Historical competition named after synchro influencer:

Synchronized Skating Challenger Competition to be called Marie Lundmark Trophy

The name of the international Synchronized Skating Challenger Series event granted to Finland for the first time has been published. The competition, to be held in Turku on 14–17 January 2021, will be called *Marie Lundmark Trophy*. The name was chosen to honour **Marie Lundmark's** determined work for Finnish and international synchronized skating.

Born in Czechoslovakia, Lundmark started her figure skating career as a single skater and ice dancer. After moving to Finland in 1968, she continued her career as a coach, judge and later referee. She was President of the Finnish Figure Skating Association twice between the years 1993 and 2002 and a Board Member of the Finnish Olympic Committee in 1996–2004.

Lundmark became involved in the development of synchronized skating when the sport arrived in Finland from the USA in the mid-1980s. In 1994 she was elected to the International Skating Union's (ISU) first Synchronized Skating Technical Committee, the goal of which was to bring the sport to world championship level. This took place six years later. Since 2002 she has served in the ISU Council, developing figure skating and looking after its interests. Lundmark has played a major role in the pursuit of making synchronized skating an Olympic sport.

Finland's Ministry of Education and Culture honoured Marie Lundmark with the Pro Sport Prize in 2010, and in 2016 she received the Special Prize of Finnish Sport Ambassador at the Finnish Sports Gala. In addition to serving in the ISU, Lundmark continues to work as a Board Member of the Finnish Figure Skating Association.

The President of the Finnish Figure Skating Association **Laura Raitio** is delighted about the allotment of the event to Finland and to Turku. Naming the event after Marie Lundmark felt a natural choice.

- It is great that the ISU granted this internationally appreciated synchronized skating competition to the Finnish Figure Skating Association. We are also happy that we can stage this event in Turku, the location of which between land and sea, on the coast of the Baltic Sea, will surely be an excellent destination even for international synchro fans, Raitio says.

- Marie Lundmark's accomplishments in the development of the sport both nationally and internationally are indisputable. We did not want to miss the unique opportunity to name this, hopefully long-running, event after her.

The event will be hosted by the Finnish Figure Skating Association with local support from Kaarinan Taitoluistelijat skating club and City of Turku.

- We are happy that we get to implement a grand sports event through national and regional collaboration. The synchronised skating competition completes the selection of high-level international sports events in Turku alongside the athletics competition Paavo Nurmi Games and the triathlon event Challenge Turku. We welcome the teams to Turku and invite them to visit not only our city but also the magnificent wintry archipelago within our region, says City of Turku Liaison Manager **Antti Kirkkola**.

Further information:
Finnish Figure Skating Association, Outi Wuorenheimo, General Secretary, p. 040 940 23 15