



Speed Skate Nova Scotia

Coaching Development Plan 2013-2015



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Speed Skate Nova Scotia

Coaching Development Plan 2013-2015

Introduction

Speed Skate Nova Scotia is experiencing rapid growth following the 2011 Canada Winter Games, and the building of the Emera Oval on the Halifax Common.

This plan has been introduced to ensure that the speed skating community has the coaching capacity to enable current and future participants to fulfil their personal potential in the sport.

Fit of the Coaching Development Plan with the Speed Skate Nova Scotia 2013-2015 Strategic Plan

The Coaching Development Plan specifically addresses the following components of the Speed Skate Nova Scotia 2013-2015 Strategic Plan:

Strategy 1: Strengthening of core infrastructure

3. Coaches

- 3.1. Continue recruitment of new coaches from the ranks of former speed skaters who have been attracted back to the sport by the Emera Oval.*
- 3.2. Schedule regular coaching clinics to formalize the training of the new coaches.*
- 3.3. Develop a formal training program to bring at least one male and one female coach up to Level 3 in time for the 2015 Canada Winter Games.*

Strategy 2: Developing strong grassroots organizations and increasing overall participation in the sport

1. Club Development

- 1.2. Ensure that new clubs are oriented to the organization of the sport, that they have assistance in identifying and obtaining start up funding, and that their boards, coaches, officials and volunteers are given appropriate development opportunities.*

Core Principles

Our Mission

The mission of Speed Skate Nova Scotia is to promote, develop and govern the sport of speed skating in Nova Scotia.

Our Vision

Speed skating will become an accessible winter sport for all Nova Scotians, and a full and rewarding option for Nova Scotians with aspirations to an athletic career.

Our Values

Accessibility and inclusiveness

We believe that skating is an iconic Canadian experience that should be accessible to all Nova Scotia residents regardless of their personal circumstances.

Excellence

We will strive for excellence of athletic activity, coaching, officiating and administration in order to provide our members with the opportunity to fulfil their personal potential in the sport.

Respect

We will act with respect in all of our dealings, and will seek to instil in our membership respect for themselves, for others, for rules and regulations, for equipment and facilities, and for the privileges and opportunities they are offered.

Fairness and integrity

We will provide fair and equitable training and competitive experiences, and will act with integrity in all of our dealings.

Health and safety

Training and competition practices must protect skaters from injury, and be designed to ensure their long term health and well-being.

Fun

Participants in speed skating should experience the joy of sport.

Giving back

As we are supported by our communities, so will we also give back in ways that strengthen and support the well-being of those communities.

Coaching Communities

While speed skating in Nova Scotia is growing at a rapid pace, the sport still has a relatively small coaching base. There are currently only two separately definable coaching communities, and there is considerable overlap between the two. The communities are defined by the needs of the athletes coached, in accordance with Speed Skating Canada's [Long Term Participant and Athlete Development](#) model.

Development Coaching Community

The development coaching community is primarily based in the province's speed skating clubs, and in the Learn to Speed Skate program on the Emera Oval.

The participants and athletes coached by the development coaching community range from beginners who are just learning to skate (*Active Start* and *FUNDamentals*), to skaters with more advanced skills, but who are not currently pursuing high level competitive careers (*Learning to Train to Active for Life*). In smaller clubs and remote locations, these coaches may also be coaching some high performance athletes.

These coaches include

- FUNdamentals Leaders, who work as instructors or assistant coaches with skaters in Learn to Skate and Learn to Speed Skate programs;
- FUNdamentals Coaches who may assume the responsibilities of a head coach or lead instructor with skaters in Learn to Skate and Learn to Speed Skate programs, as well as coach at entry level competitions; and
- Coaches in various more advanced stages of their development.

High Performance Coaching Community

The high performance coaching community is based primarily at the Emera Oval and in the Halifax Regional Municipality, though in small clubs there may be some high performance athletes who are coached by the local club coaches.

The athletes coached by the high performance coaching community are in the *Learning to Compete* to *Training to Win* stages of development.

- In short track, they will generally be competing in Division One or Division Two at regional meets, and nationally will compete at the Canada East Championship level and above.
- In long track, they will compete regionally at the Atlantic Long Track Championships and nationally at the Canadian Age Class Championships level and above.
- Every four years, the top athletes in this group will compete at the Canada Winter Games in either short track or long track.
- Some athletes in this group may also compete internationally.

