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## DPC Athlete's Committee Report 2008

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This past Olympic year and quadrennial has seen many great successes and changes within Canadian diving. Many athletes reached new heights, some of them on a personal measure, some of them as new heights for Diving Canada.

With the conclusion of the Olympic year there are several senior athletes who are retiring, which opens up the stage to a very strong slate of younger athletes.

This report will provide a brief review of key competitions and the development of key support that helped the athletes to perform at their best. With the start of a new quadrennial, some key staff changes, and a changing of the guard by the athletes there are a few key areas that this report will focus on as areas where there is room for collaborative improvement.

### **Progress and successes in 2007 / 2008:**

A brief overview of major events and initiatives in 2007 / 2008:

#### **Training camps:**

The feedback on training camps was generally very positive from both junior and senior athletes and the Montreal Olympic pool facility is an excellent venue for the camps.

As an area of improvement two key recommendations were made:

- It was felt by some that the camps could be extended by a couple of extra days.
- It might fit better with training schedules to host camps more during the week so that people could have the proper rest during the weekend, particularly as the year progresses.

#### **Outfitting:**

The outfitting keeps getting better and better each year – this is greatly appreciated. Where possible it is nice to get the gear early in the competition season. Great work!!!

A minor recommendation is that in the process of selecting and designing the graphics for the upcoming season, a small group of athletes could provide feedback for the upcoming season.

#### **Therapists:**

This is an area has seen a considerable amount of effort and coordination and that has improved drastically over the years. This is a very important area of focus that we feel has a direct and immediate impact on performance.

Specifically with regards to the Olympic games: Having 2 therapists available during that training camp was excellent. The fact that everyone had worked with either one of them during the year made a big difference. There was no surprise and the athletes were not scared of getting treated by either of them.

Although we appreciate the limitations of budgets, there was no therapist in Italy the week before Olympic Trials. The difference in support was noticed by the athletes in attendance, which was particularly frustrating given that Olympic Trials were the following week.

There was at least one other Grand Prix event where there wasn't a therapist. This is an investment that we feel has a significant and immediate impact on performance results.

### **Synchro Selection:**

Synchro pairing and selections to Grand Prix events continues to be a challenge in some cases. The synchro training camps and providing opportunities for athlete pairs to train together has come a long way in the past quadrennial; however continued efforts in this area are highly appreciated.

### **Review of competitions 2006 / 2007:**

#### **Olympic Games – Training Camp, Xian**

Other than the challenges of the generally hot and muggy conditions in the pool, the training camp was excellent. The dry room facility and accommodation in particular were excellent.

The amount of time spent in Xian was generally felt as being perfect. The fact that anyone who wanted to stay longer could do so made a difference in each person's preparation.

The efforts by Mitch, the coaches, and staff for the on-site Olympic preparation was greatly appreciated.

– Marie Eve

#### **Olympic Games – Beijing**

In most of the athletes' views, the Games were a major success!!! We all had an awesome experience and everyone did a really good job. The schedule was really well arranged and very conducive to everyone doing the job that they had prepared to do.

The team support at the games was possibly the best all year – something for us to continue to build on as a team.

– Marie Eve

Marie-Eve will be taking part in a panel discussion and review of the Beijing Games at this year's DPC AGM.

### **AthletesCAN Forum 2008:**

The four day AthletesCAN forum was constantly challenging as athletes had the opportunity participate in open discussions, facilitate and record group discussion and present discussions done in the workshops. Mandy, Erik, and Marie-Eve participated at the event in Mississauga at the beginning of October.

Mandy and Marie-Eve participated in the "KidsCAN School day" which was "brilliant!!!" The morning was spent engaging in activities with the kids, while the afternoon involved speaking to a gymnasium full of children. "The challenge of speaking in front of 400 kids

was certainly beneficial. I was terrified beforehand and then had a great time and a great response from the kids with a lot of questions.”

“The various workshops were very useful for me as I learned about different organizations and exchanged with athletes on various issues particularly ideas on NCAA support, team cohesion and team management. Although diving is a leader in the Canadian Sport in terms of High Performance, Policy and Development, we do need to continue to move forward and there are many issues that need to be addressed. I also appreciate that I will be held accountable for the key issues I feel need to be addressed.”

“The All Party Debate was an unbelievable event (bringing in politicians during the final days of the federal election to speak on sport platforms). I have been following the Sport Matters group and thought this was a great initiative. The candidates seemed excited about the opportunity to discuss sport and there were some commitments made that will benefit the future of sport in Canada.”

“The highlight for me personally was getting to know one of the Para-Olympic athletes. Jason Dunkerly is a blind track athlete who had a tremendous impact on me through his humility, passion and determination. Learning about the day to day life of a disabled athlete was wonderful and I think he would be a great person to bring in to speak to the athletes at the AGM or a Training Camp if he were to be interested.”

– Mandy Moran

After a year hiatus from the board, Erik was re-elected to the board of directors and nominated to the executive as treasurer.

### **Review of Athletes Committee Objectives and Functions:**

With several senior athletes retiring this year, the current athlete committee members feel that it is appropriate to do a review on succession planning and of the objectives of the committee: To put specific guidelines in place to help the next generation of athletes to be effective in using the athlete committee as a positive tool to communicate and enhance the efforts of the athletes, coaches, officials, and staff in striving to build the future of Canadian diving.

### **Specific Recommendation looking forward:**

Appreciating that there are many considerations in planning for events, programs, and competitions the following are a specific recommendations that we feel have the potential of contributing to further success in the future.

#### **Training Camps:**

To look at the possibility of

- Extending the training camps by a couple of days
- Holding training camps during the week, particularly later in the competition season.

**Communication with Athletes:**

There are still instances where it seems that some athletes are more informed than others on plans for major events, training camps, etc. Although this is a shared responsibility between the staff, coaches, and athletes; it is an area that has room to improve.

This recommendation includes communication with athletes who are training in the NCAA and who have potential to play a significant role in contributing to our future success as an organization. In the case of several athletes, this was very strong this year. But support and communication for these athletes is an area where efforts could continue to have a significant impact.

**Food at Grand Prix Events:**

A major area of concern for several athletes is the food available at some Grand Prix events.

A suggestion to improve on this situation would be to plan in advanced to include some funds in the budget for the team manager to be able to buy some fruit and veggies at a market. The British team did this in China at the World Series and it seemed helpful.

**Concluding Remarks:**

The opportunity to report back and provide this feedback is greatly appreciated. The outlook for the next several years looks great and we have a great base to build on from this past quadrennial.

Congratulations to the coaches, officials, and staff on a job well done!!!

Regards,

Marie-Eve Marleau  
Mandy Moran  
Roseline Filion  
Erik Petursson