and maintain positive momentum heading into Beijing 2022. I am very humbled to have the opportunity to be part of Alpine Canada as the hard work from the staff, coaches, support staff, and fellow teammates does not go unnoticed."

"Mac's consistent results have been an anchor for the Canadian Para-Alpine Ski Team for many years. He is a talented athlete on and off the hill and sets the bar high for both his teammates and his competition," said CFAST High-Performance Director Matt Hallat. "He continues to grow as a leader, and as Mac develops his leadership skills he helps hold the program and himself accountable to his accomplished athletic standards."

Nominations for the John Semmelink Memorial Award are submitted by athlete representatives of each discipline of the Canadian Snowsports Association. "This year, we received outstanding nominations," said CSA Awards Committee Chair Ken Read. "These nominations are reviewed and voted on by an independent panel of snow sport journalists, to acknowledge great Canadian champions who achieve on the world stage and give back to their community and their sport."

The John Semmelink award is named in honour of John Semmelink, who lost his life in a training accident while competing in Garmisch, Germany, the award was first presented in 1962.

The athlete representatives of the six Olympic and Paralympic disciplines of the Canadian Snowsports Association may name a candidate for consideration, with an independent Selection Panel making the final selection.

The 2021 John Semmelink Memorial Award will be presented as part of the annual Induction Ceremonies for the Canadian Skiing Hall of Fame.

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