



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 28, 2008

USA and New Zealand To Go For Gold at International Wheelchair Rugby Tournament

Burnaby, BC – The USA will meet New Zealand in the gold medal game Sunday at the 2008 Canada Cup International Wheelchair Rugby Tournament, a repeat of the match-up at the 2006 Canada Cup which went to three overtime periods before the USA prevailed. The USA, who also won the title in the inaugural event in 2004, reached the final with a hard-fought 36-31 win over Great Britain.

“You’re looking at the 4th ranked team in the world (GBR) so of course it’s going to be hard, but if you keep plugging away, plugging away, plugging away, hopefully in the end you can prevail, and we did,” said US player Mark Zupan. “Tomorrow we’ll play our game - limit turnovers, have a team game and hopefully the outcome will come in our favour.”

In a heartbreaker, with only 5.3 seconds left on the clock, New Zealand scored on Canada to win 29-28 to advance. “New Zealand is a really good team controlling the ball and it’s always really hard to beat them,” said Canadian Head Coach Benoit Labrecque following the game. “It’s a little bit our black beast.”

“But we finished the game well, and the big games are in 75 days,” said Labrecque, referring to the upcoming Paralympic Games Beijing, an event on the minds of all eight teams meeting in the Canada Cup who will also be traveling to China. “Tomorrow we will focus on controlling the game and finishing well.”

Canada and Great Britain meet in the bronze medal game Sunday at 11:00am with the gold medal game set for 1:00pm. Xable.com, the interactive media network for the disability community, is providing same day video coverage of Sunday’s games. They may be viewed by following the Xable link at www.bcwheelchairsports.com.

Saturday’s Results:

USA 41 CAN 35
JPN 63 CHN 29
AUS 53 GBR 52 (OT)
NZL 24 GER 18
GER 38 JPN 33
AUS 69 CHN 37
USA 36 GBR 31
NZL 29 CAN 28

-30-

Attached Photo may be used only in conjunction with attached media release. For higher resolution contact januscom@shaw.ca.

Photo Caption: Mark Zupan helps his Team USA to a win over Great Britain to advance to Sunday’s Gold Medal game against New Zealand at the International Wheelchair Rugby Tournament in Burnaby, BC.

Photo Credit: Kevin Bogetti-Smith

Media Inquiries: Jan Mansfield - 604-719-3828; januscom@shaw.ca
Brian Pound - 604-817-6658; brianpound_30@hotmail.com