

SBTA Technical Report

Saskatchewan had another tremendous year as we continue to find new ways to grow and develop our sport as we come out of a tremendously challenging time with COVID.

Our membership numbers for athletes are starting to climb as we went from 157 athletes last year to 190 athletes this year. We hope to continue this upward trend with some of the incentive programs that we offer through SBTA such as the Sport Promotion Incentive Grant, the Membership Assistance Grant and the Skills Development grant.

Our year began with the Champions Choice clinic and Annual SBTA awards banquet that was hosted by SOBG and Phoenix in Regina. The clinic was open for athletes competing in C through A levels. There were many excellent twirling sessions led by our clinicians Ginette Groome, Lorraine Meek, Julee Stewart, Jasmine Runge and Maureen Johnson. The athletes were treated to some very challenging classes. We also held a parent session entitled the ABC's of baton. It was a session intended to help parents understand the various events in baton and how we follow the Long Term Development model from Sport Canada and how our various programs fit into that model. The awards banquet recognized the many achievements of our Saskatchewan athletes as well as club and board volunteer of the year winners.

The fall training continued with the SBTA sponsored Training Assistance Program (TAP) gym time. This program has been in place for many years, where the SBTA funds gym time in our 2 major centers for all SBTA athletes (no matter the skill level), to be able to practice in an adequate gym space for no charge. Much of the gym time is booked during the fall, to allow the athletes the most opportunities for practice while they are still in training mode, vs in the spring, when competition season is upon us. This program continues to be widely used by many athletes in both Saskatoon and Regina and we will continue to offer it as funding allows.

Continuing with athlete development, we host 2 pre-competitive level clinics for the local athletes that are just starting into our pre-comp and competitive events. The events are hosted by the clubs in each major center in Saskatchewan and the clinicians are the A and elite level athletes in each community who have competed at the highest levels, both nationally and internationally. The proceeds from these events are then pooled and divided amongst all the Saskatchewan athletes who will be travelling to international events that season.

We also host "Fun Competitions" in the 2 major centers in Saskatchewan as well, to give our newest members an opportunity to see what a competition day looks like, without the pressure of being "judged". They receive comments and feedback from former twirlers as the "judges" and are then treated to performances by some of our more advanced athletes.

Our competitive athletes were able to participate in 4 open competitions hosted by each of the 4 larger clubs in the Province. Twirl-a Miracle, Spring Surprise, Queen City

Classic and Rising Stars. We had the opportunity at one of our competitions to have a Nations Cup event critique- where athletes were able to perform routines and then with their coach, receive verbal critiques from judges regarding their Nations Cup events. We were also able to host a freestyle competition prior to provincials. At the Queen City Classic competition, our athletes rep, Julie Stewart hosted an Ice Cream Social for all the competitive athletes in the Province. It was a great opportunity for the athletes to interact with each other outside of the competition floor. The Provincial Championships were held in Saskatoon this year, hosted by OTC.

We had several Saskatchewan athletes participate in the Nations Cup/World Championship qualifier in Durham, ON and 19 athletes were successful at being able to represent Canada in Liverpool, England.

Our skills development program has picked back up after the implementation of the new program. We had 2 clubs participate for a total of 162 badges/pins.

SBTA provides training courses to some of our parent volunteers who clerk for our judges. We held 2 courses this year, one in Saskatoon, hosted by Brenda Bennett and one in Regina hosted by Nancy Lighthouse.

We have also promoted the new CBTF coaches and judging programs to our alumni and have had a few express interest in one or both of those programs.

There were many promotional opportunities undertaken by many of the clubs and the SBTA this year. There were several local community events where baton twirling was a participating group in both Regina, Saskatoon and other center.

SBTA also provided instructors to the City of Regina Play Escapes program once again this year and provided over 12 hours of free instruction to students across the city. We have also undertaken some social media promotion in the later part of the season and into the summer to hopefully encourage new registrations in the Province.

Saskatchewan was well represented at the Canadian Championships in Edmonton, Alberta and had some tremendous success in terms of podium results and National awards- congratulations to everyone!

Technical meetings in Saskatchewan continue to be held by teleconference in an effort to keep the technical membership up to date on any changes that are happening, or to solicit feedback and input for things like the CBTF fall conferences, etc. It continues to be a challenge within the Province to maintain regular technical meetings and plans as many of our members are involved at many levels in our sport and time is short for all. I would like to thank all the members of our technical committee for continuing to make the effort to help develop and grow the sport in Saskatchewan.

Nancy Lighthouse
SBTA Technical Chair