

President's Report
Cheryl McKeeman

I recently met with representatives of Sport BC, 2010 Legacies Now, and government's Sport & Recreation Branch. They are meeting with about 60 sports, to review how sports are managing. As you may remember, these parties removed all "core" funding from racquetball several years ago. They are now revisiting their funding processes, and who knows maybe we'll get some funding or at least some "in-kind services" such as access to staff. Time will tell. Without a doubt we need such access – there are many basic activities that we have allowed to slip because we've been busy running tournaments and writing grants and coaching and officiating and all the other things that come with being part of the Board! However, with funding comes accountability, so we'll need to pull up our socks in terms of some of our processes.

Last year we hosted the Senior World Doubles Championships. It was a great event, with people from many countries. There was some wonderful racquetball, even though we were all lame by the end of it. The BCRA was able to subsidize participation of BC players.

Last year our Juniors had an amazing second-place finish in the junior nationals. As a result, we were able to obtain funding for a Junior Road Show, whereby juniors will travel around the province demonstrating the sport and speaking with juniors. The Juniors will start this show later this year. Our juniors will be traveling to Burlington in April for the 2010 Nationals, and we are having a serious look at hosting 2011. The BCRA subsidizes junior participation in the Nationals and in other specific events.

Anthony Schonberger was named to the National Junior Team, and represented Canada in the Dominican Republic. The BCRA was able to subsidize some of Anthony's expenses.

We're hosting the 2010 Senior National Championships here at REVS from May 23-29. Doubles will be Sunday-Tuesday, followed by singles.

We also were successful at obtaining a grant to digitize our archives. Kelly Gauthier has photographed hundreds of old trophies, racquets, and other gear. She also is in the process of scanning in old BCRA and Racquetball Canada newsletters and magazines. The next step will be to get this all organized on our website for all to see. We hope to have it ready to show at the Nationals.

We also were successful at obtaining some Gaming money to help our programs. In particular we have some funding to help with juniors traveling to events within the province, and other funding to help with juniors training programs.

Our membership numbers are quite stable. We are seeing lots of new faces, which means that maybe tournament play is down a bit, but we're still attracting new people to this sport that we all love.

Thanks to all the Board members this year: Ken Backman (Special Projects), Stephen Culhane (Junior Development, Website), Al Cuttriss (Tournaments), Kelly Gauthier (Tournaments & Fundraising), Debbie Goodhope (Junior Development), Diana Hambley (Treasurer, Rankings), Gord Hay (Coaching), Rick Mattson (Special Projects), Marvin Meissner (Special Projects), Sandra Neilsen (Secretary, Newsletter), Ken Slade (Membership), Cal Smith (Officiating). The 2-year terms of office for Kelly, Debbie, Gord, Rick, Marvin and Ken Slade all expire this week, and we'll be accepting nominations later in this meeting.

And to our funding partners: thanks to the Gaming Branch, Sports and Recreation Branch, 2010 Legacies Now, and Racquetball Canada, all of whom provided funding for specific programs.

Officiating Report 2009/10
Cal Smith

If there were no qualified referees, who would win? Why do we need referees? There are a number of answers but the best one would be to keep the game fair for everyone. If there are no referees, like when you play on the weekend or whenever, how many times do you replay a point because you don't want to say anything to the other player about how they completely got in your way and took your shot away. This isn't fair and the guys who get away with it don't even think they did anything wrong.

Nobody likes playing against the person who just stands in the middle of the court and doesn't try to get out of the way. We need good referees to keep the games on a level playing field. Come on out to a referee clinic and learn to play the game right. The best way to improve your officiating is to do a lot of it and to referee higher level matches. For anyone interested in getting a higher certification, please contact me and I'll start the process for you.

You can also access the rules on the web on our BCRA website or on Racquetball Canada's website. The Official Guide for Referees is also on the web and you can use it to get some idea of how to interpret rules you are unsure of. Take a look at it and see if you can learn something from it or cause you to ask some questions.

There have not been any formal clinics this year and only people who have approached me for higher certification have been looked at. I know there are a lot of you that could still gain something from going to a clinic, so get some of your friends together and arrange with me to come out and go through the rule book with you. I'm sure you will learn something that can help you as a ref and as a player just by knowing more about the rules.

