

**B C BLIND SPORTS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION
WINTER 2009**

INSIGHT



Photo of BC Men's Goalball Team

BACK LEFT TO RIGHT: Asst Coach Cherie Lu, Head Coach Robert Lebel,
Shane Wegner, Ken Spencer, Doug Ripley FRONT: BC Blind Sports Program
Director Mike Lonergan, Brendan Gaulin



Thanks to our Volunteers

BC Blind Sports and Recreation is largely supported by volunteers. Whether it's guiding someone in a walking program, a competitive running program, or golfing, gift wrapping, donating, or helping out, our volunteers are the best! Hats off to all of you for all that you do for our members.

Time to Renew your Membership

Keep up to date! See page 11 for the 2009/2010 membership form to renew your membership by March 31. Your membership fee includes information in the format of your choice, insurance coverage for all BC Blind Sports events, access to equipment, training and workshops, participation in events sponsored by BC Blind Sports and other sports organizations.

For more information, check our website at www.bcblindsports.bc.ca

Information Sharing

From time to time we receive newsletters and information from

other organizations that may be of interest to our members. If you would like to receive these electronic articles, please email info@bcblindsports.bc.ca to have your name and email address added to the distribution list.

With Sadness

We recently said farewell to Tom Cowper, who passed away suddenly in November. Tom was a teacher of the blind and visually impaired, a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing, and an orientation and mobility instructor in Kelowna.

He was instrumental in establishing the Okanagan goalball team. He provided great opportunities to his students in his roles as teacher and coach.

Saying Good Bye

Linda Evans, a long time BC Blind Sports member, has passed away after a long battle with cancer. Linda was a paddler with the Eye of the Dragon dragon boat team from the start. Linda worked as a rehabilitation teacher at the CNIB for 30 years. After retiring, she continued to volunteer and provide support for the visually impaired community.

Oakridge Centre Gift Wrapping

Once again, we thank Oakridge Centre for giving us the opportunity to provide holiday gift wrapping for their shoppers.

Thanks to everyone who came out and supported our 2nd annual gift wrapping booth at Oakridge Centre in December, 2008. As the over 125 volunteers from our membership, high schools and the community got into the holiday spirit, we wrapped more than 2200 gifts and raised over \$13,000 for our programs.

We could not have done it without you! Thanks!

Athlete of the Year

BC Blind Sports is pleased to nominate Donovan Tildesley for the Sport BC Athlete of the Year Award in the Disabled Athlete category. Awards are given based on the athlete's performance and contribution to sport in the province.

Donovan, a swimmer who is blind, earned 2 silver and 3 gold medals at the 2008 Beijing Paralympic

Games. He was also chosen as Canada's flag bearer at the opening ceremonies.

Donovan is considered one of the best Canadian swimmers with a disability and holds the world record for the men's 800 and 1500 m freestyle in the S11 (B1 Totally blind) category.

President's Award

Sport BC's President's Awards celebrate and promote the spirit of volunteerism by thanking individuals who have outstanding commitment and dedication to an organization.

This year, we have nominated the British Columbia Vision Teachers' Association (BCVTA) in memory of Tom Cowper. The BCVTA members have provided an invaluable service to BC Blind Sports and Recreation Association with their ongoing support of the introduction of sport and recreation activities to students with a visual impairment. They are a source of materials and information which assists BC Blind Sports in fostering the development of individual and team sports for the students.

2009 Premier's Athletic Awards

The Premier's Athletic Awards is an annual event allowing the province to recognize the top female and male athletes from provincial sport organizations and post-secondary institutions receiving funding through the BC Athlete Assistance Programs. The 2009 Premier's Athletic Award recipients are honoured for their athletic achievements in the 2007/08 competitive season.

BC Blind Sports female athlete selected was Shawn Marsolais for Goalball. She was a member of the Canadian Team at the Colorado Springs International Tournament (3rd Place), a member of the Canadian Blind Sports National Goalball Development Team, and a member of the BC Provincial Team.

Donovan Tildesley was selected as our male athlete in Swimming for his achievements at the 2008 Paralympic Games in China. Both athletes were recognized for their accomplishments in their sport at the Premier's Award Ceremony held Feb. 12, in Vancouver.

Run For Light

The 29th annual Run for Light Fun Run will be held on Friday, May 29, 2009 in Stanley Park.

Bring your friends and family to this fun 4.3 kilometer walk/ run along the sea wall.

