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2012 Olympics Begin a Year from Today; OKC Athletes Set Sites on London

Oklahoma City, July 27, 2011 – The 2012 Olympic Games will begin in London a year from today. For the 40 plus athletes training at the OKC National High Performance Center in the sports of rowing and canoe/kayak, it means less than a year to make their Olympic & Paralympic dreams come true.

“We’ve got two chances to qualify the Women’s K2 (two-person kayak) for the 500m event in London,” said Olympic hopeful Kaitlyn McElroy. “Team USA will either qualify the spot at World Championships this August in Szeged, Hungary, or at the Pan Am Games in Guadalajara, Mexico in October. Then, my partner Jen Burke and I will train for the Olympic trials next April to win the honor of representing the USA in London.”

Following on the heels of the Olympic Games, the Paralympics begin in London August 29, 2012. For Jacqui Kapinowski, who suffers from a rare progressive neurological disorder and relies on a wheelchair to get around, her mantra is never give up.

“Preparing for London in 2012 I need to keep training hard & giving it my best everyday, every time I’m on the water,” said Kapinowski, who earned a bronze medal at the World Games in 2008 with the USA wheelchair curling team and has completed 55 marathons in her wheelchair. She traded in her broom and rocks for a boat and oars, training with teammate Tony Davis for the mixed double trunk and arms only rowing event.

“To have been given this tremendous opportunity to train at the OKC High Performance Center has been incredible – I feel so blessed to be able to train with all of these exceptional athletes that drive me to be the best I can be.”

Both Kapinowski and McElroy have moved to Oklahoma City with aspirations to represent our nation in 2012. Follow their journeys and countdown the days to the next Olympiad! To learn more and read the latest news on OKC’s Olympic and Paralympic hopefuls visit okc-nhpc.org.

The OKC Boathouse Foundation promotes the use and development of the Oklahoma River as a world-class urban aquatic venue and provides access to rowing, kayaking and fitness programs for people of all ages and abilities. OKCBF programs pursue the highest goals of sports and embrace the principles of the Olympic spirit which inspire athletes to work toward personal excellence, embrace the power of teamwork, and practice respect for all people and the environment. To learn more or get involved, call (405) 552-4040 or visit okcbf.org.

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