



Press Release

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## The Czech Olympic Committee Bestows the "Czech Team – Gold Club" Award on Karel Komárek for Contribution to Czech Sports

**The Executive Board of the Czech Olympic Committee (COC) has conferred the first "Czech Team – Gold Club" award. The award purpose has been designed to decorate public figures that support sports and healthy lifestyle on a long-term and systematic manner. The first person to receive the award is Karel Komárek.**

Aiming to underscore exceptional activity and personal involvement in support for sports, the "Czech Team – Gold Club" award has been created by the Executive Board, the body that governs the Czech Olympic Committee, to honor individuals who promote Czech sports on a long-term basis. In introducing the award, the COC has followed in the footsteps of a tradition established during its early days, when numerous important figures of public life at that time, including Czech aristocracy, were referred to as "Gilt-Edge" with the aim of assigning an appropriate status and social prestige to sports.

According to the Czech Olympic Committee's President Jiří Kejval, entrepreneur Karel Komárek has been chosen as the first recipient of the "Czech Team – Gold Club" award mainly because he has been providing generous and systematic assistance to a wide range of sports events and numerous sports clubs for nearly two decades. During the last three years, he has been actively supporting youth sports. "Without Karel Komárek, we would be unable to launch several long-term projects that are mainly designated for children. We have to stop the trend of a decreasing number of youngsters involved in sports. Thanks to the Sazka Olympic Multiathlon, the Czech Olympic Foundation, and, most importantly, financial contributions from lottery earnings, we are making progress in this area," **Kejval** commented Komárek's support for sports, adding, "Karel Komárek not only supports sports as a patron, but also sets an example as an active athlete. That's why he is well aware of the importance sport plays in the life of both individuals and society as a whole."

Komárek's favorite sports include cycling, running, tennis, and skiing. "I believe that not only work but also culture and sports are an integral part of the all-round personal development of every individual," says **Karel Komárek**. An advocate of multi-source financing for Czech sports, he insists that a stable and predictable financial conditions need to be created in the domain of sports, as is the case in business, in order to establish a framework for the systematic training of top athletes on the one hand, and for investing into sports on a mass scale, where the importance of the latter is becoming increasingly prominent. "I want to inspire young people and their parents to pursue a healthy lifestyle and to motivate them to develop not only the mind, but also the body. What matters is courage, desire to engage in physical activity, and resolve to improve," reveals Komárek.





Since 2012, when KKCG took over Sazka, the largest Czech lottery company, its owner Karel Komárek has worked hard to make Sazka an official partner of the Czech Olympic Team, to provide financial assistance to the Czech Olympic Foundation to allow disadvantaged children to engage in sports, and to team up with the Czech Olympic committee in initiating the Sazka Olympic Multiathlon, a project that has been joined by over 1,600 elementary schools in all parts of the Czech Republic.

**Companies owned by Karel Komárek have supported many prominent sports events.**

Moravské naftové doly (MND) has been sponsoring a series of ITF Future Tournaments for talented tennis players for more than 15 years, an endeavor that has recently been joined by Sazka, as well. The MND Group is the longest-standing sponsor of the Czech Tennis Association (CTA) and its activities that target the young tennis generation. In the past, Karel Komárek received the highest Czech tennis award, the Karel Koželuh Medal, for his long-term support of the Czech Tennis Association.

During 1999-2004, MND was instrumental in bringing back first-league hockey to Prostějov, where support included both financial assistance and overall promotion of the development of ice hockey in the city. As part of the effort, specialized sports classes were opened at a local elementary school, which resulted in improved performance at the junior level.

MND is also a long-standing sponsor of regional sports clubs in the Hodonín district, where the company has its head office. In the past 10 years, MND has helped young track and field athletes on their path to success, both in the Czech Republic and in the international context. Apart from athletics, MND supports the SCM Hodonín soccer club. Since 2012, the company has sponsored some 550 young athletes and soccer players from 15 youth teams of the FK Hodonín sports club. MND's other activities include the sponsoring of ČEZ Basketball Nymburk, the reigning Czech basketball champions.

In addition to the above activities, Sazka also sponsors the Rytíři Kladno hockey club.

Karel Komárek is the founder and owner of KKCG, an international investment group that holds assets worth close to 1.6 billion euros and employs over 2,500 workers. The group's long-term investment strategies focus on crude oil and natural gas production, lotteries, tourism, and new technologies. KKCG holds shares in more than 25 Czech and foreign corporations, including MND Group, SAZKA, OPAP, VÍTKOVICE, FISCHER Travel Group, 1188 Information Service, and others. KKCG operates in 10 countries worldwide.





The Czech Olympic Committee was founded on 18 May 1899. According to the Olympic Charter, the mission of the Czech Olympic Committee is to develop and promote the ideals of Olympism and to represent and organize the Czech Republic's participation at Olympic Games. Moreover, the Czech Olympic Committee's role and responsibility is to represent the interests of Czech sports as a whole vis-à-vis government authorities. The Czech Olympic Committee aims to further the standing of sports in society and to provide access to sports activities to the broadest public possible. Likewise, the Czech Olympic Committee strives to improve financing sources, particularly in the area of youth sports.

***Additional information:***

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