PRO motion PLUS
Girls & Women in Physical Activity & Sport

# Network News

Volume 19 Number 1 ▪ Spring/Summer 2008

# Proudly Working in Partnership

*by Beverley Siver, Executive Director*

The 2008 BC Winter Games in Kimberley/Cranbrook, February 20th to 23rd, 2008 was a great success for participants and partners alike. It was exciting to be a part of the Games right from the opening ceremony Thursday evening which featured wonderful local entertainment and the unforgettable athlete's parade with representation from all 8 Zones. It was inspirational to see these young athletes strut into the arena ready for a weekend of competition and fun.

Friday brought the civic luncheon with Minister of Sport, Tourism and the Arts, Stan Hagen, the Mayors of Kimberley and Cranbrook, Co-chairs, President & CEO of BC Games Society, the Host Communities Organizing Committee and many other provincial and local dignitaries. At this luncheon we honoured Leslie Lindberg of Kimberley, BC and Jill Carley of Cranbrook, BC with ProMOTION Plus Leadership Awards in recognition of their leadership and work with girls and women in sport and physical activity.

*Beverley Siver (3rd from right) with Coaching Mentor/Apprenticeship participants Carol Dennison, Taryn Van Sickle, Cathy Spence, Kurt Innes and Keith Gordon at the Provincial Government Reception*

*Guest speakers Kurt Innes, Camille Martens and Kelsey Bowles at the Coaching Female Athletes Panel*

Aiden Sisler, our UBC Intern, presented the first of our Youth Inclusion Awareness workshops (on gender, homophobia and ableism) to the participants of the Olympic & Paralympic Youth Leadership Academy on Saturday morning. And Saturday evening, we presented the Coaching Female Athletes panel, "Attitude is Everything . . . Absolutely Everything" to a room of coaches, athletes and parents participating in the Winter Games. Finally, Sunday morning we met with the participants of the Coaching Mentor/Apprenticeship Program to evaluate the program and receive feedback which will shape its future.

All these activities at the 2008 BC Winter Games were made possible through partnerships with the Province of BC, Multi-Sport Organizations (MSOs) and Provincial Sport Organizations (PSOs) and most importantly the participants. We are proud to have strong partnerships within the BC Sport system. We thank all of our partners for their ongoing support of our programs and services, particularly the BC Games Society, CABC, the Olympic & Paralympic Youth Leadership Steering Community and the Host Community Committee.

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## This Issue

Volume 19, Number 1.
Spring/Summer 2008


## Our Vision

All girls and women in the province of British Columbia will participate in and have access to a complete range of opportunities, choices and resources for positive experiences in physical activity and competitive and recreational sport and have equity as participants and leaders.


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Customer Number: 2125161
Publications Agreement number: 41384544

# Message from the Chair

On June 10th, after three and a half years, my term as Chair of ProMOTION Plus will end. I am excited by the new direction my involvement will take as I assume the position of Past Chair. I also look forward to the energy and enthusiasm that a new Chair will bring. Each Chair brings her own focus and ideas and I believe that that change is a healthy part of the growth and development of any organization. I know that the Nominations Committee will put forward a strong slate of candidates to join our board.

We have a very strong board with a mix of new members who bring fresh eyes to the organization, and those who have a long history with ProMOTION Plus, including Marion Lay and Bryna Kopelow who joined our board as Honourary Board Members, new positions that help keep us connected with the foundations of the organization. The changes that will come with the AGM will only enhance the makeup of the board and the work that we do. As an organization we look forward to the renewal of our commitment that comes when new people join the board.

Having a strong board is healthy and staff are key to implementing the vision of the board. The strong leadership of our Executive Director, Beverley Siver, with invaluable support from AJ Murray, our Administrative Coordinator, results in new benchmarks reached time after time. We continue to thrive and grow in the delivery of programs such as the Women in Leadership Workshop series and through partnerships in programs such as the Coaching Mentor/Apprentice Program.

And while we continue to grow and develop as an organization, I know that *"you haven't seen anything yet"* and *"the best is yet to come"*!

I hope that you will join us, not only for our Annual General Meeting on June 10th at the Sport BC Campus in Richmond, but also as we continue on our journey. The support you provide with your $35 membership fee ensures that we continue to flourish and that our services, programs, and ongoing operations are strong. Remember, everyone is welcome to join (women, men and organizations).

I look forward to seeing you at our AGM on June 10th.

