



Canada's Pierce LePage wraps himself in the flag after winning a silver medal in the decathlon at the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast in Australia in April. MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Aspers' donation to support next generation of Olympians

Family's \$2.5-million gift is described as 'game changing' for sport philanthropy in Canada

TORONTO

Pierce LePage has lived through that athlete in-between stage, where the medal podium is so close, but there's little financial support to get there.

So the 22-year-old decathlete from Whitby, Ont., knows how a program such as the Canadian Olympic Foundation's 5to8, launched on Thursday, can provide that financial leg up.

The David and Ruth Asper family donated \$2.5-million to the 5to8 campaign, representing the largest donation to Olympic sport in Canadian history by a factor of 10.

The 5to8 campaign was created

to help the generation of Canadian athletes who are believed to be five to eight years from the podium.

LePage is the Canadian junior record-holder in the decathlon, and his big breakthrough came when he won silver at the Commonwealth Games last spring. But he's seen numerous athletes who weren't so lucky.

"A lot of athletes drop out after their school career, because it's hard to find funding," LePage said. "I know athletes who have had to quit sport because they necessarily couldn't see the funding."

"For me, travelling was a huge problem. If I wanted to travel to France or anywhere those big decathlon meets are, it costs a lot of money."

On top of that, there's such a problem travelling on planes with those poles [for pole vault], it can cost \$1,000 one way, then the pole is also \$1,000 itself."

LePage stars alongside two-

time Olympic freestyle skiing champion Alexandre Bilodeau, three-time Olympic short-track speed-skating medalist Kim Boutin and Olympic wrestling champion Carol Huynh in a 5to8 promotional video released on Thursday.

The Aspers' donation inspired a fund-matching program. Every donation will be matched by the Federal Government on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Paul McIntyre Royston, the chief executive of the Canadian Olympic Foundation, called the donation a "game-changing gift for sport philanthropy in Canada."

"The 5to8 campaign is a way for our family and yours to come together and cheer for Canada," Ruth Asper said in a release. "[The athletes] have got the fire. Our collective support can help keep it burning."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Doping age athletes aga

LORI EWING TORONTO

Canada's anti-doping wat while cannabis use will be dian as of next weekend,

CBD is the short form tract. But the Canadian C would rather athletes rem

The message is part of alert athletes to potential marijuana. The drug rem Agency's (WADA) banned: president and chief execu dian athletes need to rem

"No. 1, we wanted to ma fuse [legalization] with v banned in competition in Melia said.

The CCES, which conduc sport on behalf of the C doesn't screen for cannabis concern, however, is that ar recreational setting and the rele's system and show up

Because marijuana is fat-body weeks after it's ingest tors including the quantity And the time it takes to clea to person. "The human biolo vidual processes and elimin is quite individual, it is quite size, all kinds of issues, so v thumb, so [athletes] have t

The CCES has lobbied for WADA's banned list. Other against removal.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Women: FIFA' decisions draw

FROM B11

The U.S. women's team earne lion pool of prize money for t men's team earned US\$38-mi for winning the World Cup thi

FIFA has been criticized for replay to assist referees at next ant referees (VAR) were used first time in Russia. The orga VAR will come "in due time."

Some have complained the same day as the Copa America CONCACAF Gold Cup final in tention away from the women

U.S. coach Jill Ellis, speaki match on Wednesday night, v grow the sport. She also critici