

PNE AWARDS FIRST 2006 MIRACLE MILE WINNER

For Immediate Release

Vancouver, B.C.: Squamish rower **Julie Miller** is the January 2006 winner of the Pacific National Exhibition's (PNE) **Miracle Mile Bursary**.

"We are excited about continuing to promote and recognize British Columbia's top amateur athletes," says PNE President and CEO Michael McDaniel. "The Miracle Mile is one of the most well known sporting achievements of all time – the fact that it happened at the Hastings Park is a very proud fact for all of British Columbia and Canada, and we look forward to continuing the legacy of sports excellence that Bannister and Landy built here at the PNE."

Julie was chosen over other outstanding athletes for a number of reasons, including her incredible dedication to her sport. The 31-year-old athlete trains three times a day, six days a week. Julie recently placed second at the Canadian University Rowing Championships in the Women's Double and third in the Women's Four, despite missing almost a whole season due to injuries she sustained in a serious car accident last year.



Julie's commitment to the community is as impressive as her commitment to rowing. In addition to training intensively, Julie works full-time at the Crisis Centre, studies for her Masters of Social Work at UBC, and volunteers for several different community organizations.

Julie's long-term sports related goals reflect her commitment to both sport and the community. Julie wants to be a member of the team that represents Canada at a future summer Olympic Games. In addition, she wants to help athletes - especially female athletes - by using her experiences as a recent cancer survivor to inspire others "not to give up" on their sport related goals.

Miracle Mile – A PNE Legacy

On August 7, 1954, British medical student Roger Bannister and his rival Australian John Landy ran what was billed as the "Dream Miracle Mile of the Century" in front of 35,000 fans in Vancouver's Empire Stadium at the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE). The race, the highlight of the 1954 British Empire Games, was the first time in history two athletes would run a mile in less than four minutes. Today, that historic race continues to be regarded as one of the most important sporting feats in history.

The PNE created a Miracle Mile Athletic Fund in 2004 (a special series of \$500 bursaries awarded to B.C. amateur athletes) to commemorate the race.

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Miracle Mile Facts:

- Originally billed as the "Dream Miracle Mile of the Century" the Vancouver race capitalized on the media attention surrounding the rivalry between Roger Bannister and John Landy.
- The Aug. 7, 1954, event saw more than 35,000 spectators crowd into Vancouver's Empire Stadium. The demand was so strong that CBC Television engineered one of its first live broadcasts that linked central and western Canada.
- Landy pushed into the lead in the first of four laps, while Bannister held a close second throughout. Bannister always favoured keeping pace with the leader before breaking out in the last moment with what the commentator called his "famous burst of speed."
- With one-quarter of a lap left, Bannister overtook his competitor on his right, just as Landy peered over his left shoulder.
- An exhausted Bannister, who was met at the finish line by his coach and a host of RCMP, scored 3:58.8 — his personal best and a North American record. Landy was clocked second at 3:59.6.
- The lone Canadian entrant, Richard Ferguson, placed third with a time of 4:04.6.
- Bannister later complained that British Columbia's hot, dry weather made his feat more difficult. As well, he had come down with a bit of a chest cold shortly before the race, which may have contributed to his collapse at the finish line.
- In the weeks following the Vancouver race Bannister would claim the European title in the 1500 metre before retiring from competition. His time at the "Miracle Mile" remains his personal best.
- Bannister would return to his study of neurological medicine and eventually become the director of the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases in London.
- After placing second in the "Miracle Mile" Landy would retire from athletics to teach agricultural sciences.
- It was later revealed that he had run the race with four stitches in his foot, an injury sustained from stepping on a flash bulb.

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Reference:

Laura Ballance
Media Relations
Pacific National Exhibition
604-684-3170
604-771-5176 (cell)
laura@curvecommunications.com