

Local Pressure For Olympic Podium Mounts

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Majority (60%) of BC Residents Believe Canada will best its 2006 Turin Winter Games Standings at 2010 Olympics

Majority (53%) in Host Province "Excited" as Opening Ceremony Nears

With the final hours ticking down to the Opening Ceremony, a new Ipsos Reid poll reveals a majority (60%) of British Columbians expect Canada to get more medals at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games than at the 2006 Games in Turin.

Another third (36%) expect Canada to get about the same number of medals and only 4% expect Canada to get fewer medals.

In fact, almost half of British Columbians (46%) are betting on the Canadians to have a second place finish in the medal standings "ahead of their third place standing at the 2006 Games.

A further one in three (27%) expect Canada to finish in the same standing as they did in Turin whereas 14% of BC residents are optimistic that Canadians win more medals than any other country.

And it seems a similar majority (59%) of those expecting more medals will be tuning in regularly to keep up with Canada's quest for medals: six in ten British Columbians expect to follow the 2010 Winter Games (23% very closely and 36% somewhat closely).

Another three in ten (27%) say they don't expect to follow the games very closely and only one in ten (13%) expect to pass up on following the Games altogether.

With the Games set to begin on Friday, a majority (53%) of British Columbians say they're "excited" with minorities residents not very (25%) or not at all (22%) excited.

Enthusiasm about the Olympics is slightly higher among British Columbians living closer to Olympic venues and attractions, as more Lower Mainland residents are excited (58%) than residents living in other parts of the province (47%).

"Expectations are pretty solid that our Canadian team will better their standings from 2006 and it's likely to provide a source of local pressure for the podium as athletes connect with the "home town" crowd," says Steve Mossop, President Ipsos Reid Canada West. "It's also likely that once the flame is lit and the first Canadian medal is won, momentum will build as more people tune in to follow the Games and excitement and anticipation for some of the key events grow."

The poll also found that a majority of British Columbian's hold Canadian athletes in high regard: fully eight in ten (84%) believe that Canadian athletes will perform either "excellent" (37%) or "good" (47%) at events.

This is compared to 16% who expect a fair (14%) or poor (2%) performance by Canadian athletes.

This is Ipsos Reid's first poll in an ongoing series that will measure the momentum of games through the views of British Columbian residents over the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

These are the findings of an online study conducted by Ipsos Reid from February 5, 2010 to February 9, 2010 with 1,292 British Columbians.

The results were statistically weighted to ensure that the age and gender composition of respondents reflects that of the actual British Columbian population according to 2006 Census data.

With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate within 2.73 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of British Columbia been polled.

The polling was conducted using Ipsos Reid's "Voice of the West Interactive Forum" - an online panel of nearly 6,000 British Columbians who have been randomly recruited to match the overall characteristics of the adult residents of the province.

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