Irene Schell
ProMOTION Plus Chair

# P+ Nominates Debbie Pyne for 2008 President's Award

Debbie Pyne is a true advocate for women in sport. As Executive Director of the BC Ladies Golf Association from 2002 to 2004, she was one of those instrumental in the amalgamation of the provincial ladies' and men's golf associations into the BC Golf Association. Debbie was the Managing Director of Player Development & Member Services for the BCGA from 2004 to 2006 and is currently Managing Director of Player Development. She served on the ProMOTION Plus board from 2002 to 2007. Her passion for girls and women in sport comes through in all she does, making her an excellent role model. Debbie was honoured at the Sport BC President's Awards gala in Vancouver on March 5th, 2008

*Debbie Pyne and Irene Schell*

# Farewell and Thank You to Our Chair, Irene Schell

*by Beverley Siver, Executive Director*

It has been my very great pleasure and good fortune to have worked with Irene Schell over the past four years (since September 2004) in her capacity as Chair of ProMOTION Plus. Her knowledge, integrity and passion for sport has provided stability and garnered respect for the organization.

Irene has been a wonderful mentor to me and a strong leader and role model for both the Board and staff. So it is with sadness that we say good bye to this dedicated and inspirational leader.

A simple thank-you doesn't quite seem to be enough, but we hope Irene can take pride in the many achievements of the organization during her tenure as Chair.

Finally, we would like Irene to know that her dedication and work ethic sets an extremely high standard of accomplishment for this organization and we are proud to take up the torch and carry it into the future. We look forward to working with Irene in her new capacity as Past Chair!

# Report from ProMOTION Plus Victoria

It was a beautiful day for a golf tournament. Thursday, May 15th marked the 7th Annual KidSport/ProMOTION Plus Golf Tournament and fundraising auction at Prospect Lake Golf Course in Victoria. According to ProMOTION Plus Victoria Co-Chair, Patti Hunter, "we raised over $12,000. One of the highlights was a student from Claremont High, Cara Lucas who led a fund raising effort and they presented us with a cheque for $2500 from car washes and other events".

Since KidSport's inception in 2001, over 1489 children have been assisted with $180,000 in registration grants. These grants enable a child to register for a season of sport, including soccer, diving, softball, karate, baseball, football, swimming, skating, gymnastics and hockey to name a few.

This year KidSport will designate $6000.00 to go to ProMOTION Plus Victoria for two grant programs: "**Play it Forward**" — a number of $1000 grants to recreation departments, not-for-profit societies and schools to create new Girls Only programs or expand female participation in co-ed sports or activities. The "**Proud to Play Like a Girl**" awards are for junior and senior female athletes for coaching, leadership development or clinic attendance. **The application deadline for this year's awards is June 1st, 2008**. For information visit: www.promotionplus.org

*Patti Hunter (bottom right) with others at the Women in Sport Celebration April 19th*

**A Celebration of Women in Sport (WINS)**
On Thursday, April 19, 2008 PacificSport Victoria hosted the Canadian Women's Field Hockey Team, Greater Victoria Sports Hall of Fame Inductees and female athletes and coaches of all ages at a Celebration of Women in Sport. Over 300 people attended this amazing event with more than 100 free tickets going to female athletes and coaches. PacificSport Victoria presented Patti Hunter of ProMOTION Plus with a donation of $500 toward program grants for girls in Victoria.

*(continued on page 5)*

# Focus on Women in BC

## Spirits of Burns Lake Hockey Team

*by Samantha Langdorf*

While playing hockey and ringette at the age of 15 in Burns Lake, BC, Shannon Alec and her best friend Rosalie Lacerte developed an idea for an innovative program that would increase opportunities for women interested in playing hockey. For Shannon, hockey and ringette were a welcome escape from the stresses of everyday life. "Once I got on the ice I didn't think about anything else. There was nothing for me to worry about. I only had to focus on the game," she says in a phone interview from the College of New Caledonia where she is studying Culinary Arts.

*Shannon Alec (centre) with team mates*

While she was still in high school, Shannon joined an organized hockey team but was unable to continue playing with the team when the mounting costs of the sport became too high. It was then that the initial idea for the Spirits of Burns Lake Girls Hockey Team began to develop in the minds of Shannon and Rosalie. "We just wanted to bring women together and give them the opportunity to play hockey," she says.

For the next few years the idea remained just that, but in 2006 the women, with the support of a growing number of interested individuals, began to put their idea into action. "We started doing everything we could to get funding," Shannon says. "We wrote to the Premier. We applied for every sport grant that we could find. We put up posters all over Prince George asking for donations of old hockey gear." In a very short period of time, people began to respond.

