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After 1 year in the role as Athlete Rep's we have spent a lot of time listening, gathering information and getting up to speed with BC Athletics processes.

We feel BC Athletics does an excellent job balancing the needs and wants of its diverse clubs and membership. From our experience we view BC Athletics as an open-minded organization that strives to improve the experience for those at all levels in the organisation including, staff, officials, coaches, and athletes. From an athlete's standpoint BC Athletics is viewed as a leader in a number of instances.

Observations according to the pillars of BC Athletics Strategic Plan:

Athlete Development

- **Sport Education:** It would be great to see BC Athletics bring groups together with the purpose of education (i.e. Nutrition, Training, Anti-Doping, Strength Training, Mental Performance, etc.). These are all areas which BC Athletics has access to experts in the field and it would be great to share this with the membership. These events could also provide new ways to generate revenue for the organization by charging a modest entry fee to attendees.
- **Leverage our athletes.** We have so many great athletes living and training in BC, we need to leverage them to encourage and inspire the next generation of athletes. It would be great to host 1-day training camps that incorporate speaking sessions. It would love to see BC's Top Athletes return to the JD Championships or BC Summer games as special guests to give presentations and hand out awards. In return BC Athletics could offer a small amount of compensation to the elite athletes which can be very helpful.
- **Be a voice for the athletes** – BC Athletics as an organization can be great asset for local athletes in taking up issues with Athletics Canada and other governing bodies. We need to open up the avenues of communication so that when an athlete does have an issue they feel comfortable to approach the athlete reps of BC Athletics Staff directly.
- **Improve the Athlete Experience** – Kids today have so many choices for sport. Track and Field and Cross Country won't likely see a major decline in participation anytime soon but in order to make it relevant for the next generation we must continue to innovate. Youth today are surrounded by technology and it is imbedded in everything they do. They have come to expect it. We as an organization need to find ways to incorporate technology with our sport to increase its relevance for the younger generation. A couple of things we would like to see:
 - **Live video streaming**, especially at our championship events. We are falling behind by not offering this at our championship events and losing potentially reaching a greater audience and valuable exposure of the sport.
 - **Live race results.** At the BC High School XC Championships this year, I was coaching a team that ended up placing 3rd in the senior category. We didn't learn of this until we were on the ferry ride home. There were no video boards or live results posted on site. Could you imagine any other sport where this happened? (i.e. basketball, football, hockey) It would never happen at any

level of sport and would be immensely detrimental to the sport if there were no live scores/results. We need to work to move our sport forward to provide the very basics of competitions, which is a scoreboard!

- The next step would then to provide live in-race results. This would provide a superior fan experience, enabling them to know who is in leading the race both individual and as a team.

Coaching

- **Coaching & Officials Education** – It's great to see BC Athletics take a proactive view of coaching & officials education, reaching out to current and former athletes to encourage them to take training and keep involved in the sport. Getting athletes involved in coaching & officiating before they leave the sport will increase the likelihood they continue to participate in the sport once they have moved on from a competitive role. Local universities are likely great places to target.

Competition

- **Funding for provincial teams to National Championships.** Many other provinces simply don't do this, especially in Cross Country, and it is great to see BC Athletics being a leader in this area by offering these opportunities.
- **Provincial Cross Country Championships Prize money.** This was implemented a couple of years ago and has been very successful in attracting BC's top talent to attend these provincial championship meets. There is tremendous value in the younger athletes getting an opportunity to see and compete at the same meets as some of BC & Canada's top athletes.
- **Innovative events** – Events like the Whistler 50 are fun and unique yet they still stay true to the sport. When BC Athletics hosts its own events it goes along ways to increase brand awareness and good will for the organization.
- **2014 NACAC U23 Championship** - This summer Kamloops was host to the Under 23 NACAC Track and Field Championships. This was an exciting event for Kamloops to play host to, bringing in athletes from all over North and Central America. This was also a great opportunity for Canada to showcase its athletes and build excitement for the sport here at home. From all accounts this was an absolute failure. Canada sent a very small team to a home championships where the costs would be significantly reduced and we would have had a great opportunity to win more medals. On top of this, a number of the fields had as little as 2 athletes competing, a terrible experience for the athletes and for any crowd in attendance. I see this as a major miss on Athletics Canada's part and we need to look to ensure this doesn't happen again in future events by relaxing the standards to ensure more athletes qualify for the meet and by looking at ways to ensure other countries can bring larger teams to the event. (It's worthwhile to look at AC's standard for this meet. They were far too challenging, leaving a number of deserving athletes at home who could have won medals at the meet!)

Organizational Capacity

For BC Athletics to continue to remain an innovative organization that provides value to its membership we think it needs to continue to improve in the areas of:

- **Transparency** – The more information the better. The membership will always appreciate knowing where funds are being directed and why decisions have been made. Posting documentation to the website is very helpful. (Ex. Document explaining why each person on the BC carding list was selected according to criteria)
 - *** **BC Carding** - A few athletes have come forward with concerns about BC Carding. They want to know the reasoning behind why an athlete receives less funds if they work, etc.
- **Communication** – This is an area where BC Athletics has improved immensely over the past few years but can always be improved upon. The blog has been a great way to get information out to members, but awareness needs to be made that members should subscribe to these channels in order to keep up to date on current events and news. With the high volume of BC Athletics members using social media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. there should be continued use to provide information and as Athlete Reps we can further assist in fostering communication between all members.