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**Laurie Wiltshire Named to National Team, Set to Compete at 2011 Pan American Games**

CALGARY, AB – Calgary’s Laurie Wiltshire, 27, of Hiro’s Judo Club, has been named to the Canadian Judo National Team, and will compete in the upcoming 2011 Guadalajara Pan American Games.

Wiltshire started her judo career at the Ni-ten Judo Club in Fort McMurray, AB. She received the rank of Shodan (1<sup>st</sup> degree blackbelt) in 2001 and later moved to Varennes, Quebec to attend the National Training Centre. In 2002 she won her first gold medal at the Canadian Junior National Championships, and has since won seven (7) straight gold medals in the -52kg women’s category at the Canadian Senior National Championships (2005 – 2011). Wiltshire currently holds the rank of Sandan (3<sup>rd</sup> degree blackbelt).

This will be the first Pan American Games for Wiltshire, though she is a veteran competitor on the International stage. In addition to the gold medal she won at the 2007 US Open, Wiltshire placed 5<sup>th</sup> at the World University Judo Championships in Suwon, South Korea (2006), 5<sup>th</sup> at the Summer Universiade in Bangkok, Thailand (2007), 5<sup>th</sup> at the Francophonie Games in Beirut, Lebanon (2009), and 7<sup>th</sup> at the Pan American Judo Championships in Guadalajara, Mexico (April, 2011).

Wiltshire says that she is “very excited to be competing in the 2011 Pan American Games” and feels her previous success at the International level will serve her well. Being the lone Albertan on the Canadian National Team, she is confident in her potential to find the podium, saying “there is a very good chance to place in the top 5 and that is what I hope to do”.

The 2011 Guadalajara Pan-American Games will begin on Friday October 14<sup>th</sup>, with the Judo competition beginning on Wednesday October 26<sup>th</sup>. The Pan American Games are the second largest multi-sport event in the world, next to the Summer Olympic Games.

If you require addition information or have any other questions, please contact Joel Mrak at Judo Alberta via email at [judo@judoalberta.com](mailto:judo@judoalberta.com) or via phone at (780) 427-8379. Any requests for interviews with athletes and/or provincial coaches can be coordinated through Joel Mrak.