



## **Wheelchair Basketball Canada Annual General Meeting**

### **Alberta – Provincial Report**

Submitted – October 6 , 2013

The province of Alberta has completed another successful year in all areas related to wheelchair sports. Our club base continues to thrive and we are very fortunate to have a wide variety of membership representation from across the province with an astounding array of talent on every level. All major regions within the province are represented including: Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie and Red Deer. Strong efforts are being made to increase expansion into additional locations such as Lethbridge and Medicine Hat.

The 2012 / 13 season could best be termed as one of transition as there was a significant change both in participants and in program. Some positive outcomes along with some ongoing challenges presented themselves to our Basketball community during the 2012 - 13 season.

Alberta continues to be very fortunate in the areas of fundraising and sponsorship. WSA received an unprecedented level of support both in resource and financial from the Alberta Sport Recreation Parks & Wildlife Foundation (ASRPWF), Alberta Gaming, Alberta Community Spirit Foundation and others. Having said that, we are going to be facing some financial challenges in future years as government grant programs are being re-evaluated and re-structured. Several key grant programs have been cut from the Alberta Governments budget or are in a stage of suspension.

WSA continued with coordination of the new Bridging the Gap program that was launched in 2008. Efforts towards initiating ongoing developmental programming associated with the Bridging the Gap program was undertaken throughout 2013. Regional have-a-go days along with supporting weekly sessions have been setup in all regions of the province. WSA has been working closely with rehabilitation centers throughout Alberta to help bring the BTG program to fruition.

WSA continues to maintain strong support and partnership with several organizations and facilities located throughout the province. These include the Steadward Centre (Calgary & Edmonton), Canadian Paraplegic Association, Paralympic Sport Association, MS Society, U of A, U of C, Sait, MRU and Grande Prairie Regional College. Strong efforts have been made to re-ignite relationships with all special needs organizations throughout the province by initiating a strong presence at interagency meetings and special interest events.

In roads towards a strong awareness / promotional presence have been established with committee representation at the board level with the following organizations: Edmonton Sport Council, City of Edmonton, Community Services Advisory Board, Calgary Sport Council, SCI Alliance and Active Living – Physical Activity For All.

### **Alberta Provincial Wheelchair Basketball Programs**

#### **Wheelchair Basketball Alberta Leadership Team –**

The WBA Leadership Team continues to thrive and provide strong leadership to the Alberta Basketball Community. Under the guidance of Chairmen Joe Sask, this highly dedicated team of key individuals from throughout the wheelchair basketball community in Alberta has been instrumental in forging and sustaining a new

direction and helped to re-vitalize the overall wheelchair basketball program. Team members include: Lorna Shannon, Darrell Nordell, Lori Radke, Steve Ryan, Ross Norton, Mike Evjen and Sergio Giordano.

The 2012 – 13 season continued with the new WBA Provincial Basketball Coordinator Position structure where we have a Provincial Coordinator North and South. Building off of the successes of the initial position it was decided by the Wheelchair Basketball Alberta Leadership Team that it would serve our goals better to split the position into two equal part-time roles that would reduce both work load and geographical are of coverage to a more manageable size. Emphasis was placed on a North and South split within the province. This structure has proven to be the more productive direction for the position. Darrell Nordell was once again hired as the Coordinator for the North along with Lorna Shannon for the South.

WSA will be seeking further funding assistance for both positions for the next couple of years.

### **Women's Program –**

Alberta once again had a strong showing from within our club structure at the Women's CWBL Finals hosted in Montreal April 26 – 28, 2013. The Edmonton Inferno took the Gold with the Calgary Rollers taking Silver. Congratulations to all of the women from Alberta who participated and did their clubs and the province proud with outstanding results.

Edmonton Inferno: Tara Feser, Helaina Cyr, Mackenzie Doll, Alarissa Haak, Rebecca MacMillan, Catherine Pashko, Karla Tritten, Arinn Young

Calgary Rollers: Lana Cicko, Cathleen Digel, Deb Dyck, Jessica Forgeron, Kendra Ohama, Diane Sorensen, Andrea Wojcik, Kynette Holman

Special recognition goes out to Chad Jassman, Alarissa Haak and Tara Feser for being named to Canada's National Team programs for 2013.

### **Junior Provincial Program –**

Our Junior Program continued to thrive throughout 2012 - 13 and tied into the existing CWBL structure and the existing club programs running independently in both Edmonton and Calgary. Karla Tritten, Lori Radke, Lorna Shannon, Mike Evjen, Darrell Nordell and Ross Norton all contributed signifgant effort and time in streamlining this program and were instrumental in setting a solid direction with the ongoing development of our Junior's.

