



香港基督教青年會 **Young Men's Christian Association of Hong Kong**

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Media Release

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From General Secretary, YMCA of Hong Kong
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Topic: Hong Kong to Host Largest Inline Hockey Tournament in Asia

The YMCA of Hong Kong is inviting teams from across Asia to participate in its 3rd annual international inline hockey tournament scheduled for November 27 to 30, 2003. Organizers are elated with the response and are working out logistics to accommodate the expanding interest in this annual affair.

Doug Cole of the YMCA who is the point man for the organizers advises that he is expecting around 180 men and women athletes to travel to Hong Kong along with a yet unknown number of managers, friends and supporters. "We started the tournament with six teams in 2001 in celebration of the YMCA's centenary", he notes. "That number doubled in 2002 and now in 2003 we are looking at 20 teams!" Cole is planning to see 16 men's teams and 4 women's teams competing over the four-day event. Teams from Singapore, Taipei, Philippines, Japan and Korea have indicated their intention to compete and a team from UK is expected to join the fray as well this year.

Organizers note that a leadership development component has been added this year that will involve both officials (referees) and coaches. "Thanks to the support from Air Canada and the Canadian Inline Hockey Association, we are able to bring over internationally experienced officials from Canada" states Cole. "Officials from the participating countries have been invited to join, thus this will be a great training opportunity for officials in Asia", he adds. "With the Hong Kong, China Inline Hockey Association coordinating these activities, we are confident that the officiating will be top notch", concludes Cole.

Inline or roller hockey is extremely fast paced and with teams at this level the games are very competitive and exciting. Spectators were thrilled last year to see both final games in the Cup and Plate competitions go into overtime. "Teams definitely play to win but we compete within rules of the game and a code of friendship and respect" says Danny Chiu, captain of the Hong Kong Dragon's team. Cole adds that organizers of tournaments try to facilitate the social element by incorporating activities that add to a festive atmosphere. For example, with the rink located at the YMCA's King's Park Centenary Centre, which also features an 18 metre high climbing wall and skate park facility, there will also be sport climbing and skate park activities throughout the weekend.

More details about this year's tournament can be obtained from Doug Cole or Tim Lau at the YMCA King's Park Centenary Centre, 22 Gascoigne Road (next to Queen Elizabeth Hospital), telephone 2782 6682, email doug@ymcahk.org.hk.

