

## Sports



**Putting on the Brakes** Kayley Ogilvie-Turner tests out a luge this past weekend as the Whistler Sliding Centre hosted a B.C. Luge recruitment camp.

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### Search on for future Whistler Olympians

B.C. Luge holds recruitment camps at the Whistler Sliding Centre

By Alison Taylor

"That was awesome," declared 10-year-old Kayley Ogilvie-Turner, after reaching close to 75 km/h on the glassy ice at the Whistler Sliding Centre. "And I wasn't as freaked out as I thought I would be!"

It was her first luge run this winter down the notoriously fast sliding track, which will be home to the 2010 Olympic bobsleigh, skeleton and luge events in February. Ogilvie-Turner, along with her eight-year-old brother Matthew and five other local kids, were taking part in a luge recruitment camp Sunday.

The short-term goal - to have fun - was easily accomplished, as evidenced by the smiling faces after each run.

The long-term goal is perhaps a little more ambitious - to find a future Olympian among them.

"We're just building up that base and hopefully they'll make their way up through the program, get on the junior national team, the national team and eventually the Olympic team. Hopefully," said Nicole Simon, program coordinator for the B.C. Luge Association and the Canadian Luge Association.

"It could be any of these kids one day."

Simon should know. She was a 10-year-old herself, like Ogilvie-Turner, when her mom first put her in a luge recruitment camp in Calgary. She went on to slide on the junior national team, and the national team, competing in World Cup races.

That may seem like a long way ahead and a seemingly unreachable dream for the kids in this recruitment camp on this rainy Sunday morning. But with the brand new \$106 million facility in their backyard, there's every possibility a local kid could make an Olympic podium one day.

And they can see that possibility unfolding before their very eyes.

Just before taking off down the track from corner 13, the kids watched national skeleton team members hurtling down the track from the top.

The skeleton athletes, their visors scraping the ice as the G-force pushes their helmets to the track, are taking part in selection races before their season of competitions leading up to the 2010 Games begins in earnest.

The excitement, and nerves, as each skeleton racer zooms past, is building in the luge recruitment camp. They know the ice is particularly fast right now, prepared with expert precision for the selection races.

They know, too, this track is the fastest in the world, with record speeds clocked by sliders last year.

And they know about the now-notorious corner 13, dubbed 50/50, where sliders last year seemed to have a 50 per cent chance of making it through or crashing.

They'll be starting below 13 today.

"I've sent almost 700 kids down this track in the last year and there's been one crash," assured Simon.

The statement was met with a ripple of relief.

These kids, however, are no strangers to speed. Most ski, and do other sports too.