



CBTF Fall Board Meeting 2013
Report from Saskatchewan Baton Twirling Association
(Submitted by Alison Pickrell, Chair)

It has been another busy year for baton twirling in Saskatchewan. SBTA membership numbers were strong in 2012-13 with a total of 416 members including 204 athletes, plus coaches/instructors and volunteers. Although the number of competitive athletes dropped to 98 from 108, our pre-competitive athlete numbers grew from 10 to 22 and recreational athlete numbers from 73 to 84.

Saskatchewan clubs include: Southern Dancers & Twirlers in Assiniboia; Phoenix Baton, Sundown Optimist Buffalo Gals, and Twirlin' on Up in Regina; and the Optimist Twirling Connection and Saskatoon Myracles in Saskatoon. There are also recreational baton programs available through an L1 coach in North Battleford, through Giselle's Showtyme Dance, Balgonie Dance & Twirl, and a Ready, Set, Twirl instructor in Prince Albert.

Strategic Planning

As per Sask Sport requirements, SBTA completed and approved a new strategic plan for 2013-16. The following priorities were identified for the upcoming planning cycle:

- Achieve and sustain required membership levels in at least 5 of the 9 provincial districts in order to meet Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund Sport Eligibility Criteria. Although SBTA meets criteria for overall membership numbers, they currently meet geographical distribution requirements in only 4 districts;
- Address the concerns raised by the Saskatchewan Lotteries Sport Funding about the number of active coaches certified in the NCCP, and to provide evidence of our ongoing commitment to coaching education and formal training;
- Implement Sask Sport's mandatory on-line training course for coaches, "Respect in Sport", to help ensure a safe and positive sport environment;
- Undertake planning to host Canadian Team Trials for the 2014 World Baton Twirling Championships. The event will be held in Saskatoon at the University of Saskatchewan PAC in May 2014.

Competitions

Fun competitions are held to provide a relaxed atmosphere for newer twirlers and their families to experience how a real competition runs. 103 twirlers took part in our fun competitions in 2013:

Winter Wonders "Just for Fun" (OTC) in February
Spring Fiesta "Just for Fun" (SOBG/Phoenix) in March

In addition, the following competitive events were held:

Twirl-A-Myracle (SMI) in March
Spring Surprise (OTC) in March
Rising Stars (Phoenix) in April
Queen City Classic/Provincials (SOBG) in May

Saskatchewan had strong athlete representation at I-Cup Qualifiers in Barrie in May, Canadian Championships in Moncton in July, and I-Cup in Netherlands this August. SBTA provided scholarships to top placing athletes at Provincials attending Canadians. Financial assistance was also provided to the 24 Saskatchewan athletes and 2 coaches who were part of the contingent representing Canada at International Cup in the Netherlands. Congratulations to all of our athletes for a job well done.

Clinics, Courses & Forums

SMI hosted “Escalate to Excellence”, a clinic targeting BN/BI/A twirlers, in October 2012 in Saskatoon. Guest clinicians included Keisuke Komada (Japan), Cheryl & Karrissa Wimberley (USA), Deandra Leslie (ON), and Jill Ford (AB). A total of 6 Saskatchewan coaches, 66 Saskatchewan athletes, and 5 out of province athletes participated. In conjunction with the clinic, OTC hosted an awards banquet at the Delta Bessborough Hotel to celebrate the successes of our Saskatchewan athletes, and the hard work of our coaches and volunteers. The Elva Taylor Honourary membership award winner this year was Kim Taylor.

A total of 45 athletes participated in our pre-competitive and C-level clinics. OTC hosted the “Twirling Slumber Party” clinic in Saskatoon in January 2013, and SOBG hosted the 6th Annual “Baton Beach Party” in Regina in February 2013. These clinics provided an opportunity for our newer twirlers to enhance their baton skills, meet baton twirlers from other clubs, and also meet I-CUP team contenders who helped out at the events.

Ratings clinics were held in conjunction with the Twirl-A-Myracle and Spring Surprise competitions. These clinics provided athletes with an opportunity to have their I-Cup and WBTF routines critiqued by judges. 18 individuals, 2 pairs, and 2 groups had their routines critiqued.

