



**WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL CANADA**

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE	3
MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP	4
BOARD OF DIRECTORS	5
HIGH PERFORMANCE	6
DOMESTIC PROGRAMMING	8
AWARDS AND HALL OF FAME	11
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS	12
STAY CONNECTED	15





**PURPOSE :** Drive the growth and evolution of the Game while championing inclusion to empower all people of all abilities to live to their potential.

**OUR WINNING AMBITION:** Excellence – Every Day in Every Way

**GUIDING VALUES :** Excellence | Integrity | Inclusion | Accountability | Passion

# MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP



**KATHY NEWMAN**  
PRESIDENT,  
WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL CANADA

As we reflect on the 2024–25 fiscal year, we are proud of the continued progress Wheelchair Basketball Canada (WBC) has made in advancing our sport and strengthening our organization. This past year was one of strong momentum—defined by strategic focus, meaningful accomplishments and a shared commitment to excellence, inclusion and growth.

Guided by our [2022–2028 Strategic Plan](#) and our winning ambition, Excellence – Every Day in Every Way, we focused on delivering programs and initiatives that drive impact across the system. Strategic priorities in high performance, targeted recruitment, and member support and preparations to host the Ottawa 2026 IWBF Wheelchair Basketball World Championships provided a clear framework for decision-making and investment. Thanks to the dedication of our staff, Board and partners, we achieved tangible progress across each of these areas.

On the court, our National Team programs continued to demonstrate Canada’s strength on the international stage. Athletes and coaches benefited from high-quality training environments, competition opportunities and enhanced sport science and technical support. At the same time, we remained committed to building depth and long-term success by strengthening our development pathways and investing in emerging talent across the country.

Equally important were the strides made across our domestic programming. Participation and grassroots initiatives expanded access to wheelchair basketball in communities nationwide, reinforcing our belief in the transformative power of sport. Programs designed to introduce new participants, support coaches, and officials and foster inclusive environments helped ensure that wheelchair basketball remains accessible, welcoming and impactful at all levels—from playground to podium.

The 2024–25 year also marked a significant milestone as preparations continued for the 2026 IWBF Wheelchair Basketball World Championships in Ottawa, Ont. This once-in-a-generation event will leave a lasting legacy for our sport, and our communities and the progress achieved this year reflects strong collaboration and collective leadership across the organization.

We are grateful for the continued support of our funding partners, sponsors, donors and stakeholders. We also extend our sincere thanks to our Board of Directors for their governance and strategic leadership and to our staff and volunteers whose passion, professionalism and commitment drive our success every day.

As we look ahead, WBC is well positioned to build on this momentum. With a clear strategic direction and a strong, united community, we remain focused on creating opportunities, elevating performance and ensuring the long-term growth and sustainability of wheelchair basketball in Canada.

Thank you for being part of our journey and for your continued belief in the power of sport to inspire, connect and transform lives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Newman".

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wendy Gittens".

**WENDY GITTENS**  
CEO, WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL CANADA

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**KATHY NEWMAN**  
**PRESIDENT**



**THOMAS SOULLIERE**  
**DIRECTOR**



**TARA LLANES**  
**ATHLETE REPRESENTATIVE**



**MIKE LONGO**  
**DIRECTOR**



**JESSICA VLIEGENHART**  
**DIRECTOR**



**MICHEL PAPILLON**  
**TREASURER**

# HIGH PERFORMANCE

## Excellence Reimagined

WBC conducted a comprehensive High Performance debrief that led to a complete reset of our National Team programming. The reset is a strategic shift in how we define and deliver excellence.

Program leadership tackled strategic priorities to ensure alignment, including:

## A Redefinition of High Performance

Our National Team programming is centered around a new definition:

*“Excellence in performance habits, personal well-being and supportive team relationships, resulting in consistent podium results”*

## Enhanced Athlete Support and High-Performance Culture

A new staffing model has been implemented to strengthen athlete support across all National Team programs. This approach emphasizes the development of high-performance habits, mental and physical well-being and strong, cohesive team relationships.

## NextGen Development: Preparing for 2028 and Beyond

WBC has made significant investments in formalizing its Next Gen pathway with the hiring of a Next Gen Player Development Manager/Scout, who collaborates with clubs and Provincial Sport Organizations (PSOs) to identify, recruit, evaluate and develop emerging talent.



# HIGH PERFORMANCE

## Performance Highlights

### SENIOR WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM

#### Major Competitions



Women's IWBF Repechage Tournament  
(Osaka, Japan)

- Earned Paris qualification

Paris 2024 Paralympics - Fourth Place  
(Paris, France)



#### Exhibitions

- Canada-Germany exhibition  
(Ottawa, Ont.)