All registered participants get a glow in the dark t shirt and a light stick!

Curling

BC Blind Sports welcomes John Sinclair as the new sport commissioner for curling.

We have formed a new partnership with the Vancouver Curling Club, who are now members of BC Blind Sports.

The BC Provincial Championships, held in Kelowna, were hosted by the West Coast Blind Curling Association on January 9th -10th. There were four teams that participated: Kelowna, Nanaimo, Prince George and Vancouver.

The results were:

1st—Kelowna

2nd— Prince George

3rd—Nanaimo

4th— Vancouver

Kelowna were super hosts for this event and the camaraderie was great and everyone had fun.

Kelowna and Prince George move on to represent BC in the Western Blind Curling Championships in March in Edmonton, Alberta.

Dragon Boating

Shane Stewart recently said to his wife and fellow paddler, “I’m taking you on a boat cruise this Valentine’s Day.” Sweet, you say? Not so as Shane and his wife, Yvonne are with Eye of the Dragon, (EOTD) which kicks off its 2009 dragon boat season on February 14 at False Creek.

EOTD heads into its 16th year with a couple of new managers, Adele Piroshco and Yvonne Stewart.

After sixteen years we say good bye to Dianna Johnston. For those

of you who may not know, Dianna has been a member of the team since the beginning. Her husband, Jim, was a coach for a period of time and Dianna has managed the team from the start. We take this opportunity to say THANKS DIANNA! You have always been competitive and inspiring on the water and the team is grateful for your passion and perseverance.

Dan Hebert, affectionately known as Mick Jagger due to his repeated threats to quit, returns for his 6th year as coach. His training and experience have taken the team to a new level.

The EOTD team ended the year by hosting their very first “open boat” at dragon zone. The event was held in an effort to facilitate both athletes who are sighted and those who are sight impaired who expressed an interest in dragon boating. It was a huge success and resulted in some new recruits not only for Eye of the Dragon, but also for other teams. This will likely be tried again next year.

Upcoming events include:

April: 200m dash in Deep Cove

June: Rio Tinto/Alcan Festival

July: Nanaimo

August: Seattle

Fundraisers include a wine raffle in April and the annual trivia night in June.

Complete season results can be found at: www.bcblindsports.bc.ca

Goalball

The BC Senior Men's and Women's Goalball Teams competed at the 2009 Montreal Open Goalball Tournament

January 21 – 23. Last year the men placed 8th overall and have clearly taken their game to another level, as they took home the silver, losing in the final game by a score of only 2-1 to the Ontario All-Blacks. In the semi-finals BC beat the Japanese National team.

Doug Ripley, Ken Spencer, Shane Wegner and Quebec transplant Brendan Gaulin have been training tirelessly since September, and their hard work showed as they lost only 1 game in the preliminary round. They're looking to capitalize on home field advantage as BC hosts the 2009 Canadian Blind Sports National Goalball Championships in Coquitlam.

The BC Women also looked good in the tournament, and were eliminated from the playoffs by Ontario B in the rare sudden-death shootout. For those unfamiliar with Goalball that means they remained tied through regulation, 2 over time periods, the 1st round of penalty throws and then were finally beaten in the 2nd round of penalty blocks! Shawn Marsolais, Angel Lu-Lebel, Ashley Andrews and Christina Mowatt gave their all and had some close games, but perhaps the best news for the program is that Angel, Ashley and Christina are all still juniors and are all eligible for the 2009 Canadian Blind Sports Junior Goalball Championships in Kelowna April 17-19.

BC Blind Sports congratulates the teams on their hard work and success!

See page 9 for information about the upcoming National Goalball Tournament hosted by the BC Blind Sports and the Canadian Blind Sports Association.

Golf

Western Canadian Blind Golf Tournament : July 12-16, 2009

Location: Crown Isle Golf Club, Comox, BC

Cost: \$25 for members of WCBGA residing in one of the 4 western provinces

Requirements: Membership in a Provincial Golf Association (BC Blind Sports or PCBGA and Membership in WCGBA prior to May 1st, 2009

Eligibility for Net awards:
Established golf handicap. This can be completed with 4 scores

submitted.

For further info contact Susan at BC Blind Sports:
susan@bcblindsports.bc.ca or
Doug Stoutley at
dougstoutley@shaw.ca

Hockey

Winter means hockey across Canada and the Vancouver Eclipse Hockey Team is once again going strong! In fact, enrollment is up considerably from last year, and we often have 10 skaters and 2 goalies ensuring a fun-filled, end-to-end, spirited pickup game! The game runs every Friday from noon until 1:00pm at Riley Park Arena (main @ 30th), feel free to come watch or contact the office to learn how to join in.

