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Mikaël Kingsbury Named Canadian snow sport Athlete of the Year

Freestyle skiing champion caps record-setting season, with John Semmelink Award

Vancouver – In recognition of his continued domination in moguls and his community leadership, Canadian freestyle skiing Olympic and World Champion Mikaël Kingsbury has been named the 2020 recipient of the **2020 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.

Kingsbury continued his domination of the World Cup moguls tour in the 2019-20 season. The 27-year old from Deux-Montagnes, Que., posted seven World Cup wins in moguls and dual moguls this winter to capture his ninth consecutive World Cup title. Mikaël has combined his success on the slopes with service off the snow as an ambassador for two important Canadian programs: Breakfast Club of Canada which is dedicated to ensuring disadvantaged students have reliable access to proper nutrition and Fondation Médicale des Laurentides et des Pays-d'en-Haut, whose mission is to provide medical equipment.

Kingsbury is considered to be the most accomplished mogul skier of all time, with 63 World Cup wins, the record for most consecutive wins (13), and 18 crystal globes including 9 consecutive World Cup Mogul titles and 9 overall Freestyle World Cup titles. His achievements also include 9 FIS World Championship medals (four gold) and 2 Olympic medals (2018 Olympic champion). In 2018, Kingsbury was named winner of the Lou Marsh Award, as Canada's top athlete, becoming only the fifth skier to receive the prestigious award.

He is also a leading innovator in his sport, becoming the first athlete to complete a cork 1440 – in competition – a maneuver which requires four complete 360° rotations.

"It's a tremendous honor for me to receive the John Semmelink award and to follow in the footsteps of so many amazing athletes", said Mikaël. "I love my sport, I enjoy the camaraderie between all of the skiers, I thrive on competition and I feel lucky every day to have the opportunity to live out my passion. I feel like I still have a lot to learn and I will continue pushing the sport for as long as I can."

"It is an honor for Mikaël to be recognized within this group of Canadian snow sports legends. I know he will be thrilled to be the recipient of this year's John Semmelink award. It certainly serves as a tribute to Mikaël's unquenchable drive for excellence on the field of play however it is his approachable nature and humility which really defines him." said Peter Judge, CEO of Freestyle Canada.

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. "To see the athletic success and community service of our top winter sport athletes, is a testament to the great club and development programs across Canada. This is the intent of the Award: to recognize the athletes who are great champions 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 2020 John Semmelink Memorial Award will be presented this autumn as part of the Induction Ceremonies for the Canadian Skiing Hall of Fame.

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