



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2012

## YVAN COURNOYER AT FEB FEST THIS YEAR!

### IMAGINATION ON ICE STARRING JEFF BUTTLE ON NEW DAY!

Feb Fest is pleased to announce that former Montreal Canadiens and ten time Stanley Cup Champion, **Yvan Cournoyer**, will be this year's Ambassador to Feb Fest. Cournoyer will be signing autographs from 12 pm – 1 pm and 2 pm – 3 pm in Springer Market Square during Hockey Day in Kingston on Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>.

With the Carr-Harris Cup taking place this year on the opening evening of Feb Fest, Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at K-Rock Centre, the **Imagination on Ice** skating extravaganza will be moved to Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. "We think this new time will work well for skating enthusiasts – a great time of day to bring the whole family down to Springer Market Square and then stay and have a skate after the show," said Michèle Langlois, Feb Fest Coordinator. **Jeffrey Buttle**, World and Canadian Champion, headlines this show which features local skating stars as well.

One of the best skaters and stickhandlers ever to grace a sheet of ice, **Yvan Cournoyer** played with an affection for the game of hockey that was as obvious as it was rarely matched. He joined the Montreal Canadiens during the 1964-65 season and by the time he retired in 1979, he had run up an impressive array of offensive statistics. He scored 25 or more goals 12 consecutive times in a career marked with consistency and championships.

In his first years, Yvan was used exclusively as a power play specialist. As a rookie he scored seven goals in 55 games. In his second year (1965-66) Yvan scored 16 of his 18 goals on the power play. The following season he scored 20 of his 25 goals with the man advantage. Yvan eventually scored over 150 power play goals during his NHL career. Toe Blake, then coach of the Canadiens, wasn't satisfied with Yvan's defensive skills to give him a full-time job. The French faithful didn't understand why Blake didn't play him more. They were constantly chanting "We want Cournoyer!" Blake would stalk behind the bench, his eyes blazing in anger. "Why don't they let him alone?" he would snarl. "They're putting pressure on him and they're hurting him. They're hurting the team." Blake was trying his best to keep the pressure off the young Yvan. Earlier Blake had sent him down to AHL for a seven game stint which made a deep impression on Yvan. "I knew then that the only place to be was with the big team," Cournoyer said. "I guess I always knew that, but it had never occurred to me that I might not be a part of it. When I got back, I said to myself, 'Yvan, this is the only place to be and you are going to work hard to be here.' Maybe it was then that I started to mature. Toe kept harping at my defensive play, and I kept working on it"

His best years were in the 1970s, when he had two forty plus goal seasons. Perhaps the finest moment in his career came in the playoffs in 1973, where he scored 15 goals in 17 games and was the recipient of the Conn Smythe Trophy, which is awarded to the MVP of the NHL's playoffs. The six time all star would taste sweet champagne from Lord Stanley's silver chalice an incredible 10 times in his career.

Yvan Cournoyer is considered to be one of the best right wingers of the seventies. In 16 seasons of play, Cournoyer established himself as one of the premier forwards in the NHL, scoring 428 goals and 435 assists in 968 games. He was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1982.

[www.habslegends.blogspot.com/2006/07/yvan-cournoyer.html](http://www.habslegends.blogspot.com/2006/07/yvan-cournoyer.html)

**Jeffrey Buttle** burst onto the international scene in 2002 when he upset the favorites to win the ISU Four Continents Championships, a feat he repeated in 2004. He placed eighth in his Worlds debut, receiving great praise for his musicality and artistry. In 2005, he earned his first World Championships medal and in 2006 he was the leading skater on the Canadian Winter Olympic team, winning the bronze medal. World Championship gold was his in 2008 (the first Canadian man to win the title in 11 years), when two strong performances placed him on the top step of the podium.

Buttle has been skating since the age of 2 and competing since he was 6. He has divided his time between two training bases, working with Lee Barkell at the world-renowned Mariposa School Skating in Barrie, Ontario, and Raphael Arutunian at the Ice Castle International Training Center in Lake Arrowhead, California. He also spends time working with choreographer David Wilson at the Toronto Cricket, Skating and Curling Club. "Representing Canada around the world has been an honor and I'm very proud of my achievements as a competitive figure skater," said Buttle, who, despite technically retiring from the sport, is retaining his eligible status and leaving the door open for a future return to Olympic sport. "I've had so much support throughout my career-I'll be forever grateful to my fans, coaches and of course, my family."

Upon Buttle's retirement, William Thompson, chief executive officer of Skate Canada, said, "Jeff has been a leader and an ambassador for our sport and country over the years. He has embraced his role as a Canadian Champion, World Champion and Olympian by being a role model for young skaters in Canada and will continue to be involved and support Skate Canada. We will miss his wonderful blend of artistry and athleticism and wish him nothing but the best in the future." [www.jeffreybuttle.com](http://www.jeffreybuttle.com)

Founded by a volunteer committee led by Kirk Muller, Downtown Kingston! BIA, Kingston Accommodation Partners, KEDCO, Queen's University and the City of Kingston, Feb Fest is a free event open to everyone to see the best of what a Kingston winter has to offer.

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**For more information please contact Michèle Langlois, Marketing Manager**

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