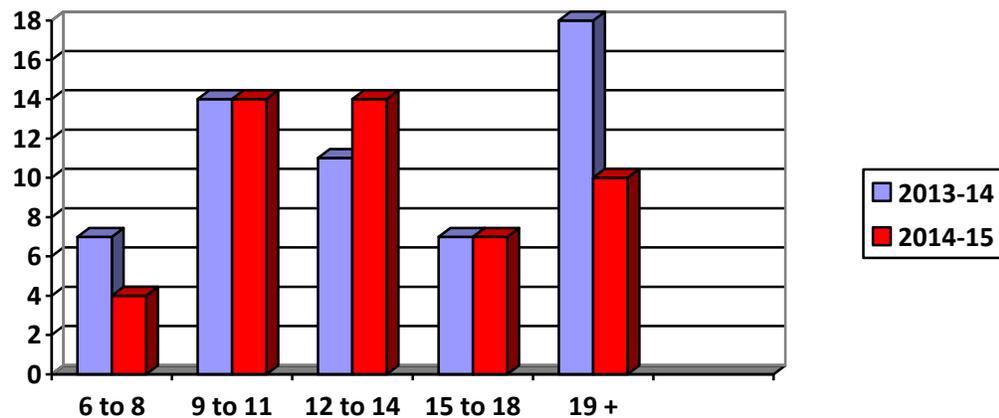




Head Coach Report 2014-2015

CLUB MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS:

We had **48 skaters** registered in the 2014-15 season, comprising of 29 short track, 15 short /long track combined and 4 long track only. Looking at the age distribution of the club our membership numbers have declined in the 6-8 year-old and 19 + year-old group (see comparison below). We have had a decline in HRSSC members participating in long track for the fourth straight year. Comparing 2014-15 membership to the previous year we have declined by 9 full-time members (counting full-time members as one and one night a week skaters as one-half)



We must increase the numbers of youth in our speed skating programs. The growth of the membership at the base is critical for the long term survival of HRSSC and other speed skating programs. A strong membership base is crucial to supply skaters into any future competitive provincial and high performance programs. Recruitment of new members should target this younger age group.



COMPETITIONS

This season, HRSSC skaters were well represented in the Atlantic Short track competitions, regional short track competitions, long track camps, local long track competitions, regional long track competitions, and national long track competitions. 11 HRSSC athletes represented Nova Scotia in the 2015 Canada Winter Games. Three HRSSC athletes made the Canada Cup time standards and competed at the Canada Cup long track competitions with the best junior athletes in the nation. Five HRSSC skaters represented Nova Scotia at the Canada East Short Track Competition.

HRSSC should build on the momentum of the successful 2015 Citadel Cup Short Track Competition by keeping new short track officials/volunteers engaged at early short track competitions in the Atlantic region in the fall of 2015. HRSSC's success in hosting competitions, special events, and public demonstrations hinges on continued training of HRSSC associate members and parents in various volunteer positions.

PROGRAMMING:

HRSSC Coaches provided 460 hours coaching during the 2014-2015 season. These volunteer hours do not include travel, coaching at competition and planning. I would like to thank all the members of the HRSSC coaching team. HRSSC programming this season has included:

- **DRYLAND TRAINING:** Saturday morning throughout the spring, summer and fall, as well as dryland training for Group A for 40 minutes prior to their short track ice time.
- **SHORT TRACK:** Mondays 7-9pm and Thursdays 7:30-10:00pm
- **LONG TRACK:** Wednesday 5-6pm, Saturday 9:00-10:15am
- **LEARN-TO-SPEED-SKATE:** Saturday 10:15-11:00am

SUNDAY MORNING RACES: During the long track season, long track races were organized on Sunday mornings. Racing took place from 9-10:30am on weekends where special events were not planned on the oval. Although these races were not officially part of HRSSC programming, some of our HRSSC members took part.



The coaching team, using the ice time allotted, divided the HRSSC members into groups based on stage of LTAD, speed, track awareness and willingness to commit to off ice training. The number one consideration in the grouping of skaters was on-ice safety. This year we had the following groupings:

- **Beginner Group C:** Beginner / younger skaters. This group has more emphasis on fun and learning to speed skate.
- **Intermediate Group B:** This group teaches racing and technique that skaters will use as they grow to be faster and better overall athletes. Off ice dryland training is introduced during the summer.
- **Advanced Group A:** This group is the most advanced. Skaters in this group must be prepared to train off ice and follow a fitness program.
- **Learn to Speed Skate Program:** This group is comprised of members of the public ranging in age from youth to retired adults with an interest in learning basic speed skating skills on the Halifax oval.

COACHING CAPACITY:

We started the season with 5 returning coaches: Brent Thompson, Carolyn Jarock (CJ), Jean-Pierre Daigle (JP), Danielle Daigle and Jonathan McNeil. A new coach, Chris Gallant, has joined us this season. Chris skated competitively for the Dieppe Club and is currently in Halifax taking his MBA at Dalhousie University and will be in Halifax for his second year next season. During the long track season, we had Kelsey Patterson, a former skater from Fredericton assist with the Learn-to-Speed-Skate program on the oval. The team did an excellent job of covering for each other during illness, absences due to training camps /competitions, as well as snow storms. I would like to thank all the members of the coaching team.

HRSSC will be losing at least two coaches next season. Recruitment of new coaches and looking critically at programming provided is of paramount importance. As mentioned last season, I would recommend that we recruit at least one on-ice assistant (non-coach) for each HRSSC group on the ice during short track and long track sessions.



Danielle Daigle is one of the coaches who will be leaving us next season. Her workload as a young lawyer is too large for her to continue her coaching commitments for HRSSC. Danielle has been awesome to work with and will be missed by all.

I am the second coach who will not be returning next year. In the past 7 years, speed skating has gradually had additional time commitments that have added up to involve approximately 45 weekends per year and up to 25-30 volunteer hours per week during the peak part of the season when long track and short track overlap. I am suffering from volunteer burn-out and have over-committed myself to a volunteer position. I have only taken approximately seven days' vacation unrelated to speed skating in seven years. I am unable to continue to coach, as speed skating commitments have interfered with my work, marriage, family and health. I realize that many other people have committed countless volunteer hours as well and don't want to overshadow their work. I applaud them all.

I will continue to support my daughter's speed skating interests. Next season, I may be available for volunteering at special events and I may do some recreational skating myself. I wish the executive and all of our skaters the best in the upcoming speed skating season.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brent Thompson

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Head Coach HRSSC