There are local, Provincial, National and International events that you can attend and referee at if you are interested in furthering your refereeing capabilities. All of these events will only be available to qualified Level 3 referees. If you want to improve your refereeing or if you have a tournament coming up and want a clinic before it, contact me to set it up. We need more referees at higher levels and all it takes is a little initiative to get there.

**Junior Development:
2010-2011 Season Plans - Objectives -
Stephen Culhane**

I - 2009 Overview Season Report

2009 Junior Nationals

Team BC had our most successful nationals in 15 years in Regina, placing second to host Saskatchewan. Our plan to focus on our doubles teams paid off in a huge way. Sebastien and Tanner (18s), Anthony and Sidd (14s), Sivan and Chloe (14s), and Nicholas and Connor (12s) all took home national championships. Anthony also won the 14 singles.

2010 Junior Nationals

- We held a successful Summer Team BC Training Camp at REVS for one week in August.

- Two weekend Team BC Training Camps are to be held in next two weeks in preparation for Junior Nationals in Burlington

Junior Development Centres

a) REVS J-League continues with strong numbers (30 players). As many of these are new to racquetball, it continues to be a challenge to transition them into tournament play. Many of these players are now in their first provincials, but only one is expected to compete in nationals.

- The J-League has been broken down into two groups - the basic league and the Elite Player Development Program in response to a tendency for more advanced and older players to drift away from the league. This shift has been somewhat successful, particularly as the provincials and nationals approach. Sebastien has come on board to run the EPDP with Steve.

- Our language information efforts have started to pay off. After meeting with the Korean players at REVS (adults) 8 new junior players have come into the program. As well, discussions among Cantonese-speaking players in the league has resulted in 6 new players. Two new Japanese-speaking players have also joined.

New challenges are arising, however, with a great deal more support being needed for these players and parents. We are planning to have parents take on communications support within different language groups to help explain the ins and outs of tournaments, nationals, etc.

c) Newlands has agreed to serve as an alternative location for J-League on Sundays for next season, in situations where there is a handball or other event at REVS. We did not need to move there this year.

d) Campbell River - A very successful program continues in Campbell River; led by Gord Hay. Support for the junior program in Campbell River has continued. Using partial travel grants, we were able to bring three juniors up for the North Island event. As well, one of their athletes was able to come to Bellingham to play for BC in the second part of the BC-Washington Challenge Series.

e) Prince George - unfortunately, the closing of the courts in Prince George has this program in limbo.

Junior Roadshows

- We received funding to hold our **junior roadshow** events and have scheduled three destinations - Campbell River (including a stop in Gibsons), Victoria, and Kelowna. These are scheduled in May and June.

- The Kelowna roadshow event is going to be held in conjunction with Richard Gauthier's Aboriginal Racquetball Program which subsidizes instructor costs, court rental, and equipment costs, for aboriginal youth in partnership with the Ki-low-na Friendship Centre's youth programming.

II - 2010 Season Plans and Objectives

Co-Ordinators

- Bring in Sebastien Boissonneault as a third member to the Junior Development team
- Steve C. to undergo Intro to Competitive and continue with certification efforts

Junior Nationals at REVS

- Put together Junior Nationals Hosting Team
- Formally apply to host junior nationals in April 2011
- Agreement on increased player-based fundraising.
- Work through logistics of fundraising that reflects the athletic, personal development, and team approaches the group wants to foster in young players.
- Assist more players who cannot otherwise attend to do "personal fundraising - sponsorship of these individuals (eg: Penny Pratt Scholarship)

- Work to build doubles teams for missing categories and to bring more young ladies with us to the next nationals

- Team uniforms that do not need to be replaced ever year, with low cost T-shirts for particular years -- such as a good quality windbreaker or hoodie
- Summer Junior Clinic - preparing for Junior Nationals in BC

Leagues

- continue to increase players in REVS - J-League - and to define competitive players for BC and National Level competitions
- put together a province-wide initiative to support junior leagues in other centres
- contact Newlands as an alternative location for J-League
- Bring more parents into Community Coaching level, and league management positions
- -- For example, Lani Dinur is serving in this role with the J-League at REVS and we are encouraging more parents to do so.

