

HP Report for the WBC AGM
September 2015

Major Results

It was a busy summer for our National Team Program with only the U23 Men not having a major event to attend.

U25 Women's World Championships

Our U25 Women attended the second-ever U25 World Championships and placed 4th (the same as in 2011 when Canada hosted). The team did not have a lot of time to prepare with the details of the event being released so late in the year. A team of 11 athletes and 4 staff attended the event in Beijing, hosted at the Chinese National Paralympic Training Centre.

It was a great experience for the team, and offered a great chance for 4 members of our Senior National Team to assume leadership roles with the younger athletes (Jacques, Young, Gavel and Lalonde).

A 61 – 53 loss to China in the Bronze medal game left Canada with a 4th place finish. Maude Jacques was named to the tournament All-Star team.

Parapan American Games

Congratulations to both the Men and Women for achieving their primary objective... qualifying for the Rio 2016 Paralympics.

The Women confirmed their place in Rio by securing a spot in the semifinals after the round robin, along with Brazil (which meant the top 4 teams would advance to the Paralympics). The Women cruised through the first 4 games of the tournament until facing a very tough USA team in the final. An 80 – 72 loss resulted in a Silver medal.

The Men needed a semifinal victory against Brazil and got it with a 70 – 54 win. Ensuring a top 2 spot in the tournament meant they qualified for Rio as well. As with the Women, the Men were in tough against a strong USA team and lost the final 62 – 39 for a Silver medal. It was great to see Coach Tonello at the final cheering on the men. One of the highlights of the day happened at the end of the game when the Men's Team recognized and thanked Jerry in front of the home crowd.

WBC was very well represented at the TO2015 Parapan American Games with a couple of board members holding key positions with the organizing committee. Steve Bach and Trevor Kerr were members of the planning group that spent the past couple of years getting the event ready. (While Donald Royer and Kathy Newman did the same for Powerlifting and Wheelchair Rugby, respectively).

The TO2015 Parapan American Games were a very successful event. Well organized, well attended and well promoted and covered by the media. CBC even broadcast the Men's gold medal game live on the main network, which can only be a good thing for parasport awareness in Canada.

Programs

The **Senior Men** had a busy time preparing for the Parapans. They hosted the “Toronto Challenge” in March with the teams from USA, ARG and BRA coming in to Toronto for 5 days of training and games. It gave those teams a chance to see the facility for Parapans in advance and gave our Men the chance to measure their progress against their main opposition.

We expect the Toronto Challenge to become a recurring annual event in March of each year. Our excellent relationship with the Mattamy Athletic Centre and the Courtyard Marriott Hotel make it easy to run an international level tournament. Our plan is to alternate the event between men and women.

The Men also centralized for 3 weeks in Toronto during May/June. The U23 Men and a team of Black Aces (able-bodied players) came in to offer up some competition.

A two week tour in Germany in early July offered the final competitive opportunity prior to Parapans with training and a number of games against GER and TUR in Frankfurt.

The team’s final staging took place at Brock University for 1 week prior to moving into the Games Village in Toronto.

The **Senior Women** were also busy leading into the Parapans. The Osaka Cup is an annual international tournament in February and the US hosted the Lakeshore Cup in March. The Women also centralized in Toronto in May, and hosted the Women’s team from Japan for 1 week during that time as well.

Two more weeks of centralization in June in Winnipeg was hosted with the available players. The U25 Women skipped this camp and the Euro Tour in order to prepare for and play in their World Championships.

The Euro Tour provided a competitive opportunity against GER, GBR and NED over their 2 week stay.

The Women also staged at Brock University for 5 days before moving into the Games Village. The German women came in to provide a competitive partner for that time.

The **U25 Women** shared several camp opportunities with the Senior Women in the spring and early summer when feasible. Having 4 players involved in both programs made the sharing of training opportunities a simple idea.

The Women staged in Vancouver for 4 days immediately before heading to Beijing. Thanks to Marni and BCWBS for assisting with the set-up and organizing a game against local BC athletes.

The **U23 Men** did not have a major event this year, but they did train cooperatively on several occasions with the Senior Men. They did attend the Défi Sportif in May.

The program will pick up steam for next season in anticipation of a qualifying tournament for the 2017 Worlds.

Coach Steve Bialowas moved from the U23 program to the Senior Men’s program as Head Coach, with the illness of Jerry Tonello. Darrell Nordell has assumed the role of interim Head Coach for the U23 Men until a permanent plan is established.

The **Academy** had a very successful season, with the ongoing daily training environment for up to 22 athletes last year.

There were multiple hosting opportunities during the year which saw teams from the U of I, Edinboro, New York Rolling Knicks, multiple CWBL club teams and the Men and Women's National teams from Japan come in for training and games. The Academy also hosted the 2015 CWBL Finals.

The Academy went on a brief hiatus for the Pan American Games, as we were moved out from May 5 to September 15. An alternate training site was secured at the Abilities Centre for several weeks this summer.

The Academy's equipment needs should be set for a long time to come. Thanks to the TO2015 Legacy Plan, the Academy will be gifted with shot clocks, scorer's tables, cameras, basketballs, storage cages, training tables, portable hoops, backboards and much more. We would like to thank TO2015 for their very generous contribution to the future of wheelchair basketball.

We are grateful to our partners for continuing to support this world-class initiative. OTP, CPC, CSIO, the Province of Ontario and the WBC Board have supported this idea so fully, that we have no excuses for not achieving our objectives.

Funding support

Significant financial support continues to be provided by OTP. Annual funding provided to WBC for both the Men's and Women's programs rose to \$1.55 million for this current fiscal year, based on an increase to the Women's program due to their Gold Medal placing from 2014. This includes funding for training camps, competitions, coaches salaries, IST support, the Centres for Performance and the National Academy. We are very grateful for OTP's ongoing funding support.

The next submission will be sent to OTP by late-October. We will have a preliminary indication of the funding provided to the HP program by early January 2016.

In closing, I would like to welcome Murray McCullough to the fold as the new HP Coordinator. I'd also like to thank the Office Staff for their hard work and support. To Wendy, her leadership and guidance continues to be greatly appreciated. To Frog, his vision for the Academy and the way the game is played will keep us ahead of the curve. To our coaches, athletes and IST members, thank you for your continued dedication to the WBC National Team Programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharron St. Croix, VP High Performance