By January 2007, the women had enough funding and gear to hold the first practice of the Spirits of Burns Lake Girls Hockey Team, and they also had a group of women who were eager to take advantage of the opportunity. In addition to providing the gear and ice time at no expense to the players, the team also covers the cost of transportation to and from the ice rink as well as the Gatorade and snacks that the players have during practice.

The team is composed of women from all different ethnic backgrounds, a fact of which Shannon is very proud, "We really wanted this team to be open to everyone. There is so much racism everywhere and we wanted to bring women together and give them a chance to do something fun with one another." The team also bridges the age gap, with players starting as young as 14 years old and going up to 56 years old. "It is so inspiring to have older players on the team, especially because I can't even keep up with some of them. They are great role models for us all to look up to."

For the off season, the women are going to move from the ice to the diamond with the start of a summer baseball league. They want to stay in shape for when they head back on to the ice in the fall.

The Spirits of Burns Lake Girls Hockey Team is always looking for donations of equipment, for both hockey and now baseball. If you would like to get in touch with them you can contact **spiritofhockey @yahoo.com**.

# Mental Focus

## The Importance of a Positive Attitude

*by Kristen McCarthy*

Imagine being submerged in 20º C water with a thousand pairs of arms and legs flailing around you. Somebody elbows you in the face. Your head is shoved underwater again and again. Salt water fills your lungs and you still have 3.8 km to go before you reach the shore. All you can think is, *"am I going to drown out here?"*

Professional triathlete Lori Bowden knows first hand the mental challenge the Canadian Elite National Triathlete Team will face at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The two-time Ironman World Champion trains for over 30 hours a week to qualify for one of the most arduous courses in the world, where athletes race continuously through a 3.8 km swim, 180 km cycle, and a 42.2km marathon, often under harsh conditions. Bowden's learned that her state of mind can be her greatest adversary. "When you have so many thoughts in your head, that's when you have to refocus," says Bowden. "If you're not feeling so great, you just try and tell yourself that you do feel good, because if you tell yourself you feel bad, you're never going to survive the day."

Bowden's words come at a time when triathlon is gaining international recognition as the newest Olympic sport. After its debut at the 2000 Sydney Games, where millions of viewers watched Simon Whitefield and Brigette McMahon win the first gold metals in the sport, triathlon has become one of the most anticipated Olympic events. Although the Olympic Distance course is approximately one third of the Ironman, it pushes amateur athletes to their absolute mental and physical limits, which is a strong part of the appeal.

"The number one attribute of an athlete is being positive," says Bowden, who's faced some of her toughest moments, both physically and mentally, as a triathlete. "You have to be positive in your training and racing. If you're a negative person then it's always going to carry through to whatever you do and it's going to set a lot of limitations for yourself. It's always a lot of positive self-talk."

Certainly we can learn about overcoming limitations from the 2008 Canadian Elite National Team who've trained on the International Triathlon Union World Cup circuit at the Olympic distance of a 1.5 km swim, 40 km bike and 10 km run. Comprised of the country's strongest amateur triathletes, the Elite National Team already has their inspirational stories, like the addition of Victoria's Kirsten Sweetland, the first Canadian female to win the World Junior Triathlon Championships and the youngest Canadian to win a World Cup race.

*Lori Bowden*

The Beijing Olympics will celebrate the endurance of the human body, but as athletes like Bowden remind us, the true accomplishment of an athlete is more mental than physical. "When you're racing for nine hours and it's really difficult to make it to the finish line you have to be strong to succeed." Bowden maintains that her training as an athlete carries through into everyday life. "I've learned that I have an incredible amount of mental strength. I know that I can be stubborn and I can be strong and I can get through pretty much anything that anybody throws at me."

As millions of people around the world tune in to the upcoming Olympics they remember what it means to reach for the extraordinary and to persevere. Just when you think you're going under, there are athletes like Lori Bowden who remind you to keep your mind focused on the shore.

***REPORT FROM PROMOTION PLUS VICTORIA*** *(con't from page 3)*

Guest speaker Wendy Ladner-Beaudry (co-chair of the BC Games Society) commented," Walking through the gathering was inspirational as female athletes from many sports relived their past with team-mates, and introduced their daughters to each other. Although the event was representative of excellence and high performance in the past and the present (with the national field hockey team and members of the Victoria Sports Hall of Fame attending), the underlying theme was Active for Life! Slides of various athletes in the room, showing them at the prime of their career were received with cheers, applause and smiles as team-mates remembered the past. Most importantly daughters saw their moms as athletes in their prime and recognized them as part of something greater than just their family. We celebrated women as accomplished athletes, role models, mentors, mothers and grandmothers. There was laughter, there were tears, embraces and connections, but most of all it was a FUN raiser that educated the community on the LTAD and the strength of what already exists in Victoria".

