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**A new network brings together elite athletes born in the 80s:
Sixteen Finnish sports stars to join Sonera Next Generation**

The reconstructed Sonera Next Generation team gathers together an impressive group of athletes representing different individual sports. The team captains for the period of 2009–2011 will be Minna Kauppi, Janne Happonen, Olli-Pekka Karjalainen and Pekka Koskela. Next Generation brings together 16 athletes who were born in the same decade but in different parts of Finland and represent eight different sports.

Sonera Next Generation is based on networks where athletes and their background teams share experience and know-how. Each of the teams – Sonera Air, Ground, Ice & Water and Snow – serves as a tight community formed by a captain and three other athletes. This partnership initiative, which is unique to Sonera, has its roots in a sense of community, responsibility and a new approach to sponsoring and cooperation.

“This kind of cooperation with athletes of different sports and their background teams has seldom – if ever – been possible in Finland. Exchanging information and ideas will undoubtedly benefit everyone involved in this project – both the athletes and coaches. I was well familiar with the project from before and definitely wanted to join. Who knows – our gymnast Tomi Tuuha might even teach me how to turn a double somersault with a twist,” jokes hammer thrower Olli-Pekka Karjalainen, the big man of Finnish athletics and the captain of the Sonera Air team.

“The new Next Generation team is a direct continuation of the project’s six-year tradition. The basic idea was to meet athletes at both good and bad times, and to create a network where support, experience and sparring partners are always close to them. Previous years’ experiences encouraged both us and the athletes to further develop the next-generation sponsoring partnership – crossing the boundaries between different sports,” says Sanna Wester, Sonera’s Head of Brand.

Towards success at the next Olympics

The members of the new Next Generation team have already achieved success and are now facing challenging targets. The average age of the team members is 23.3 years. In their applications, three out of four athletes in the team announced that their target was to win a medal at the next Olympic Games.

“With the new team members, born in the 80s, we are helping them in the most difficult portion of an athlete’s route – the final climb to the absolute

international top. Many of these athletes are only a footstep away from being number one in the world. To be able to reach this goal, they need training resources and the right people around them. Selecting athletes to the team was particularly difficult, and the issue was not who was a better athlete but how to create a well-functioning and motivating community,” says Wester.

With this project, Sonera provides substantial support for the Finnish elite sports. The agreements signed with both the captains and the other athletes represent cooperation at the main partnership level. Sonera received almost 400 applications from athletes of 45 different sports.

Sonera Next Generation networks 2009–2011

Sonera Air

Olli-Pekka Karjalainen, hammer (Capt.)

Tero Järvenpää, javelin

Antti Ruuskanen, javelin

Jelena Jaakkola, javelin

Sonera Ground

Minna Kauppi, orienteering (Capt.)

Petteri Lax, long jump

Sari Keskitalo, sprint

Tomi Tuuha, apparatus gymnastics

Sonera Ice & Water

Pekka Koskela, speed skating (Capt.)

Mika Poutala, speed skating

Tapio Nirkko, sailing

Tuuli Petäjä, sailing

Sonera Snow

Janne Happonen, ski jumping (Capt.)

Anssi Koivuranta, Nordic combined

Peetu Piironen, snowboard

Meri Peltonen, snowboard

The agreements signed with the athletes become effective on January 1, 2009 and are valid for a period of three years. To follow the progress of the project, visit: www.nextgene.fi.

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TeliaSonera tarjoaa televiestintäpalveluja Pohjoismaissa, Baltian maissa, Espanjassa sekä Euraasian kehittyvillä markkinoilla, Venäjä ja Turkki mukaan lukien. Tarjoamme Euroopan johtavana toimittajana laadukkaita, maiden rajat

ylittäviä puhe-, IP- ja kapasiteettipalveluja kokonaan omistamamme kansainvälisen verkon kautta. Vuonna 2007 TeliaSoneran liikevaihto oli 96 mrd. kruunua, ja joulukuun 2007 lopussa yhtiöllä oli yhteensä yli 114 miljoonaa liittymää 18 maassa. TeliaSoneran osake noteerataan Tukholman ja Helsingin pörsseissä. Helppous ja hyvä palvelu ovat meille tärkeitä työkaluja luodessamme kannattavaa kasvua sekä arvoa asiakkaillemme ja osakkeenomistajillemme. Lue lisää osoitteesta www.teliasonera.fi.