### SENIOR MEN'S NATIONAL TEAM

#### Major Competitions



Men's IWBF Repechage Tournament  
(Antibes, France)

- Earned Paris qualification

Paris 2024 Paralympics - Fourth Place  
(Paris, France)



#### Exhibitions

- Ulm Exhibition  
(Ulm, Germany)
- CBH Rechtsanwaelte Nations Cup  
Cologne  
(Cologne, Germany)

#### NEXTGEN

- 2024 Men's Kitakyushu Champions Cup  
(Kitakyushu, Japan)
- 2025 Women's Osaka Cup  
(Osaka, Japan)



# DOMESTIC PROGRAMMING

## Increasing Participants

WBC has been successful in recent years through a targeted approach to supporting clubs and PSOs. Each year, WBC meets one-on-one with each PSO to understand development goals within each region. These meeting notes directly inform operational planning and have yielded significant advancements in the sport.

Where capacity allows, WBC also provides targeted support to clubs. In Ontario during the 2024–25 year, WBC supported two club-based Jumpstart grants to get necessary equipment for the Ottawa Carleton Wheelchair Sports Association (Glouster) and the Centre Wellington Celtics (Fergus and Elora). WBC also continued to support the development of a club at Queen’s University in Kingston through coach education and assisted with the launch of a new club at the Independent Living Centre in Sudbury.

WBC embarked on a new era in 2024–25 with the launch of the RAMP Member Management System. RAMP has revolutionized data collection and management of events and member information.

## RAMP Interactive

Three PSOs and three clubs signed on to the RAMP system. This includes 618 members:

- 463 athletes
- 75 staff
- 30 WBC staff/contractors
- 60 officials



# DOMESTIC PROGRAMMING

## Pathways & Partnerships

WBC is focused on expanding delivery capacity through strategic partnerships. In 2024–25, WBC worked closely with education partners in Ontario, with a vision for wheelchair basketball programming at the high school and post-secondary levels in the near future.

Thanks to some incredible student leaders and teachers across the province, high school wheelchair basketball tournaments are now hosted annually in Ottawa, Kingston and Burlington.

WBC also partnered with several post-secondary programs to deliver curriculum-based sessions focused on course outcomes and experiential learning opportunities for students. Partnership organizations included Algonquin College, Collège La Cité, Queen’s University and Cape Breton University.

### Queen’s University

- Delivered a try-it session as part of the third year coaching course.
- Recruited a coach for the local program.
- Supported the start of a local drop-in program at Queen’s University.

### Algonquin College

- Collaborated with Abilities Ottawa to deliver a hybrid (in-person and virtual) session as part of Wheelchair Basketball Week.

### Collège La Cité

- Delivered sessions to police and fire programs.
- Partnered to host the first Campus Hoopfest.
- Hosted a 3x3 tournament for five post-secondary institutions (Carleton, uOttawa, La Cité, Algonquin and Cegep de L’Outaouais, which included 40 participants).



# DOMESTIC PROGRAMMING

## Events

The 2024–25 domestic calendar was a banner year for competitions. Leading into the year, the Development Committee worked on a competition review to refocus WBC’s national event offerings.

The Canadian Wheelchair Basketball League (CWBL) Finals is a celebration of the wheelchair basketball community with a place for everyone to play at a developmentally appropriate level. At the 2025 CWBL Finals in Montreal, Que. a record 16 teams competed in two divisions.

The WBC Nationals expanded and embraced a true best-on-best event environment, welcoming the return of the men’s division alongside the established women’s division.

## Winners



# AWARDS & HALL OF FAME

Five outstanding individuals were recognized at WBC's annual Awards and Hall of Fame Banquet, with three athletes inducted into the WBC Hall of Fame in recognition of their lasting contributions to the sport.

## Award Winners



**KAITLIN LAURIDSEN**  
Leadership Excellence Award



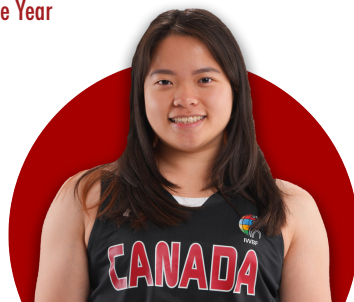
**LOGAN AALDERS**  
True Sport Award



**NICK VAN BAKEL**  
Junior Athlete of the Year



**COLIN HIGGINS**  
Male Athlete of the Year



**PUISAND LAI**  
Female Athlete of the Year

## HALL OF FAME



**DAVE DUREPOS**



**SABRINA DUREPOS**



**WALTER DANN**

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

## Amplifying Impact

Marketing and communications played a pivotal role in amplifying strategic programming efforts and fueling national growth throughout the year. By pairing high-impact, recurring storytelling—such as the Beyond the Arc and From the Sideline feature series—with timely coverage of the Senior National Teams' strong performances on the world stage, WBC strengthened its connection with fans, partners and the broader Canadian sport community.