# Youth Inclusion Awareness Project (YIAP) Update

*by Aiden Sisler*

In the fall of 2007 I was engaged in a student internship with ProMOTION Plus through the School of Human Kinetics at UBC. From September to November 2007 I researched and interviewed experts in the areas of gender, homophobia, race, bullying and harassment, compiling that information into a 150 page document which formed the basis for the Youth Inclusion Awareness Project (YIAP).

In mid-February, ProMOTION Plus delivered a workshop on gender, homophobia and ableism to approximately fifty enthusiastic youth delegates from across the province. The Olympic and Paralympic Youth Leadership Academy held in conjunction with the BC Winter Games in Kimberley/Cranbrook proved to be the ideal place to pilot the YIAP, a series of interactive workshops aimed at providing education and insight into diversity and inclusion issues. The response from the young leaders was overwhelmingly positive and all involved played a vital part in the development process. Their feedback will aid us in tailoring the program for the eventual goal of participation by all age groups. Many youth said that the issues explored were ones they had never been able to discuss previously and that doing so was . . . "awesome!"

*Aiden Sisler (standing) with participants at the BC Olympic and Paralympic Youth Academy*

Samantha Langdorf facilitated three YIAP workshops at the Gathering Our Voices conference for Aboriginal youth in Victoria in March. The topics of gender, bullying and racism were explored and discussed. Constructive input from participants again proved invaluable. The highlight of the conference was deconstructing media stereotypes through art, which garnered rave reviews from the youth.

We also delivered a brief overview of the YIAP following a fantastic train the trainers Youth Leadership workshop by Nora Scheffe in partnership with CAAWS in April. Both Sam and I acknowledged that rarely do we have the opportunity to learn from such a deep pool of knowledge and experience as the amazing women in the room. With insights gained, connections made and support given, the workshop and feedback process was a resounding success. Speaking for those involved, we left the conference feeling inspired.

The upcoming months will see further drafts and revisions of the two-part resource/workshop manual. Thank you to all who have contributed their time and expertise thus far. If you have any questions or would like to contribute resources or information on gender, heterosexism, bullying, harassment, ableism or racism please email aiden.sisler@gmail.com.

# Girls Only Incentive Program Successes

This past winter ProMOTION Plus and BCRPA selected 8 programs in 6 different communities across the province to participate in the Girls Only Incentive program.

- Down Hill Girls (Canim Lake Band, 100 Mile House)
- Elders Winter Keep Fit (Chawathil First Nation, Hope)
- Girls Badminton Clubs (Vancouver School Board, Vancouver)
- Girls in the Groove
- Girls Can Curl (Eagle Valley Sports & Leisure Association, Sicamous)
- Girls on the Go (Coquitlam School Board, Coquitlam)
- Girls Sport Night (Town of Smithers Recreation, Parks and Culture)
- Strathcona Basketball Outreach for Girls (Strathcona Community Centre, Vancouver)

Congratulations to all!

We are pleased to announce that we are now accepting applications for **Girls Only programs starting in summer/ fall 2008 or winter 2009**.

Up to $2,500 is available for community-based recreation and sport programs to get girls and women active! Take advantage of this great opportunity to expand your girls only programs, create new programs, or partner with a community group to promote female participation in sport.

***Applications deadline: June 23rd, 2008.***

Download application criteria from: **www.promotionplus.org** or email: **Rhianne.Mari@bcrpa.bc.ca**

# 2008 Recipients of the Bobbie Steen Awards

Bobbie Steen Award recipients were honoured at a ceremony as part of the Sport BC President's awards at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Vancouver on March 5th, 2008. Congratulations to everyone who was nominated for the phenomenal work that you do for women and girls in sport.

### 2008 Award of Excellence for Career Achievement: Dee Neukomm, Prince George, BC

Dee became involved in Special Olympics BC in 1986 when her daughter Lara expressed an interest in participating in sport. Dee not only supported Lara's quest but attained her coaching certification in order to help her. Dee went on to coach other Special Olympic athletes in Prince George. Lara and Dee worked to have the sport of Rhythmic Gymnastics brought into the Special Olympics. Dee has been the Head Coach and Team Manager for the Provincial, National and World Games. Dee recently coached her Rhythmic Gymnastics team to victory at the 2007 World Summer Games in Shanghai China.