During our first competition of the year SBTA hosted an athletes’ forum at a local Saskatoon restaurant. The forum, led by SBTA’s Athletes’ Representative, gave athletes aged 13 and up an opportunity to socialize and to provide input and suggestions for the upcoming year. 25 athletes took part in this event.

An intensive 2-day Level 1 Coaching Clinic was offered in Saskatoon in June 2013. Six participants achieved their Level 1 CBTF Coaching Certificate. A Summer Play Escapes Instructor Course was offered in both Regina and Saskatoon to train experienced twirlers to deliver a 1-hour introduction to baton course at city playgrounds this summer.

The CBTF M2 judging course was offered in September 2012, and it was followed up with an M3 judging course in March 2013. A total of 4 were registered. Joanne Moser has now received her M2&M3 judging certification, and Megan Priel her M2

certification. Additional certifications are pending but expected shortly once paperwork is completed.

Other Activities

SBTA continues to meet its mandate to promote and grow the sport of baton in the province. The following assistance programs were in place in 2012-13:

- Sport Promotion Incentive Grant (assists full voting clubs by offsetting the costs associated with participating in or hosting events such as parades, bring-a-friend day and demonstrations).
- Membership Incentive Grant (assists non-voting recreational clubs or groups by providing per-athlete funding to help grow and/or sustain programming)
- Membership Assistance Program (assists full-voting clubs to support community and club level sport development)
- Grassroots/Skills Development Grant (provides clubs with financial assistance to offer Skills Development Program badge testing)
- Training Assistance Program (TAP) gym times were provided in both Regina and Saskatoon and many athletes took advantage of extra practice times

SBTA continues to utilize funding from the Sask Sport Exceptional Needs Grant to run its Ready, Set, Twirl Program, and we once again participated in summer playground programming in Saskatoon, Regina, Warman, Craik, Bengough and Prince Albert.

Clubs partook in a number of additional promotional activities throughout the year such as the Santa Claus Parades in both Saskatoon and Regina, hands on demonstrations at the Children's Festival in Saskatoon, and special performances at the Optimist Club in Regina, the CIS Hockey Championships, and the Farmers Market in Saskatoon. At the University of Saskatchewan, ten students were instructed how to teach baton to participants in a wheelchair. Over the past season SBTA coaches/athletes demonstrated our sport to 1160 participants, 430 were boys.

There were six testing days for the Skills Development Program (SDP) held in the Province. A total of 143 ribbons, badges and pins “awarded”.

Awards and Recognition

Once again Sask Sport awarded our baton athletes with Future Best funding. 2013 recipients of this funding were Kayla McKinnon and Kiera West.

SBTA awarded Kayla MacKinnon with a High Performance Athlete Training Grant. This grant provides financial assistance to athletes who have completed grade 12, and are competing at an advanced or elite level at national and international events.

Two of our members are receiving Sask Sport Awards. Elan Paluck is being honoured for the Volunteer Award which recognizes individuals who have tirelessly devoted their time and effort toward the development of their sport at a local, national and international level. Myra Kirk is being honoured for the Female Coaching Dedication Award which recognizes the outstanding accomplishments and long-term contributions made by female

coaches to their sport, athletes, and community. Elan and Myra will be presented with their awards at the SBTA Fall Banquet in October 2013.

Maureen Johnson was recognized with an Honorary WBTF membership during an awards ceremony at ICUP in Netherlands. Maureen is the first Canadian recipient.

Special congratulations to Brenda O'Connor, our SBTA Sport Coordinator, for completing her "Leading the Way" professional development certificate. 21 graduates of this 7-course program were recognized at the Sask Sport AGM in June.

The Saskatchewan Baton Twirling Association was recognized as Executive of the Year by CBTF at the Canadian Championships in July. I would like to thank the Executive and all of our board members, athletes, coaches, and volunteers who have contributed to this past year's successes. SBTA is truly blessed to have such a dedicated and knowledgeable group of individuals involved in the sport of baton.