Ranking Report *Diane Hambley*

It has been a quiet year for ranking. All of the match results for B. C. tournaments (except for the B. C./Washington Challenge junior matches) are now entered automatically through the use of the R2 Sports program during the tournament so ranking is always up to date at the beginning of every month. There continues to be a problem with the duplication of some names and it has not yet been resolved whether this is caused by the players, tournament directors or the program itself.

It is important for every player to double check if he/she is already in the R2 system before registering as a new participant. If you have lost or forgotten your login information, then do not create a new ID because you will forfeit all your previous ranking experience.

There was a problem with two people losing their ranking history and having it switched with the other's but this seemed to be an isolated incident and not related to the duplication of names.

If you have any questions about how the ranking system works or your particular ranking, please contact me.

Respectfully submitted
Diana Hambley

Racquetball Canada Report *Cheryl McKeeman*

I am the BC representative on the Racquetball Canada Board, which is composed of 10 provincial reps (appointed by their provinces) and 7 elected Executive members. At the May 2010 AGM, we will see elections for the positions of President, VP High Performance, and VP Technical (responsible for tournaments, coaching and rankings).

Over the past year, with the hiring of new Executive Director and the selection of a new VP Finance, numerous problems with the national accounting were identified. Those two individuals have worked hard to fix the problems and appear finally to have the situation in better control.

Canada continues to have distant-third performances internationally, lagging behind the USA and the powerhouse Mexico. We should all be concerned about this because national funding is strongly related to international standings.

In terms of domestic programs, coaching training has received a lot of attention as the new courses are prepared. People have been trained to deliver the new courses, and (a new part of coaching programs) to evaluate trained coaches. Long Term Athlete Development principles continue to be incorporated.

I'm hoping that the new "Racquetball Rocks" training program will soon be ready to launch. This will be a consistent national program for teaching people skills. We will look to the national body for assistance in implementation.

The new VP of Communications and Marketing has kind of disappeared, so we are ending yet another year with little communication with the membership. This is an ongoing problem, and hopefully one that the new Board will have more luck addressing. Related to communication, Racquetball Canada has invested many thousands of dollars in their website which also links to the R2 events site, with the rankings threaded throughout both.

There has been some turmoil recently as the Board struggles with whether incumbents should be able to extend their term of office beyond 6 years. This will be resolved either at the May elections, or before.

Coaching Report 2009/2010 ***Gord Hay***

This year we decided to focus on developing coaches already in place, rather than expanding to have more coaches. A decline in juniors and facilities overall has forced this decision.

I trained three more coaches at the Community Sport level as two of them were already assuming roles at REVS and the J-Program there. Due to my work commitments with the Olympics and Paralympics, I personally was not in a position to develop the program any further over this year.

With the help of Geri Powell, Sebastien Boissonneault and I are planning to run an Introduction to Competition Course in May. This will enhance our program two-fold, as Sebastien and I will further advance our training in becoming facilitators, which will allow us to train more coaches at the Competition level. We need to have 8 registrants in order to run this course, so please think about whether you or someone you know would like to receive this training; I've also contacted Alberta to see if they would like to send some coaches.

Racquetball Canada is continuing to develop courses for more advanced levels.

It is important that we identify coaches in more remote locations to help expand our sport in these areas. With the closing of the courts at the Prince George Y, and courts threatened in other locations as well, we must work even harder to get local trained coaches who can help develop and maintain our sport.

BC Games ***Gord Hay***

I have been in contact with the BC Winter Games Office. In 2010 the games were in Terrace. The next games are scheduled for Vernon. They take only a limited number of sports, and they have already established their mandated sports. I have requested that Racquetball be considered to fill any void that may develop. A problem we face is that there are not facilities in every location that hosts the Winter Games, nor in every zone of the province.

The 2014 games are scheduled for Mission, so this upcoming year is the time to start another application process with the Winter Games Society.

Tournaments ***Al Cuttriss***

Al Cuttriss reported that numbers were down a little this year, and encouraged all players to support the local clubs and the sport by playing in more tournaments. Abbotsford will be offered this year (April 16-18).