### 2008 Award of Excellence for Development: West Coast Nordic club, Langley, BC

In 2007, the Nordic club introduced the Biathlon Bears program in the Sea to Sky corridor. The program targets youth under age 13 and ensures they are provided with quality equipment and highly qualified coaches to inspire and instruct them. Wanting to attract more girls to the sport of biathlon, the club set up its own coaches' training program. Since then 4 women have become Biathlon Bears Gold Coaches and two more are Silver Coaches. This mentorship

*(continued on page 8)*

*Nicole Bakker of West coast Nordic club, Dee Neukomm, Rae Mitchell and Terrie Pighin (for daughter Brooke)*

PRO motion PLUS

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**Become a new member or renew your membership to ProMOTION Plus**

YOUR NAME WILL BE ENTERED INTO A DRAW FOR THE FOLLOWING GREAT PRIZES:

- **Grand prize draw of a 1 year membership to the Vancouver YWCA** valued at $819. www.ywcahealthandfitness.com/index.php.
- **"Private Tasting Event" from Cactus Club restaurants.** A party for 8-10 people — sample the menu (appetizers and drinks included), tour the kitchen and be entertained by the GM. Visit www.cactusclubcafe.com.
- **3 draws for women's golf shirts from Cracked Wheat Golf Apparel.** www.crackedwheat.ca

**The winning names will be drawn at our Annual General Meeting, Tuesday, June 10th, 2008, 7:00pm–8:30pm Room 160, 3820 Cessna Dr. in Richmond.**

**Membership applications available on the website: www.promotionplus.org**

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PRIZE DONORS:

YWCA of Vancouver · CACTUS CLUB CAFE GLOBAL DINING LOUNGE · GOLI

**BOBBIE STEEN AWARDS** *(con't from page 7)*

program sees senior women imparting their knowledge and skill to young athletes. The club's future goal is to provide sport opportunities for women of all ages.

*Bobbie Steen Awards of Excellence are provided in partnership with BC Games Society, Sport BC and the BC Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts.*

### 2008 Bobbie Steen Legacy Foundation Awards Recipients

This year the committee was pleased to award two Legacy Foundation awards, to Rae Mitchell of Vancouver and Brooke Pighin of Port Alberni.

### 2008 Emerging Leader: Rae Mitchell

This elite athlete has excelled in the sport of volleyball, playing professionally in Belgium and France and was a member of the Women's Team Canada Masters in June 2006. Rae has devoted her life to passing on her skill and knowledge as a coach, mentor and role model. She is the founder of the Action Volleyball Club. Rae exemplifies Bobbie Steen's vision of providing access and opportunity for girls and women.

### 2008 Emerging Leader: Brooke Pighin

After recovering from a devastating skiing accident in her childhood, this young athlete found her passion in Track and Field. Brooke has successfully competed on the provincial, national and international stage. Her main event is javelin but she has successfully competed in discus, high jump, pole vault and in the challenging heptathlon. As a talented coach and mentor, Brooke is actively developing female athletes in the Alberni Valley and the Lower Mainland. In 2007, she was the proud recipient of the ASRA Athlete of the Year Award.

# Mark your calendars.

The ProMOTION Plus Annual General Meeting will take place

**Tuesday, June 10th, 2008**

from 7:00–8:30 pm
Room 160 – 3820 Cessna Dr.
in Richmond

There will be a special guest speaker, our membership draw and updates on all our activities.
Come out, network and enjoy an interesting and informative evening!

To RSVP contact:
**info@promotionplus.org**

Publication Agreement Number 41384544

## Female Participation at the 2008 BC Winter Games

| | KIMBERLEY CRANBROOK 2008 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ABORIGINAL | | FEMALE | |
| | Total | Total | % of Group | Total | % of Group |
| Assistant Coach | 186 | 3 | 1.61 | 108 | 58.06 |
| Athletes | 1411 | 44 | 3.12 | 746 | 52.87 |
| Head Coaches | 157 | 4 | 2.55 | 59 | 37.58 |
| Officials | 184 | 1 | 0.54 | 85 | 46.20 |
| **TOTAL** | **1981** | **53** | **2.68** | **1030** | **51.99** |

Statistics on female participation for the 2008 BC Winter Games held in Kimberley-Cranbrook this past February show that overall 52% of the participants were female. This is certainly in keeping with the overall population and what we would expect to see. As we have noted in the past however, the role of Head Coach has a much lower percentage of females and the Assistant Coach role, which is often a more supervisory position, has a higher number of females. These statistics indicate a need for sports to continue to encourage women to pursue coaching and to support them as they work toward higher certification levels so that they can coach teams and athletes to the BC Games and other competitions.

**To Order ProMOTION Plus RESOURCES please contact our office**