

TV host needles province

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American talk show host Stephen Colbert used his sharp tongue to drag Saskatchewan into a dispute with officials in charge of speed skating at the 2010 Olympic Games.

The host of The Colbert Report recently announced he was coming on board as a sponsor of the cash-strapped U.S. speed-skating team and launched a fundraising campaign on his website. Now, he is whining that officials in Richmond, B.C., have denied his troops training time.

"Those syrup suckers won't let us practice at their Olympic venues," he said. "At the Salt Lake Games, we let the Canadian luge team take 100 practice runs . . . and you know how Mormons feel about two men lying down on each other."

Colbert also held up a sign saying "Canadian ice-holes," and claimed the Canadian national anthem was the theme song Quebec singer Celine Dion performed for the Titanic movie.

Colbert had earlier targeted Saskatchewan as being a culprit in keeping his skaters off the ice.

"Tonight I'm calling on Saskatche-whiners to unclench their frosty sphincters and let Americans onto their oval," said Colbert.

Steven Krueger, president of the Saskatchewan Speed Skating Association, laughed when he heard of Colbert's comments and said the American team is more than welcome to skate on the ovals in Regina or Saskatoon.

There is one problem, he pointed out. "It will have to get cold so we can get some ice on them," he said.

Krueger was perplexed that Colbert would single out Saskatchewan. "Maybe he should get a map and find out where Richmond is versus Saskatchewan."

Olympic officials in Richmond have invited Colbert to serve as an Olympic ombudsman to prevent American discrimination.

"We are proud syrup-suckers who have been unfairly branded as cheats," said Richmond spokesperson Ted Townsend.

"The fact is, we would never knowingly harm one of our American 'cousins.' However, we feel the best way to prove we are committed to fair play is for Mr. Colbert to come and see for himself."

In a letter, Townsend told Colbert: "It takes a lot to upset us. After all, the combination of the languid smell of beaver musk and the freezing temperatures make us a docile people.

"Still, we just can't stand the thought that someone would think we aren't playing fair."

The collage consists of two main parts. The top part is a newspaper clipping with the headline "TV host needles province" and a sub-headline "Life sentence for gang leader Wolfe". It includes a small photograph of two men. The bottom part is a Fido advertisement. It features the text "Savings you've been wishing for" and "CityFido 2,000" with "Unlimited text! No System Access Fees" and "anytime local minutes 45". There is an image of a dog and a phone. The ad also includes "Fido Cares" and "Switch now! @shop.fido.ca" and "Drop by a store or call 1-800-321-3336".