The Paris 2024 Paralympic Games marked an invaluable opportunity to reach new audiences. Compelling, athlete-centered content drove unprecedented digital momentum, delivering significant gains in reach, impressions and engagement. The exponential increase in engagement with WBC channels during Paris 2024 alone reflected heightened national interest and pride in Team Canada. This momentum extended well beyond social media, with surging website traffic and high email engagement underscoring the growing appetite for meaningful, in-depth involvement with wheelchair basketball.



# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

## Social Media Performance

FOLLOWERS



15.8 K

▲ 12.8%



7.2 K

▲ 19.3%



8.9K

▼ 0.4%



1.1K

N/A

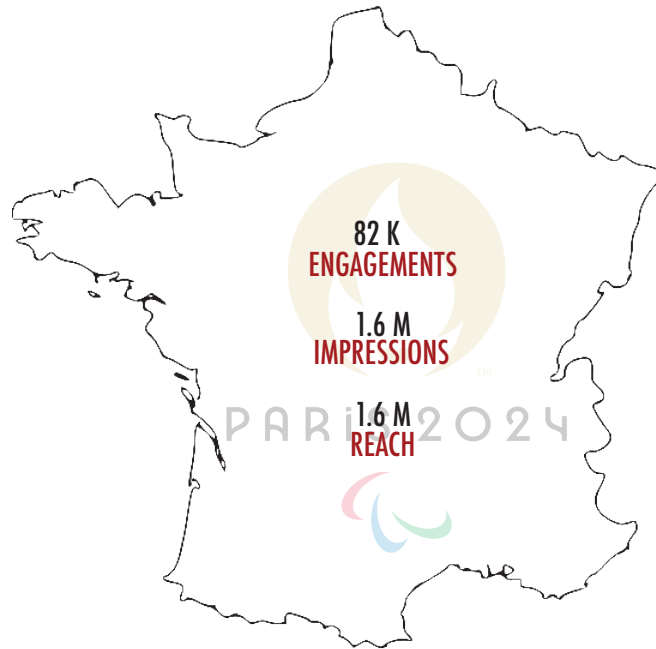
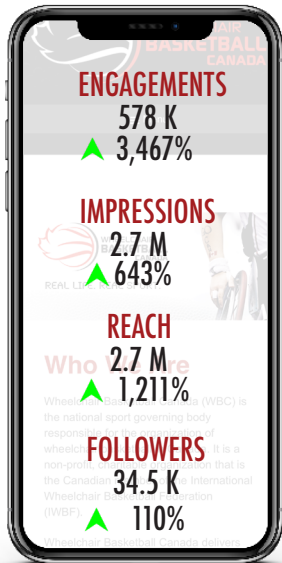


1.5K

N/A

TOTALS

PARIS 2024 SNAP SHOT



## TOP PERFORMING POSTS



3K  
ENGAGEMENTS

242K  
IMPRESSIONS

237K  
REACH

1.6K  
ENGAGEMENTS

58.2K  
IMPRESSIONS

39 K  
REACH



\* Percentage increases in social metrics shown in comparison to 2023 calendar year

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

## Web & Newsletter Performance



**WEBSITE** | [wheelchairbasketball.ca](http://wheelchairbasketball.ca)

 **Visits**  
131,044  
▲ 2,229%

 **Unique Visitors**  
104,857  
▲ 1,832%

 **Pageviews**  
222,910  
▲ 1,364%

\* Percentage increases in web metrics shown in comparison to 2023 calendar year



## TIP-OFF NEWSLETTER

The WBC Tip-Off newsletter is distributed monthly and recaps the latest news, performances and highlights upcoming events.

 **Subscribers**  
3,109

 **Open Rate**  
44.5%

 **Click Rate**  
10%

# STAY CONNECTED



@wheelchairbasketballcanada



@wheelchairbasketballcanada



@WCBballCanada



@wheelchair-basketball-canada



@WheelchairBasketballCanada

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## MAILING ADDRESS

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