

B.C. ATHLETICS A.G.M. 2007

ATHLETICS CANADA REPORT

The past year has been one of growth and consolidation for Athletics Canada – one in which the emphasis has been upon developmental programs and team building for the major events in 2007 and 2008.

The organizational gap left by the departure of Alex Gardiner for COC pastures has been filled by the appointment of Martin Goulet, as Chief High Performance Officer, and Les Gramantik as Head Coach. It says much for our sport that we were able to reach to within the Association to find the necessary excellence, experience and expertise to fill these crucial roles as we head into the World Championships in Osaka this year and the Olympics in Beijing in 2008.

To replace Martin as Director for Endurance Programs, we were very pleased to welcome Hugh Cameron, who brings a wealth of knowledge and achievement to this area of our operations.

Of the three major international competitions in 2006, it was a particular joy to see the performance of our younger athletes at the World Junior Championships in Beijing in August. To secure two silver medals on such a stage, one by our Senior 200m Champion Brian Barnett in his specialty, and one by the 4 x 100m relay team, bodes well for the future in those events. The additional excellent placings in several other events indicate that those young performers are taking full advantage of the strong coaching and competition experiences which they are receiving in the Branch programs here in B.C. and across the country.

At the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne in March, in spite of being “out of season” for our athletes, we were able to increase the number of medals won at the previous Games in 2002, as well as having Chantal Petitclerc chosen to carry the flag proudly into the Opening Ceremonies on behalf of the entire Canadian team. Chantal also led the way in our medal winning performances at the IPC Paralympic World Championships in the Netherlands, where we found that a large number of emerging countries are now putting major efforts into the advancement of that category of athletes, with increasingly successful results on the podium.

This is another reason why our programs across the board must be focused upon the development of athletes to step up to the international competition level in every aspect of our sport.

Of the National Championships successfully staged across the country last year, it was especially ironic that the National Cross-Country event should be extremely well presented here in Vancouver on the only weekend which was white instead of wet!! At least the runners didn't have to watch out for falling trees!

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With the emphasis of Sport Canada upon medal production at the major international events as the basis of its funding of National Federations, Athletics Canada is having to expand both its planning and coaching frameworks into the areas of performance predictability at the world level.

While this adds a dimension to our programs which many find as not necessarily desirable, it is nevertheless how the nature of the sporting world is developing in Canada. Rather than flinch from it, we have to respond by building into the outcomes of our developmental programs for both disabled and able-bodied athletes an increasing sense of confidence in their own abilities and in the excellence of our coaches and coaching systems.

Having to predict the number of medals we anticipate gaining at World Championships and at Olympic and Paralympic Games should be seen as moving away from the area of hope into the new area of expectation – expectations which our top athletes have shown themselves capable of achieving on a regular basis.

At the National Office, C.E.O. Joanne Mortimore has assembled a team of extremely competent and eager staff members who are ensuring that the aim of Athletics Canada being recognized as one of the “best practices” national sport organization is being met.

An increasing effort is being put upon the work of the various A.C. Committees, in particular those associated with Finance and Strategic Planning. In this context, it must be noted that B.C. Athletics is a leader among the Provincial Branches in its willingness and capability to integrate its planning framework and processes into that of the National Association. When other Branches are able to re-assess and re-articulate their processes in a similar fashion, then the Association’s need to have everybody “on the same page” can only increase the effectiveness of its efforts, and result in more of the success for our athletes and their coaches which we all wish for.

Respectfully submitted,

**Danny Daniels,
Vice-Chair, Athletics Canada.**