The Eclipse use a slightly larger puck that is easier to track, moves a little slower than a traditional puck, and has a rattle inside to help track it. We can only score in the bottom half of the net, and visually impaired or blind skaters get 5 feet leeway on offsides – other than that, it's hockey rules.

Regardless of your skill, or level of vision, if you can skate we'll find a role for you! If you can't skate – it's never too late to learn, contact the BC Blind Sports office and we'll help you get started so you'll be ready for the 2009-2010 season!

Lawn Bowls

The 2008 lawn bowling season came to an exciting end. The Courtney lawn bowling club did a great job of hosting the provincial and national championships together. This was a total success, with a great host, excellent volunteers, and good weather.

The competition was exciting with over 45 athletes from across Canada, and best of all we had a good time of fun and fellowship. If the Nationals should be held in BC again we certainly would be pleased to have these two events joined together. Congratulations to Madeleine Sherry from Nanaimo, BC as she received the Joan McKay Trophy. All results can be found at www.bcblindsports.bc.ca.

If you would like a print copy please call the office at 604-325-8638.

We are gearing up for the new Lawn Bowling season with two Regional Play Downs (dates and places TBA.) Play Downs are excellent for those who are new to the sport or who want to improve their skills, or just want to check out the competition and meet other bowlers. For volunteers interested in becoming directors this is a great place to learn more about the sport and this is the place to meet bowlers who are looking for a Director.

This year's Provincial Lawn Bowls Championships are scheduled to be hosted in Maple Ridge in July, as part of the Disability Games.

The 2009 CBSA Lawn Bowl National Championships will be hosted by Alberta Sports and Recreation Association for the Blind. They are scheduled for August 24-28 in Calgary. As we receive more details on this we will post them at www.bcblindsports.bc.ca.

On behalf of the bowlers and directors I thank BC Blind Sports and Recreation Association Volunteers, Board of Directors and Staff for all their hard work that goes into putting these events together.

Submitted by Sport Commissioner
Al Hanet

Canadian Blind Sports National Goalball

BC Blind Sports is co-hosting the 2009 Canadian Blind Sports National Goalball Championships which will be held in Coquitlam from March 19 – 21st and is also hosting the 2009 Canadian Blind Sports Junior Goalball Championships in Kelowna from April 17 – 19th and we need your help!

We need volunteers to help with all aspects of the tournament – from helping to set-up, to serving food, to actually getting on the court and being a Goal Judge—there is a great opportunity waiting for you!

If you think you'd like to get involved please contact Susan Flanagan, BC Blind Sports Member Services Coordinator, by calling the office 604-325-8638 or by email :
info@bcblindsports.bc.ca.



Picture of people running.

NOTES:

Calendar of Events

Until March 9

Hockey

Riley Park, Vancouver

February 28

Island Open Martial Arts Tournament

Victoria, BC

March 18-21

Canadian Blind Sports National Goalball Championships

Coquitlam, BC

March 24

Sport BC President's Awards

River Rock Resort, Richmond, BC

April 17-19

Canadian Blind Sports Junior Goalball Championships

Kelowna, BC

May 29

29th Annual Run For Light Fun Run

Lumberman's Arch, Stanley Park, Vancouver

June 20-21

Rio Tinto/Alcan Dragon Boat Festival

Vancouver, BC

July 12-16

Western Canadian Blind Golf Tournament

Comox, BC

July 22-24

BC Disability Games

BC Blind Sports Lawn Bowl Provincials

August 24-28

Canadian Blind Sports National Lawn Bowls Championships

Hosted by ASRAB—Calgary, Alberta

Board of Directors

President	Brian Cowie
Vice President	Tami Grenon
Treasurer	Tom Ollis
Athlete's Representative	Doug Ripley
Chair, Sport Commissioners	Al Hanet
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Member-at-Large	Shawn Marsolais
Member-at-Large	Ken Spencer

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Executive Director	Jane D. Blaine
Financial Manager	David Chung
Program Director	Mike Lonergan
Coordinator of Member Services	Susan Flanagan
Office Coordinator	Helen Varga

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Note: information in this newsletter is intended for general guidance only. Readers are advised to speak with BC Blind Sports staff for more information and with a physician before changing any exercise, diet or other health practices.



