



BIG CHANGES FOR PLAYLAND AS IT OPENS FOR 2022 SEASON

NEW THRILL RIDE, REFURBISHED CLASSIC COASTER SET TO OPEN IN EARLY JULY

For Immediate Release

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Vancouver, BC – Playland at the PNE, Vancouver’s iconic amusement park, officially reopens for the summer on Saturday, June 18th from 11am-5pm and guests to the park will notice big changes.

“Over the past two years Playland has undergone significant changes – including the purchase of a brand new, multi-million dollar state-of-the-art Italian thrill ride; the largest refurbishment of the classic Wooden Coaster since it opened in 1964 and the retirement of the classic Music Express and the Crazy Beach Party; we’re excited to welcome thrill seekers of all ages,” says PNE spokesperson Laura Ballance.

RENOWNED ITALIAN RIDE DESIGNER ZAMPERLA TO BUILD NEWEST PARK RIDE

One of the world’s most respected amusement ride design and construction companies, Zamperla, was commissioned to build Playland’s newest ride, Skybender, slated to open this July.

“We are very excited to add a new thrill ride to our Playland ride lineup,” says PNE President and CEO Shelley Frost. *“Skybender is unlike anything currently available in Canada and is one of the few rides anywhere in the world offering a single rider experience.”*

Skybender features a spectacular light package, dynamic action sequences and a thrilling combination of gravity drops and accelerations. With a total price of \$2.7 million Skybender represents the most significant investment into Playland in five years.

Skybender is slated to open in early July.

PLAYLAND WOODEN COASTER REOPENS FOLLOWING \$1 MILLION RETROFIT

Considered one of the greatest wooden coasters in the world today, the Playland Wooden Coaster has won countless accolades including Coaster Classic and Coaster Landmark from the American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE), the world’s leading Coaster enthusiast organization. Over the past twelve months, the Playland Wooden Coaster has undergone the most extensive retrofit in its 64-year history, including undergoing the addition of lap belts in the train to meet incoming safety standards.

The Coaster is a “living” structure, made entirely of wood outside of the friction plates where the train’s metal wheels meet the frame of the ride structure.

“Since 1958 thrill seekers from across British Columbia, Canada and around the globe have made the pilgrimage to pay homage to one of the greatest amusement rides ever constructed, the Playland Wooden Coaster,” says PNE spokesperson Laura Ballance. *“This retrofit will ensure that this special piece of global ride history is ready to celebrate its 65th birthday in 2023 as well as many more decades thrilling Playland guests.”*

The international engineering team assembled to complete the extensive project sought to ensure the signature Playland Wooden Coaster ambience of yesteryear was retained and respected in the modern retrofit.

An old-world, all-time classic, the Playland Coaster has a gritty ambience and rough and tumble exterior. Hobbyists’ and fans who’ve braved the Coaster are familiar with the dramatic and unsuspected jerk of motion as the sixteen-passenger train is locked into position on the uptake chain at the base of the first hill. The clicking sound that follows is as universally known by Coaster fans as the stomach-churning first hill plunge and the camel-hop drops that are as signature to the ride as the picture of its iconic, skeletal frame set against the Vancouver skyline.

The refurbished Playland Wooden Coaster is slated to open in early to mid-July. *“We had hoped to reopen the Coaster for the start of the 2022 season in June, but delays in materials means that it will reopen in July,”* says Ballance. *“June will be a great time for families to enjoy Kids Playce, but the addition of Skybender, the Coaster and other park thrill favourites in July will make that the time more advanced riders will want to mark their calendars to visit the park.”*

2021/2022 COASTER RETROFIT FAST FACTS

- Over 1,200 lengths of structural grade Douglas Fir have been installed – this equates to over 12,000 feet of lumber
- More than 4,700 man-hours have been invested in this project
- Engineering lead on the project is: Martin and Vleminckx Rides (MVR) a world leader in the design, manufacturing, fabrication, installation and restoration of wooden roller coasters
- MVR is globally known for constructing the very first, all-wood, barrel-roll roller coaster in Jinan, China
- MVR has constructed thirteen new wooden roller coasters, worldwide, in the last 10 years, including: China, Australia and across North America

PLAYLAND WOODEN COASTER FAST FACTS

- The Playland Wooden Coaster was built throughout 1957 and early 1958
- Opened in 1958
- The Coaster was designed by Carl Phare
- Head of construction was Walker LeRoy
- The train is made up of eight two-person cars (total capacity: 16)
- Maximum speed of trains – 45 mph
- Maximum track height – 75 feet at highest point (1st hill)
- Track length is 5/8th of a mile
- Ride time is 90 seconds
- Coaster rides an average of 1/2 million guests annually
- The Coaster is powered by a 75 hp electric motor which lifts the 16

passenger-specially designed train up the first hill. Once each train passes over the first hill, it is driven through a series of climbs, dips, banks, horseshoe turns and a classic reverse curve only by the law of gravity

- Original cost of construction: \$200,000
- Built entirely from Douglas Fir
- Listed as an American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE) – “Coaster Classic” and “Coaster Landmark”

2022 also marks the retirement of the Crazy Beach party and the classic Music Express ride, whose catch phrase “do you wanna go faster” was known to generations of Playland riders.

“We all loved the Music Express, but that ride had reached the end of its lifecycle, so it was removed and recycled, making way for the addition of Skybender and other exciting park improvements in this and coming years,” says PNE spokesperson Laura Ballance.

Stay tuned to Playland and PNE social media for more information.

Twitter: @PNE_Playland

Instagram: @pne_playland

For more information about the 2022 Playland season or to purchase tickets visit: www.PNE.ca/playland/

About the PNE:

Owned by the City of Vancouver, the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) is a healthy and vibrant non-profit organization dedicated to delivering over 3 million visitors a year with memorable experiences through access to first-class cultural, music, sporting and family entertainment events, as well as access to public space for passive recreation. Founded in 1910, the PNE’s home is Hastings Park, a multi-facility venue in Vancouver where the organization manages four activity streams: the annual PNE Fair, Playland Amusement Park, Park Care and Facility Maintenance and an expansive portfolio of year-round events. All revenues generated are invested back into park space, community programs and non-revenue generating educational and entertainment experiences.

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Reference:

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