

# Canadian Tire and the NHL help make hockey dreams come true for young Canadian players

*Competition finalists earn ultimate hockey experience of trip to 2012 Tim Hortons NHL® All-Star Game weekend in Ottawa, courtesy of Canadian Tire*

TORONTO, Jan. 19, 2012 /CNW/ - Canadian Tire and the National Hockey League® (NHL) today announced the names of the 40 finalists who will compete in the Canadian Tire NHL Junior Skills™ National Championship in Ottawa during the 2012 Tim Hortons NHL® All-Star Game weekend (January 28-29). The players who will be competing at the Canadian Tire NHL Junior Skills™ National Championship represent every province across Canada.

"I know firsthand what it must feel like for these hockey school members to have competed and qualified to take part in the NHL® All-Star Game Weekend experience," said Jonathan Toews, founding member of CTHS™, and winner of the Stanley Cup® and a Canadian Olympic Gold Medal. "I'm looking forward to seeing their commitment to hockey pay off as they participate in the Canadian Tire NHL Junior Skills™ National Championship, the peak of an inaugural program made possible by Canadian Tire and the NHL."

Canadian Tire, one of Canada's largest hockey retailers, is providing 40 young hockey players (ages 7 to 12) with a great hockey experience to kick-off the New Year. They will have an opportunity to showcase their skills during the Canadian Tire NHL Junior Skills™ National Championship taking place on Saturday January 28 from 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. on the Rideau Canal Skateway. Six competitors (a boy and a girl from each of the Novice, Atom and Peewee age divisions) will be recognized as the 2012 Canadian Tire NHL Junior Skills™ National Champions based on the combined highest scores from all four skill areas. Fans are welcome and encouraged to attend this public event alongside the Rideau Canal, with designated public viewing areas located between Rideau Street and the Mackenzie King Bridge. Toews will participate in the trophy presentation.

In addition to earning their place to compete for the title of Canada's most skilled youth hockey player, these competitors will have the opportunity to experience the 2012 NHL® All-Star festivities in person. All finalists will receive passes to: NHL® Scotiabank Fan Fair, Molson Canadian NHL® All-Star Skills Competition and the Tim Hortons NHL® All-Star Game.

"As Canada's home of hockey, Canadian Tire is dedicated to the development of grassroots hockey initiatives across Canada," said John Jobin, Vice President, Merchandising, Canadian Tire. "We are excited to give these 40 young hockey players the opportunity to come to Ottawa, compete in the Canadian Tire NHL Junior Skills™ National Championship and enjoy the 2012 NHL® All-Star Game weekend featuring their favourite NHL players."

The Canadian Tire NHL Junior Skills™ National Championship is the culmination of 15 regional qualifying competitions modelled after the NHL® All-Star Skills Competition: fastest skating, shooting accuracy, puck control and passing accuracy that ran across Canada from October to December of 2011 as part of

the Canadian Tire Hockey School (CTHS). From on-ice tips and tricks from NHL® alumni to helpful advice on equipment and training, CTHS events offer a fun and interactive way to learn more about the game so many Canadians love. Visit [www.canadiantirehockeyschool.ca](http://www.canadiantirehockeyschool.ca) for more information.

"For every young hockey player, the ultimate achievement is to make it to the NHL," said Brian Jennings, Executive Vice President, Marketing, NHL. "The Canadian Tire NHL Junior Skills™ National Championship brings that dream to life by providing an opportunity for these young players to take part in the NHL All-Star festivities and compete in their own skills competition, just like their favourite NHL players. It's an experience that they won't soon forget."

### **About Canadian Tire**

Canadian Tire Corporation, Limited (TSX:CTC.a) (TSX:CTC) is one of Canada's most-shopped general retailers and the country's largest sporting goods retailer, with more than 1,700 retail and gasoline outlets from coast-to-coast. Our primary retail business categories - Automotive, Living, Fixing, Playing and Apparel - are supported and strengthened by our Financial Services division, which offers such products and services as credit cards, retail deposits, in-store financing, product warranties, and insurance. Nearly 68,000 people are employed across the Canadian Tire enterprise, which was founded in 1922 and remains one of Canada's most recognized and trusted brands.

### **About the NHL®**

The National Hockey League, founded in 1917, is the second-oldest of the four major professional team sports leagues in North America. Today, the NHL® consists of 30 Member Clubs, each reflecting the League's international makeup, with players from more than 20 countries represented on team rosters. According to a Simmons Market Research study, NHL fans are younger, more educated, more affluent, and access content through digital means more than any other major professional sport. The NHL entertains more than 250 million fans each season in-arena and through its partners in national television (VERSUS, NBC, TSN, CBC, RDS, RIS, and NHL Network™) and radio (NHL Radio™, Sirius XM Satellite Radio and XM Canada). Through the NHL Foundation, the League's charitable arm, the NHL raises money and awareness for Hockey Fights Cancer™ and NHL Youth Development, and supports the charitable efforts of NHL players. For more information on the NHL, log on to NHL.com.

### **About Jonathan Toews**

Born in Winnipeg Manitoba, Jonathan Toews is a Stanley Cup® Champion and Olympic Gold Medalist. Toews currently plays for and is team captain of the Chicago Blackhawks, making him currently the youngest captain in the NHL, and the third youngest full captain in NHL history. The fully bilingual Toews competes internationally for Team Canada, having won gold medals at the 2005 World U-18, the 2005 World U-18 Hockey Challenge, 2006 and 2007 World Junior Championships, 2007 World Championships, and the 2010 Winter Olympics (a tournament in which he was named Best Forward). Toews won the Stanley Cup in 2010, becoming the second-youngest captain ever to win the Stanley Cup®, and was presented with the Conn Smythe Trophy as the playoff MVP. After winning the Cup,

Toews passed Peter Forsberg as the youngest player to be inducted into the Triple Gold Club. As recognition for his ongoing contribution to his community, In July 2010 the City of Winnipeg gave Toews the Keys to the City.

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