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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **USA Canoe/Kayak Announces Appointment of Independent Directors**

*Charlotte, North Carolina - March 5, 2009* - As a part of a sweeping re-structuring of its governance structure, USA Canoe/Kayak has appointed four outstanding professionals to serve as independent directors on its Board of Directors. The announcement culminates months of work by a special governance review task force and an initial nominating committee that were appointed by the Board of USA Canoe/Kayak in 2008.

USA Canoe/Kayak is the national governing body for the two Olympic sports of flatwater sprint and whitewater slalom. As the exclusive US member of the International Canoe Federation, it also governs the sports of canoe polo, canoe marathon, dragonboat, outrigger, wildwater, canoe sailing and freestyle kayaking.

The four newly appointed directors are:

- David Backer, an attorney in Cape Elizabeth, Maine. Mr. Backer has previously served on the board of USA Triathlon and more recently on the US Olympic Committee's Athlete Support Committee
- Marian Hanson, Vice President, Content Strategy for ESPN in Bristol, Connecticut, where her work over the past decade have earned her both SAG and EMMY nominations.
- Jennifer Storms, senior vice president of programming and marketing for Turner Sports in Atlanta, Georgia. Ms. Storms' broad range of responsibilities include sports programming on the TBS and TNT networks, the company's online properties which include NASCAR.com, PGA.com and PGATOUR.com and Turner Sports' four television sports properties, which include the NBA, NASCAR, MLB and professional golf.
- Humpy Wheeler, recently retired as president of Speedway Motorsports in Concord, North Carolina. A member of the International Motorsports Hall of Fame, he is widely acknowledged as being one of those most responsible for the growth of NASCAR into one of the most successful sports enterprises in the US.

“We are very gratified that so many exceptionally qualified people expressed an interest in serving in the leadership of our sport,” said Bill Endicott, chair of the Initial Nominating and Governance Committee. “These four leaders are truly among the best of a large number of potential candidates our group considered. They bring a wealth of talent and experience to the task of helping the US re-establish its historic position among the most successful nations in these exciting sports.”

“The appointment of these outstanding leaders from various elements of the US sports scene is a truly important step in our efforts to achieve international competitive success in all of the great sports we serve,” said USA Canoe/Kayak Executive Director David Yarborough. “We welcome their experience, energy and vision. We have built great momentum in the past few years and the addition of these talented leaders will propel us toward our goal of joining the elite countries in our sports.”

Eric Parthen, Director of NGB Organizational Development for the US Olympic Committee, added “I congratulate USA Canoe/Kayak for the remarkable way in which it has addressed its governance and leadership needs and for their success in attracting such an outstanding group of independent directors. The US Olympic Committee is gratified by the efforts of so many who volunteered to serve as members of the Task Force and the Nominating Committee that have completed this difficult job within a very tight timetable.”

### **About USA Canoe/Kayak**

USA Canoe/Kayak is a non-profit membership organization based in Charlotte, N.C., promoting canoe and kayak racing in the United States. A member of the United States Olympic Committee, USA Canoe/Kayak is the national governing body for the Olympic sports of Flatwater Sprint and Whitewater Slalom and an official U.S. federation of the International Canoe Federation. Other paddling sports sanctioned by USACK include Marathon, Freestyle (Rodeo), Wildwater, Polo, Canoe Sailing, Outrigger, and Dragon Boat.

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