



Montreal Mayor Gérald Tremblay cheered on the crowd at the first World Outgames.

and only with the two partners and the registrar present. No one else is allowed to attend.

Couples must apply for registration 30 days in advance and prove they are single, healthy and mentally stable.

U.K. Court Rejects Lesbians' Marriage

Two British lesbians who tried to get their Canadian marriage recognized in the United Kingdom failed July 31.

U.K. law automatically converts foreign same-sex marriages into U.K. civil partnerships, which nonetheless provide all the same rights and obligations.

Sue Wilkinson and Celia Kitzinger, who were married in Vancouver in 2003, denounced the decision by Sir Mark Potter, president of the London High Court Family Division, as "profoundly discriminatory [and] an affront to social justice and human rights."

"We feel distressed, demeaned and humiliated," they said in an e-mail.

In his ruling, Potter said: "Parliament has not called partnerships between persons of the same sex marriage, not because they are considered inferior to the institution of marriage but because, as a matter of objective fact and common understanding...they are indeed different. To accord a same-sex relationship the title and status of marriage would...fail to recognize physical reality."

Kitzinger, 49, is a sociology professor at University of York. Wilkinson, 52, directs the social psychology degree program at Loughborough University in Leicestershire.

The couple said they might appeal the ruling, though they're concerned that the government is now seeking \$46,850 in costs from them for the High Court case—an amount roughly equal to their life savings.

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Success for First World Outgames

The first World Outgames, staged July 29 to Aug. 5 in Montreal, were an apparent success.

Montreal organized the Outgames after a bitter dispute with the Federation of Gay Games led to the seventh Gay Games being relocated from Montreal to Chicago, where they took place July 15 to 22.

More than 10,000 athletes from 111 nations participated in 35 sports at the Outgames, and the opening ceremonies attracted an additional 28,000 spectators to the Olympic Stadium.

The crowd rowdily cheered Montreal Mayor Gérald Tremblay, who said: "I know some of you are from nations where your sexual orientation can send you to jail or even cause your death. Your presence here encourages us to continue working for a better world."

Athletes came from more than 20 nations where gay sex is banned.

The crowd aggressively booed federal Public Works Minister Michael Fortier, who was Prime Minister Stephen Harper's stand-in, both because Harper himself didn't show up and because Harper supports a plan for Parliament to revisit Canada's legalization of same-sex marriage.

According to *The Montreal Gazette*, "Fortier's remarks were

swallowed up in a rising tide of boos which grew even more deafening as much of the crowd began slamming their folding seats up and down." Ironically, later in the week, Fortier mentioned to reporters that he is a supporter of same-sex marriage.

Olympic gold medal swimmer and Outgames co-president Mark Tewksbury told the crowd: "When I swam at the Olympics in Seoul, I felt all alone. I don't feel like that anymore!"

During the games, his 4 x 100 relay swim team set a Canadian record. Tewksbury swam the 100-meter backstroke portion of the relay in 1 minute, 2.33 seconds.

In a video greeting, Québécoise superstar Céline Dion gushed: "The first World Outgames in Montreal are a wonderful occasion to celebrate the love that binds us.... I know in my heart that the love that binds us.... I know in my heart that the first World Outgames in Montreal will be an unforgettable moment in our struggle for tolerance."

Entertainment at the opening event was provided by k.d. lang, Martha Wash, Cirque de Soleil and several Canadian stars. Gay icon Liza Minnelli headlined the Aug. 5 closing ceremonies, which attracted 32,000 athletes and spectators.

A world record in swimming was broken Aug. 3 when gay San Franciscan Daniel Veatch completed the 200-meter backstroke in 2 minutes, 14.83 seconds, besting a 2:15.49 in the age 40-44 category by U.S. swimmer William Speicht in 1999. Veatch competed in the Olympic Games in Seoul in 1988. Outgames swimming competitions were sanctioned by the Quebec Swimming Federation, which means Veatch's world record "counts."

Openly gay Canadian Member of Parliament Réal Ménard, who represents a Montreal-area district, won a silver medal in wrestling.

Prior to the games, organizers hosted a four-day International Conference on LGBT Human Rights, promoted as the largest gay rights conference ever. More than 1,500 delegates approved a "Declaration of Montreal" that will be presented to the United Nations and national governments.

Speaking at the conference, U.N. high commissioner for human rights Louise Arbour called for the decriminalization of homosexuality throughout the world.

Media took particular notice of attendee Mariela Castro Espín, niece of Fidel Castro and daughter of Raúl Castro, Cuba's current ruler while Fidel is hospitalized. She is director of Cuba's National Sexual Education Center.

In Chicago, meanwhile, Gay Games organizers said Aug. 3 that they will show a profit when all the accounting is finalized. The Gay Games have a history of ending up in debt. **10**

REX WOCKNER has reported for the gay press since 1985. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University and started his career as a radio reporter.



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