



MEDIA RELEASE

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Manitoba Aboriginal Sports & Recreation Council (MASRC) Announces the Return of the Manitoba Indigenous Games in Spring of 2021

The MASRC is announcing its revival of the Manitoba Indigenous Games (MIG) since it was last hosted in 2011 by the communities of Peguis First Nation and Opaskwayak Cree Nation. This decision was made due to the ongoing pandemic and in response to the announcement of the postponement of the North American Indigenous Games originally set to be held in Halifax in July 2020.

"We were disappointed the day that the NAIG Council announced its postponement of the Games due to the ongoing threat of Covid-19 and we knew that it would affect our athletes who were looking forward to the International competition. It was time to get creative and we took this opportunity to revive MIG and use it as an opportunity to keep our athletes engaging in sport and friendly competition." says MASRC Executive Director, Mel Whitesell.

Since 1999, the Manitoba Indigenous Games (MIG) has been providing Indigenous athletes, coaches and officials in Manitoba the opportunity to participate in their own multi-sport competition. Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN) is recognized as the founders of this sporting event. In 2001, the MASRC proudly accepted the stewardship of this wonderful and exciting event.

The MIG emphasizes active participation in sporting competition for our Indigenous youth regardless of sport specific skill levels, age, and gender. Sport competition is not the only reason youth enjoy participating in this event. Other reasons include: meeting new friends, developing social interaction skills and gaining valuable educational experiences in the diverse cultural and traditional practices found in Indigenous cultures. These reasons were all found equally valuable, if not more important, than competition alone.

In May of 2021, the MASRC in partnership with multiple schools and school divisions will be hosting "MIG the Comeback". It will look different this time around as precautions are taken and guidelines are followed to ensure the safety of all who participate. Events will be open to any and all schools in Manitoba. Physical Education Specialists will be invited to host these events during their classes between the dates of May 3rd to the 14th, and submit results electronically by May 19th.

"I'm happy to see that the MASRC, MFNERC & FSD are working hard to put together these Games for the youth. I am especially excited to see traditional games being incorporated into MIG, as it shows a genuine interest in the revitalization of these traditions. Having the youth create their own equipment for traditional games will help them explore their Indigenous self-identity, and will create meaningful internal connections." says Norbert Mercredi, Physical Education & Health Program Facilitator, MFNERC

Who can participate?

- Indigenous youth living in Manitoba (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)
- Students enrolled in grades 7 through 12 are eligible to participate. Winners will be selected in each of the age categories* below.

- 13U: Ages 11-13
- 16U: Ages 14-16
- 19U: Ages 17-19

**age categories are based on participants age as of May 14, 2021.*

What are the events:**

- Long distance running
- Orienteering
- Basketball challenge
- Archery
- Traditional Games:
 - Archery (with hand-made bow)
 - Fox Tail Games
 - Hoop & Pole Games
 - Arctic Sport

***Sport information subject to change*

How can the province prepare for the Games?

- Leading up to the Games, “How-to” videos and informational posters will be shared to help prepare for MIG events, such as “How-To Harvest and Prepare Your Materials to Build Your Own Bow!”
- The MASRC will coordinate training opportunities to teaching staff and volunteers in all Manitoba Indigenous Games events, in partnership with the Frontier School Division (FSD) and the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC).

Technical Packages and School Registration for MIG will be available starting on December 7, 2020. For more details and announcements, make sure to stay connected through the MARC's website and social media channels:

www.masrc.com

Facebook @MasrcManitoba

Instagram & Twitter @_masrc

About Manitoba Aboriginal Sports & Recreation Council: The MASRC is a non-profit organization established in 1988 and is the mandated Provincial/Territorial Aboriginal Sport Body (PTASB) for Manitoba. We believe that physical activity is a healthy and positive tool to empower and build strong and vibrant Indigenous (First Nation, Métis, Inuit) people and communities. The MASRC is "the bridge" between existing partners in the sport and recreation delivery system and Manitoba's Indigenous community. Our focus is to work with Indigenous communities, organizations and individuals to develop sustainable programs that improve opportunities for community members to participate in sport and recreation.

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