

The Speedy Kids Oval Program Society

Report to Speed Skate Nova Scotia

June 6, 2015

During the 2014-15 season, The Speedy Kids Oval Program Society continued to increase membership, recruit new volunteers to help out on and off the ice, and develop coaching and officiating capacity.

Administration

The Society's end-of-year party and annual general meeting were held on April 19th at the George Dixon Centre. The board of directors for 2015-16 is Lisa Gannett (President), Nicholas Williams (Vice-President), Christine Buckley (Secretary-Treasurer), Joy Hillier (Member-at-Large), Andrew Leitao (Member-at-Large), David Magloir (Member-at-Large), Hilary Rankin (Member-at-Large), and Maartje Stroink (Member-at-Large). Speedy Kids has nominated Hilary Rankin and Laura Channon to serve on the SSNS board.

Membership

The Society had 176 members during 2014-15, which includes participants in ice and inline after-school and club programs, staff and volunteers from our partner organizations, parents, and volunteers from the community. There were 132 Speedy Kids members registered with SSNS and SSC: 15 as Associate, 55 as Introductory, and 62 in free after-school programs. This represents a 30% increase in Speedy Kids membership and a 124% increase in SSNS and SSC membership since last season. Skaters in our after-school and club programs ranged in age from 4 to 14: in terms of LTAD classes, this included 27 skaters in Active Start, 45 in FUNdamentals, 16 in FUNdamentals/Learn-to-Train, 31 in Learn-to-Train, and 3 in Train-to-Train. Although our skaters were too young for the Canada Winter Games this time around, 25 of this year's participants will be old enough in 2019.

Programs

During 2014-15, the Society offered inline and ice programs throughout the year. In the spring, we partnered with Halifax Recreation to offer a 6-week "Introduction to Inline Skating" course at the Needham Community Centre, we provided support for weekly inline skating sessions for the after-school groups at the George Dixon Centre, and we held club group practices at the oval. In the summer, we provided support for weekly inline skating sessions for summer camp groups at the George Dixon and Needham Community Centres, and we held club group practices at the oval. In the fall, we partnered with Halifax Recreation to offer a 6-week "Inline to Ice Speed Skating" course at the Needham Centre and Devonshire Arena, we provided support for weekly inline skating sessions for the after-school groups at the George Dixon Centre, and we held club group practices at the oval and Dixon Centre. Use of the community centre gyms for inline has been helpful in providing space we can count on when the oval is too wet to use and in raising the visibility of speed skating and Speedy Kids in the community. During the winter, we used the 4-5pm weekday times for the after-school program: the Community YMCA and George Dixon Centre attended regularly; unfortunately, we were thwarted in repeated efforts to host the North Preston Community Centre by weather and Hockey Day preparations. The 5-6pm weekday times were used for the club program. We are making efforts to boost attendance

at Saturday morning practices and Sunday races by skaters from both the after-school and club programs. We had 10 skaters participate in the Atlantic Long Track Championships and 16 skaters participate in the Atlantic Single Distance Championships. Skaters also had a lot of fun and gained valuable experience by participating in the Sunday Morning Racing Series. We are indebted to Brent Thompson for his vision and hard work in making this series a reality.

We would like to express appreciation for the funding we received over the past year from NS Health & Wellness and Sport NS, which made our programs possible. We would also like to thank SSNS for its support for the after-school program: this allowed us to register participants with SSNS and SSC and access extra skates. We are also grateful for our ongoing relationships with our community partners and their excellent staff: the George Dixon Centre, Needham Centre, and Community YMCA.

Healthy Snacks Initiative

The Society piloted a Healthy Snacks Initiative this winter for the after-school program. Volunteers from the community provided a healthy snack of food (e.g., parmesan popcorn, fruit salad, cheese, hearty cookies) and drink (e.g., milk, juice, hot chocolate, hot cider) to the children upon their arrival at the oval. The initiative was a great success, and we are looking for funding to continue it in future years.

Coaches and Officials

Speedy Kids hosted an NCCP FUNdamentals Coach clinic in December, which was facilitated by Lisa Gannett under the watchful eye of Todd Landon. Lisa is now certified as a facilitator for the FUNdamental Leader and FUNdamentals Coach courses. There were 21 participants registered for all or part of the clinic, 20 of whom were from Speedy Kids. Thanks to SSNS and the George Dixon Centre for their support. Speedy Kids now has 6 coaches who have completed all modules at the FUNdamentals Coach level. We plan to hold these modules on an ongoing basis.

Andrew Leitao and Ashley Wu attended the Level I Officials' clinic that was held in February, and several of our members volunteered as officials during the Sunday Morning Racing Series.