The main focus for this season was to ride the wave of momentum created from the Canada Games held in 2011 and begin rebuilding our base with a strong junior programs in both Edmonton and Calgary. All of the Juniors involved in Canada Games have committed to the ongoing program and continue to fully participate through their club structures and provincial development opportunities.

Great success was had within the junior ranks in the early part of 2013 with the Alberta Junior Provincial team having a strong showing at the Junior West Regional Championships held in BC. Alberta sent 3 Coaches and 15 players to take part in the 3 on 3 tournament.

Coaches – Ross Norton, Darrell Nordell, Karla Tritten,

Athletes: Ben Tumack, Ben Moronchuk, Helaina Cyr, Caleb Cyr, Alarissa Haak, Jonathon Bilan, Brandon Doll, Arinn young, Mitch Czayka, Mackenzie Doll, Kyle Allen, Zak Madell, Lynette Holman, Rebecca McMillan, Dylan Sparks.

Special recognition goes out to Halaina Cyr and Alarissa Haak for both being chosen to represent Canada on the Women's U25 Team.

## **2012 - 2013 CWBL Alberta Division (Submitted By Darrell Nordell)**

The Alberta Conference CWBL Open A and B schedule was confirmed for the 2012-13 season in early October. As in every year it seems that the official schedule takes some time to build and this year was no different. Club teams still need to book gym times earlier and earlier every year and I would encourage our WBA Leadership Team to have an early April – May 2013 meeting so we can confirm even tentatively the 2013-14 schedule by the end of June.

Both the North and South WSA Program Coordinators worked on this year schedule with the local clubs representatives so an equally distributed league could be confirmed. The CWBL A League has four teams entered this year with Edmonton, Calgary, Regina and Saskatoon. The CWBL B League also has four teams with Grand Prairie, Edmonton, Saskatchewan Women and Calgary. Lethbridge has shown interest in competing in the B Division but has yet to attend a tournament. The CWBL Schedule is attached below for both A and B Division.

### **CWBL A**

November 3-4, 2012	Edmonton
January 12- 13, 2013	Saskatoon
January 19 -20, 2013	Calgary
February 9-10, 2013	Regina

### **CWBL B**

November 17-18,2012	Grand Prairie
December 1- 2,2013	Edmonton
January 19 -20, 2013	Calgary
March 16-17, 2013	Edmonton

- Planned for and delivered a one day Grand Prairie wheelchair basketball skills camp on September 29th, 2012. Although camp numbers were small this year the athletes and coach (Joseph Sask) that did attend there was plenty of time to talk team strategy and individual skills for certain classifications. During the day recreation center staff from the City of Grand Prairie introduced athletes to the onsite fitness center and some of the adaptable equipment that is on hand for athletes to use.
- During the CWBL A and B season North Coordinator was in attendance at all Edmonton hosted tournaments and events. This gave a chance to not only watch games but to interact with coaches from all the clubs and talk about the league, LTAD in Alberta and to help mentor in some of the coaching.
- Attended level 1 Introduction to Coaching certification in October 2012 with coaches from across Alberta. Good opportunity to listen to Master Coach Tim Frick and discuss coaching philosophy and strategies over the weekend with other Alberta Coaches.
- Planned for and successfully ran a 2012 Christmas Junior Development Camp. Over 15 athletes were in attendance from Club teams across Alberta (Edmonton, Grand Prairie, Calgary) and from Saskatoon. Worked with WSA to bring in Canadian National Junior Coach Steve Bialowas to help instruct and observe up and coming Alberta classifiable junior athletes. Along with the camp a two day 3 on 3 tournament was held and some exciting games were played.
- In March 2013 attended and coached one of the Alberta Provincial Junior teams at the West Jr Regional Finals in Prince George, Alberta. Alberta entered the most number of teams and athletes for this tournament and respectfully finished 3rd, 5th and 7th over the weekend.
- In April 2013 meet with the assigned Mental Coach for the 2015 Alberta Junior Canada Games team and talked about what sport psych services can be offered and what are the identified needs of the coaches for the team.
- In April 2013 sat in on a WBA Leadership conference call and discussed potential scheduling and dates for the 2013/14 WSA Alberta Conference season including all levels of recreation and competitive play

(Minis, Junior, CWBL A & B and Women). Current a proposed Draft schedule is residing with WSA Leadership Team.

