

## **HOCKEY CANADA AND ITS 13 MEMBER BRANCHES START 2010 BY SENDING OUT A SPECIAL GIFT TO MORE THAN 215,000 MINOR HOCKEY PLAYERS IN CANADA**

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Halifax**, 20 January 2010 – Hockey Canada, in partnership with its 13 member branches, announced on Monday it is sending out special gifts this week to more than 215,000 minor hockey players under 10 years old who have registered to play in Canada for the 2009-10 season.

This is the third-straight year that Hockey Canada and its 13 member branches are connecting with their grassroots membership by mailing out gift packages to hundreds of thousands of children who are taking to the ice across the country. This year, more than 215,000 children will receive the free gift, which includes a comic strip featuring Hockey Canada's official mascot, Puckster, and a personalized workbook filled with a variety of fun activities and skills spotlights.

"We are very excited to be partnering with the 13 regional hockey branches in Canada to send this very special package to minor hockey players in Canada under 10 years old," said Hockey Canada president and CEO Bob Nicholson. "On behalf of Hockey Canada and its regional branches, we welcome these youngsters to the great game of hockey and hope that many more will join our team next season."

In total, there are more than 550,000 children who are registered in hockey through Hockey Canada's 13 member branches and its member minor hockey associations. These young players benefit in many ways by participating in the sport, from having fun and building friendships to learning lessons about confidence, fair play, good sportsmanship and teamwork.

Hockey Canada has developed this special mail-out for children with the help of all 13 regional branches to communicate with the base of its membership and remind minor hockey players that they are an important part of Hockey Canada - just like members of Team Canada such as Jarome Iginla, Sidney Crosby, Hayley Wickenheiser and Kim St-Pierre. This year is an especially exciting season to be involved in hockey, with Canada's Men's Olympic Team and National Women's Team to go for gold at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games next month and Canada's National Sledge Team to compete at the 2010 Paralympic Winter Games in March.

### **The Hockey Canada gift package for minor hockey players includes:**

A personalized Hockey Canada activity book featuring fun hockey-related activities and skills spotlights such as Shoot like Wickenheiser.

A letter from Hockey Canada's official mascot, Puckster.

A comic about Puckster's hockey adventures for parents to read with their children.

A Puckster pin.

Team Canada and Canadian NHL team stickers.

A pull-out poster of Canada's three national teams.

Hockey Canada has also re-launched its popular kids website. The website features everything from videos, games and quizzes to an interactive hockey card builder, hockey tips and information about Team Canada. Check it out at [www.hockeycanada.ca/kids](http://www.hockeycanada.ca/kids), where an online version of the workbook and comic will also be available for download.

Minor hockey players between the ages of four and 10 who are registered with Hockey Canada but do not receive a mail-out package by Saturday, January 30 can have their parents email [kids@hockeycanada.ca](mailto:kids@hockeycanada.ca) or their member branch to request the free gift or to get packages for friends that may want to register for minor hockey in the future. Please provide the player's name, his or her club team, the name of the minor hockey association and a mailing address.

For more information on Hockey Canada, visit [www.hockeycanada.ca](http://www.hockeycanada.ca).

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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