



Alberta Provincial Report

WBC AGM 2015

WSA has completed another successful year in all areas related to wheelchair sports. All of our hard laid plans and efforts with development continue to show signs of success. 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 regions within the province are represented including: Lethbridge, Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Red Deer and Lloydminster.

2014 - 15 was the year of continued forward motion along with consistent continuity in all aspects of the WSA operation. The board of directors worked together in a collaborative cohesive manner which made for a smooth flowing machine. We had 1 new member join the Board in 2014. The WSA Strategic Plan along with a solid business plan continues to provide concise direction to the organizations visions and goals. Financially WSA is in a stable position. The year was not without its financial challenges and going forward there will remain fiscal challenges due to significant changes in government funding, grant reductions and limited financial opportunities. Grants are becoming more and more oversubscribed and there is healthy competition amongst the non-profit organizations in Alberta all vying for the same pots of money.

Barb Armbrust completed her seventh year as WSA President once again brining her in-depth sport knowledge and professional skill set to the table for all of our benefit. I have appreciated the Boards conscientious and thoughtful approach to all of their roles and have enjoyed working with everyone involved immensely.

WSA launched the new Bridging the Gap program in 2008 and momentum was consistent through the 6th year of delivery. BJ continues to bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to his position of BTG Program Coordinator and has made a great contribution to the role and the overall program. Throughout 2014 - 15 efforts towards initiating further ongoing programming, networking and collaborative opportunities with many other provider organizations was emphasized. Regional have-a-go days and weekly sessions have continued in both Edmonton and Calgary and efforts to bring the program into the communities of Red Deer, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Grande Prairie and Lloydminster were undertaken.

Wheelchair Basketball

The 2014 - 15 season could best be termed as one of stability and forward development. Alberta continues to work within the parameters established by WBC with respect to the domestic program and the CWBL. Joe Sask along with a committed group of wheelchair basketball volunteers continue to drive wheelchair Basketball forward throughout the province. This is an established trend that we see continuing into the future which will help steer our overall program to greater highs of success.

Calgary was host to the CWBL Womens Final which were staged March 28 – 30, 2015. Despite Calgary agreeing to take on the final championship tourney late in the season they did an outstanding job of organizing and running a very successful event. Congratulations goes out to both the Edmonton Inferno and Calgary Rollers on their first and second place performances.

The CWBL – Finals concept that brings all club teams together for a final playoff from across the country in the open division saw Edmonton take 6th.

Provincial Basketball Coordinators Darrell Nordell and Lorna Shannon continued to build off of the successes of their initial efforts. Having the two part-time roles that service the North and south portions of the province has worked well reducing both work load and geographical area of coverage to a more manageable size.

Alberta players named to the National Team for 2014 include Arinn Young for the Sr Women and Chad Jassman for the Sr Men. Darrell Nordell has also been named to the assistant coaching staff of the Sr Men's program. The U25 Women's Team includes Alberta players Helaina Cyr, Alarissa Haak and Arinn Young along with Head Coach Ross Norton.

Junior participation both in Edmonton and Calgary has increased dramatically from fewer than 5 active participants a few years ago, to 29 different juniors involved during this season. Many of these juniors were part of our very successful Canada Games Team for 2015. The Alberta Junior Team took the Bronze at the Canada Winter Games held in Prince George and all of our players are committed to working with their club teams and the Junior Provincial Program leading up to the next Canada Winter Games in February of 2019.

Our main focus will continue to be to strengthen our existing programs and grow the game in our current communities as well as in new areas of the province. This will only happen with continued focus on developing our established institutions (coaching, referees, CWBL, junior programs) and continuing to work on a consistent reliable structure for all of our programs to fit into. We are however making strides in a few newer exciting ventures

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 planning summits that took place over the last couple of years, 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 both grass root and national caliber athletes

wheelchair fitness, skills and 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 through BTG and by working with various groups, including 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. This past year we hosted 9 tournaments along with some great developmental learning opportunities for all ages and abilities.

Future Initiatives

WSA will attempt to continue its coordination and organization of wheelchair sport programs for the provincial men's, women's and junior teams along with grass root initiatives for all of our core sports. WSA's focus for the upcoming years will be on developing partnerships in sport development, marketing and promotion along with recruitment from grassroots through to high performance.

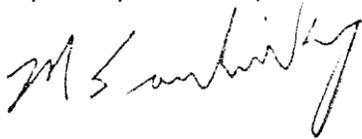
Conclusion

I have now been with WSA in the capacity of Executive Director for 8 years. During this time I have had the opportunity to help steer the direction and development of the organization in many new and exciting directions. I feel that we have accomplished many of the goals that we set out to achieve all of which has been done with the support of all the dedicated hardworking individuals that make up the extended WSA family.

As the saying goes "All Good Things Must Come to an End" as I will be stepping down from the ED position at the conclusion of 2015. An active recruitment plan has been implemented to secure my replacement and we are currently accepting applications for the position. Opportunity for new enthusiasm and new people will pave the way for the future of WSA.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Wendy and all the WBC Staff, the WBC Board and the wider Wheelchair Basketball Community across the country who all have provided me with guidance and assistance in carrying out my duties as Executive Director over the past 8 years. Alberta will continue to thrive in all things wheelchair basketball and I look forward to watching this development from the sidelines.

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