#### Summary:

The one day wheelchair basketball camp was organized between Wheelchair Sports Alberta and Grand Prairie Wolverines. Although the camp numbers were low the athletes that did show up gained knowledge and technical skills that they did not currently have. Grand Prairie is lucky to have a long time volunteer and knowledgeable wheelchair athlete up there in Joseph Sask. Joe has been training, coaching and playing wheelchair basketball for over 20 years and it is good from time to time to bring in other coaches to share, introduce and confirm what is being taught is the right method and the skills needed to advance in wheelchair basketball.

The Grand Prairie Wolverines will continue to grow with new recruits in the new building that they train out of as exposure is all around them. The onsite office and storage unit also helps as there is always equipment on hand for someone to use and athletes can drop in and train on scheduled times but also when the building is open and has drop in gym time.

I applaud the Wolverines for what they have done and continue to be a leader for wheelchair basketball in Northern Alberta.

A Two Day Junior Wheelchair Skills Camp was organized on December 27th and 28th in Edmonton at the Go Centre. The camp was a huge success with 14 athletes the first night and 15 athletes on the second night training and competing in a 3 on 3 basketball tournament. Athletes came from four different locations (Edmonton, Calgary, Grand Prairie, Saskatoon) and 5 Coaches from Edmonton were actively involved in instructing and coaching during the two nights.

Canadian Wheelchair Basketball Junior Head Coach Steve Bialowas was on hand to identify potential Junior National Team Classifiable athletes and instruct each night for one hour on defense and offence break down drills. This worked really well and I would strongly encourage having Steve come back out again in the future to work with our athletes and coaches.

Attending the West Jr Regionals was great exposure for the 15 junior athletes that were selected to go and for the three coaches to see how the Alberta Junior development matches up with the other western provinces. Although one of the three teams medaled Alberta did have the most number of teams entered so competitiveness was equally shared between all three teams. The Alberta program is well one the way with their Canada Games 2015 preparations and will only continue to get stronger.

Alberta hosted an Intro To Competition Advanced Coaching Course in late September 2013. Six individuals all participated in the course that was facilitated by Tim Frick.

#### **Future Initiatives**

WSA will continue to coordinate and organize wheelchair basketball programs under the provisions of WBC's mandate for domestic programs and under the guidance of the Wheelchair Basketball Alberta Leadership Team. WSA's focus for the upcoming years will be on initiating a more integrated approach to all of our basketball programs aligning the men, women and junior teams.

WSA will work closely with the revised Wheelchair Basketball Canada strategic plan incorporating many of its initiatives by integrating those ideas into our own overall big picture direction(s).

Coach and official development have been identified as a much neglected area of training in Alberta. It is WSA's hopes to initiate more opportunity to host developmental clinics for both coaches and officials.

Additional strategies will include developing partnerships in fund raising and sponsorship, the development and recruitment from grassroots to high performance athletes. BTG will remain an integral part of our overall recruitment strategy allowing for a more widespread approach to grass root development.

Long Term Athlete Development Model – It is Alberta’s intention to be national leaders in implementing the new LTAD model that is being promoted nationally from both the sport and governmental level. We were the best represented province at the recently held summit, and we feel that many of our current initiatives put us well on our way to championing a model that promotes holistic development, sport for life and a focused approach on developing national caliber athletes

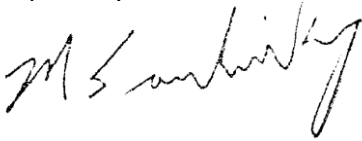
Non sport specific wheelchair programs – It is our belief that with the size and diversity of the wheelchair sporting community in Alberta, we are not properly serving many of our members by trying to draw them exclusively into particular team sports in this province. We are looking to take leadership by working with various groups (including Bridging the Gap, Alberta Sport Development Council and specific sporting organizations) on providing more general wheelchair programs where participants can become involved at their own level, participate with a goal of fun and fitness, learn chair skills that will apply across various sports and experience more of what the different sporting groups have to offer.

CWBL changes – We have made significant changes to our league structure over the past 2 years and continue to modify it to make it as friendly as possible to all levels of play.

## **Conclusion**

Once again it has been a real pleasure working alongside such a dedicated group from within the Alberta Wheelchair Basketball family. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all those involved in the wheelchair basketball community at large and all those who have provided me with guidance and/or assistance in our efforts to solidify the growth and development of all areas within wheelchair basketball. The future looks bright for wheelchair basketball in Alberta and I look forward to continuing to help shape the direction and vision of this great sport.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Sandomirsky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" being particularly prominent.

Mike Sandomirsky - Executive Director