

BC Athletics Zone 6 Director Candidate Bio - Darren Willis

(2021-08-17)

Darren has served as the Zone 6 representative on the BC Athletics Board of Directors since 2017. He lives in Port Alberni, BC and has a diverse background both within and outside of sport.

Coaching

He is currently:

- Head Coach/Director of the Alberni Valley Track Club
- Track & Field coach for the Alberni District Secondary School
- Coach/Director for EMS Weightlifting
- Strength & Fitness coach for the West Coast Hockey Prep Camp

NCCP certified in Track & Field and Olympic Weightlifting, Darren has coached athletes in Track & Field, Olympic Weightlifting, Football, Basketball, Hockey, Rugby, Skiing and Figure Skating. Several of those athletes have won Provincial or National Championships in their sport and international Masters events. He works with athletes ranging from the Junior Development level to Masters age.

Event Management

Providing opportunities for athletes (and communities) means getting involved with event management. Over the years those have included:

- 2004 BC Winter Games (Port Alberni, BC)
 - Part of media team. Responsible for design, layout and production of the official Games Souvenir Program.
- 2005 Canadian Junior National Championships - Olympic Weightlifting (Port Alberni, BC)
 - The first Canadian Junior National Championships to be held in BC
- 2008/2009 World Under-17 Hockey Championships (Port Alberni, BC)
 - Part of media team. Worked with Hockey Canada on the design, layout, production and sales of the Official tournament program.
- 20 editions (1999-2019) of the A&R Memorial Weightlifting Competition (Port Alberni, BC)
 - Annual Olympic Weightlifting competition. Until 2019 was the last qualifier for Western Canadian Championships and the senior National Championships for BC athletes.
- Several editions of the Bob Dailey Track & Field Meet (Port Alberni, BC)
 - Meet annually welcomes over 300 athletes.
 - Responsible for planning, organization and running of the event.
- 2018 Vancouver Island High School Championships (Port Alberni, BC)
 - Scheduling, volunteer recruitment and organization, set-up/tear-down, meet management
 - Event drew over 800 athletes from Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast

Athlete

Prior to coaching sport, Darren was a multi-sport athlete (Track & Field, Soccer, Football, Rugby, Volleyball, Badminton, Olympic Weightlifting) who competed in both Football and Track & Field at the collegiate level. His sport highlights included:

- BC Summer Games (Track & Field)
- BC High School Track & Field Championships (3-time silver medalist)
- BC High School Soccer Championships (Provincial Champion)
- Collegiate Football (UBC, Santa Barbara City College, Hofstra University - Wide Receiver/Running Back)
- Collegiate Track & Field (Santa Barbara City College, anchored both 4 x100m and 4 x 400m teams)
- Olympic Weightlifting (Team BC member at Western Canadian Senior Championships (Team Champions), IWF Pan Am Masters Championships (silver medalist), held BC Masters Records for Snatch, Clean & Jerk, Total for over a decade)

Outside of Sport

With a Bachelor's degree in Finance from Hofstra University (NY) Darren worked for years as an analyst and consultant to clients in the private sector, government and community organizations including:

- Hupacasath First Nation
- Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
- Nuu-chah-nulth Seafood Development Corporation
- Shawn Atleo (former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations)
- Ecotrust Canada
- Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (on behalf of Ecotrust Canada)
- Kakawis Family Development Centre (now Kackaamin Family Development Centre)
- Carden Consulting
- Aboriginal Business Service Network
- First Nations Social Development Steering Committee Society (FNSDSC)
- Human Resource & Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)
- Scott Kemp Architect

While working with Ecotrust Canada, Darren was part of a team building a business banking portfolio of environmentally sustainable businesses through its Coastal Loan Fund.

Darren helped raise over \$20 million in investment capital for clients.

Things To Know

He takes pictures (dwillis.studio), with his work having appeared in the Globe & Mail's online edition (Architecture), Canadian Hot Rods Magazine (Automotive) and other places; even on the side of a vehicle (Landscape image for Dave Koszegi - Remax).

He's a published writer. Commissioned to write an article for Making Waves - Canada's Community Economic Development Magazine (volume 19, number 1, Spring 2008). The article, titled "A Powerful Idea", filled 5 pages of the magazine on the development of the Hupacasath First Nation's Upnit Power Corporation which was the first majority First Nation-owned renewable energy project in Canada.

He's hit a Hole-In-One and actually won a Golf tournament. What?

He is forced to ride over extremely high mountains, on a bike, by "friends" when he travels outside of Canada.

He will travel for food.