



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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County's Biathlon World Cup officials launch countdown calendar and reflect on news of being Named among top sporting events of 2016 by *New York Times*

Aroostook County - Officials with the International Biathlon Union (IBU) World Cup 8, set for Aroostook County in early February, are thrilled to learn *The New York Times* has named the coming event among the top sporting events of 2016.

Gathering on New Year's Eve at Katahdin Trust Company's Presque Isle location to launch the official World Cup countdown calendar, lead organizers spoke with local media about a recent article by the nation's second-highest circulated newspaper that included the international happening coming to the Nordic Heritage Center among the 23 global sporting events of note over the coming 12 months. The Christmas Eve article entitled "The Usual (and Not-So-Usual) Suspects in Sports in 2016" by *The New York Times* Sports Reporter Victor Mather, names the IBU World Cup coming to Presque Isle February 11 through 14, along with high profile events like Super Bowl 50, The NCAA Men and Women's Final Four, the Masters Golf Tournament, Kentucky Derby, World Series and Summer Olympics.

"We could not be more thrilled to be in such impressive company," said Jane Towle, 2016 IBU Biathlon World Cup event director. "It is such a tremendous honor to be included in this listing of the most notable sporting events of the coming year by such a venerable publication as *The New York Times*. Although it came as a bit of a surprise, it is certainly warranted on many levels. After all, Biathlon is the most popular Winter Sport in Europe, and televised World Cup events, including the live broadcasts from Presque Isle are among the highest rated programs across the continent. Most importantly, it is certainly a tribute to our dedicated and spirited team of volunteers who have helped northern Maine host world-class events right here."

In his article, Mather notes "Martin Fourcade of France and Emil Hegle Svendsen of Norway, who staged a [memorable finish](#) in the mass start event at the Sochi Olympics, will be among the big names scheduled to compete." A photo of Fourcade is included in the online version of the piece.

As they celebrate news of Aroostook County again being thrust onto the world sporting stage for its hosting of biathlon events, officials are also marking the start of 2016 with the visible launch of a countdown calendar that notes the days remaining to when competition gets underway at the Nordic Heritage Center. Joining with representatives of Katahdin Trust Company, one of the regional event partners for the Biathlon World Cup, event organizers placed the numbers four and zero on the newly installed countdown calendar on the Katahdin Trust building on the corner of Main and North Street in Presque Isle. January 1, 2016 is forty days to the start of competition on February 11.

Members of the event organizing committee felt locating the calendar, marking the days left to go before the event start, at the bank was ideal as the event draws ever closer. The location offers a number of strategic advantages, including the fact that it sits at the intersection where many area residents turn to drive out to the Nordic Heritage Center – site of the coming World Cup.

Employees at Katahdin Trust Company’s Presque Isle branch have officially adopted the countdown clock and will change the numbers each day until the event starts. According to company officials, this is both consistent with the strong spirit of community engagement amongst Katahdin employees and a great way to build excitement for the coming event amongst staff, customers and the community.

“We look forward to sharing with our area friends and neighbors the enthusiasm that is growing within our organization for the upcoming 2016 IBU Biathlon World Cup,” said Vicki Smith, Senior Vice President of Marketing & Communications. “Katahdin Trust is proud to show our support by displaying the countdown calendar at our branch in the Star City for all to see. We are extremely fortunate to have a facility like the Nordic Heritage Center to host an event of this caliber that provides such great exposure to the area that we so proudly call home through regional, state and international media.”

IBU World Cup 8 will be hosted in Aroostook County by the Nordic Heritage Center as the next to last in a series of nine stops on the 2015-2016 international circuit, and the only stop in the United States. Teams and visitors from the participating nations are expected to arrive in Aroostook County in early February and depart the region on February 15.

Upwards of 300 of the world’s top male and female biathletes, ages 20 and over, from more than 32 countries are expected to be in Aroostook County for the competition. The biathletes will participate in six competitions at the Nordic Heritage Sport Center venue: sprint, pursuit, and relay in both men’s and women’s divisions.

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Officials with Katahdin Trust Company and the 2016 IBU World Cup Event gathered outside the Katahdin Trust Company location on the corner of Main Street and North Street in Presque Isle on New Year's Eve to place the numbers 4 and 0 on the official Biathlon Countdown Calendar. The sign will serve as a visible reminder and count down the number of days remaining until the first competition day for the international sporting event. Joining in the Countdown Calendar launch were (left to right) Diane Green, vice president, retail services officer and Presque Isle Branch Manager for Katahdin Trust; David Cambridge, regional vice president and commercial services officer for Katahdin Trust and member of the 2016 IBU World Cup Organizing Committee; Jane Towle, 2016 IBU Biathlon World Cup event director; and Jason Parent and Kerri Watson-Blaisdell, co-chiefs of press and promotion for the 2016 IBU Biathlon World Cup.