



Press Release

> For Immediate release

RENDEZ-VOUS MONTRÉAL 2006 WILL HAPPEN WITHOUT THE FEDERATION OF GAY GAMES

Montréal, November 11, 2003 – “November 10 2003 will remain for me, and for thousands of gay and lesbian athletes around the world, a day of mourning. Montréal’s opportunity to bring forward the ideals of participation, inclusion and personal best as put forward by Tom Waddell have just been crushed by the members of the Federation of Gay Games (FGG) who have, after two years of negotiations, rejected Montréal’s final offer to present the Games” said Mark Tewksbury, Co-President of Montréal 2006.

Montreal 2006 just experienced three incredible days during the final round of negotiations with the FGG. After two years of discussions and a 400-page contract, after 15 hours of negotiations through the night Saturday into Sunday, after being given only 12 minutes to be heard during yesterday’s all-day assembly, after all those efforts, the FGG found a way to have its members not vote on Montreal 2006’s proposal! The FGG returned with clauses that Montreal 2006 had already repeatedly rejected and, more importantly, the FGG has continued to demand the full financial control of the 2006 Games.

The FGG’s ultimatum to Montreal 2006 expires tomorrow, after which time the FGG will take away Montreal 2006’s right to host Gay Games VII in 2006. We realize now that it is time to break with the past and with an organization that ultimately represents little more than itself, with only 21 of the 1000 sports teams around the world being FGG members.

Rendez-Vous Montreal 2006 will, however, move forward as planned. “Our event will take place without the FGG” declared Tewksbury. “Our vision remains the same. We will offer the best sport games the gay and lesbian athletes of the world have ever seen.”

The long road of negotiation has not been easy. The FGG, embittered by the deficits of previous host cities, demanded that Montréal’s original candidature of 24,000 participants be reduced to 10,000, with budget cuts from an original \$20 million CAD down to a starting point of \$10 million CAD.

In June, Montréal 2006 conceded to revise its numbers to 16,000 participants with a budget of \$16 million CAD. This participation level was based on the financial viability of the Games and on the fact that this will be the first time in twelve years that Games have taken place in North America.

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The deal breaker between Montréal 2006 and the FGG was the issue of financial control of the event. The FGG insisted on approval rights on budgetary increases and expenditures — yet left all legal responsibility and accountability for the administration of the Games to the Board of Directors of Montréal 2006. Furthermore, the FGG, while not participating in any way in fundraising for the Games, collects close to one million dollars CAD for the license rights to the trademark.

So where does Montréal 2006 go from here?

Strengthened by the support of sports teams from all over the world and by the unwavering support of its financial partners, Montréal 2006 will hold Games in Montréal in 2006 as planned. Regardless of what the FGG may do, Montréal 2006 will focus on servicing the hundreds of sport teams and clubs around the world. A think tank with prominent members of the gay and lesbian sport community will be organized in the months ahead to ensure the creation of an international sporting movement that will be democratic, inclusive and dynamic.

The possibility of Montréal 2006 taking legal measures necessary with regard to the FGG or any city that agrees to host Gay Games in 2006 remains open.

Montréal 2006 leaves Chicago admittedly disappointed, but strong in its resolve to deliver a successful event in 2006. "With the wealth of support already received from athletes around the world, we know that we will be able to host Games on the scale they deserve, and for the first time in close to twenty years, in a financially responsible manner," said Tewksbury.

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