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Roanoke, Virginia – Virginia Amateur Sports, Inc (VAS) organizers of the Coventry Commonwealth Games of Virginia, announced today that an anticipated 10,000 amateur athletes throughout the state would be participating in the 21st Anniversary of the Coventry Games with competition in nearly 60 sports. More than 171,000 athletes have competed in the Coventry Commonwealth Games of Virginia since its inception in 1990.

Having Coventry Health Care as our title sponsor has allowed us to enhance our ability to increase our marketing efforts in publicizing our “Call for athletes, volunteers and sponsors.” Securing sponsorships and community support has been the lifeline of the Coventry Commonwealth Games,” stated Pete Lampman, president of Virginia Amateur Sports.

Holding the Coventry Commonwealth Games, known throughout Virginia as Virginia’s Olympics, has been a huge economic boost for the Roanoke Valley. “We are delighted to host the Coventry Commonwealth Games here in the beautiful Virginia Blue Ridge Mountains” stated Landon Howard, Executive Director of the Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau. “The athletes and their families enjoy all that this area has to offer including our many attractions, dining, outdoor amenities, and much more.” Howard added, “hosting the Coventry Commonwealth Games is a big boost to our regional economy with millions of dollars spent annually.”

This year’s Coventry Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremonies featured speaker is Olympic Medalist Jr Celski. JR is a short-track speed skater, who recently competed in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The 19 year old won two bronze medals at the Games despite having returned from a serious injury only two-and-half months prior to the start of the Olympics. Celski won his bronze medals in the 1500 meter race and 5000 meter relay race. Jr has also won two gold medals, one silver medal and 2 bronze medals at the world championships, the overall title at the U.S. Junior championships twice in 2007 and 2008 and was the overall silver medalist at the 2008 National Championships.

“Adding JR Celski to our growing list of USA Olympic Medal winning speakers for our Opening Ceremonies has demonstrated the excellence of the Games,” stated VAS Board Chairperson, and Vice President of Marketing of our title sponsor Coventry health Care, Mr. Chris Fanning. “Featuring Olympic Medalist speakers each year has provided the athletes a message that no dream is too small and that if you commit yourself to fulfilling that dream, it can come true.”

Once again, the Opening Ceremonies presented by McDonalds will feature a performance by an American Idol Finalist, country singer, Bucky Covington. We are bringing in Bucky to help us celebrate our 21st Anniversary with his engaging personality and formidable talent. With his rocker’s charisma and the country boy charm thrills old and new fans alike as he crisscrosses the country. Covington takes his status as a star very serious knowing he has responsibilities and standards to showcase as so many young children look up to him.

This year’s other major sponsors include WSET ABC 13, Kroger, StellarOne, AutoTrader.com, and Pepsi. For more information please visit our website at www.commonwealthgames.org or call 1-800-333-8274 or 540-343-0987.