The coaches in the high performance coaching community in Nova Scotia are still for the most part working towards certification at Level 3. With guidance from the Speed Skating Canada Long Track Coach and Regional Development Mentor based in Halifax, they are coaching the more advanced athletes in their clubs, and assisting with the coaching of the athletes in the Atlantic Long Track Program's High Performance Program and Identification and Development Program.

Coaching Development Objectives

These are our current coaching development objectives:

- To have sufficient Development Coaching capacity to ensure the long term sustainability of club level programming;
- To have sufficient High Performance Coaching capacity to ensure the attainment of high performance goals;

- To continually recruit new coaches and to develop all coaches in accordance with coaching standards and their personal development objectives, to ensure participants are able to fulfill their personal potential in the sport;
- To support the retention of athletes and coaches in the sport.

Coaching Development Gaps

To achieve these objectives, the following needs and gaps must be addressed:

- Need to establish a coaching framework for Speed Skate Nova Scotia outlining processes for recruitment, selection, training and development, evaluation, and retention of coaches, and coaching standards and expectations regarding conduct and ethics;
- Lack of detailed information about coaching development needs at all levels, needed to enable better planning on an ongoing basis;
- Lack of coaches certified at the appropriate level for the 2015 Canada Winter Games, and gender imbalance in higher level coaches;
- A need for additional coaches at these levels:
 - FUNdamentals Leaders;
 - FUNdamentals Coaches;
 - Introduction to Competition;
 - Level 3;
- Need to increase coaching capacity for clubs in remote locations, to ensure the sustainability of club programming;
- Need for increased awareness of and commitment to coaching development at the club level;
- Increased support for coaching development, particularly financial support;
- Both formal and informal learning and development opportunities for coaches:
 - Formal: Speed Skating Canada coaching modules and NCI courses;
 - Informal: Seminars, conferences, mentoring, interactions with other coaches, on-ice learning, coaching at competitions.

Action Plan

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame
1. Put in place a Coaching Framework for Speed Skate Nova Scotia, including coaching standards and policies, reporting structures and approval processes, a coaching development program, an annual planning process for identifying and addressing coaching	Coaching Committee	April 2014- March 2015

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame
<p>development needs, and communication and delivery plans.</p> <p>1.1. In particular, establish processes to ensure that the development of new coaches begins as soon as they are recruited.</p> <p>1.2. Ensure that the Coaching Development Program specifically addresses gender balance, and the development of coaches with qualifications to coach at the Canada Winter Games and high level competitions.</p>		
<p>2. Promote awareness of and commitment to coaching development at the club level.</p> <p>2.1. Arrange visits to all clubs by the Long Track Coach and Regional Development Mentor, and a member of the Speed Skate Nova Scotia Coaching Committee.</p> <p>2.1.1. Conduct awareness sessions with club organizers, parents and coaches.</p> <p>2.1.2. Participate in / observe on-ice coaching sessions.</p> <p>2.1.3. Promote key coaching development activities such as the recruitment of FUNdamental Leaders from the ranks of parents and experienced skaters.</p> <p>2.1.4. Discuss local coaching capacity and coaching development needs. In the case of clubs in remote locations, discuss strategies for increasing capacity to provide for unforeseen losses of coaching resources and increases in demand for coaching.</p> <p>2.1.5. Obtain input from club coaches concerning their individual development needs and interests.</p> <p>2.1.6. Assist the clubs in creating a coaching development plan for their club, and identifying the resources needed to implement the plans.</p>	Coaching Committee	March-December 2014
<p>3. Complete a more in-depth analysis of coaching development needs over the planning period and prepare a proposal to address those needs.</p> <p>3.1. Using the information gathered during the club visits identify the known coaching development needs for the province.</p> <p>3.2. Working in collaboration with the Long Track Coach and Regional Development Mentor, consider development trends in the province, and identify projected future</p>	Coaching Committee in collaboration with Long Track Coach and Regional Development	March-December 2014

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame
5. Recruit new coaches		
5.1. Continue recruitment of new coaches from the ranks of former speed skaters who have been attracted back to the sport by the Emera Oval.	Coaches and organizers of activities on the oval	Ongoing
6. Coaching resources		
6.1. Continue to identify and add coaching resources to the Coaches page of the Speed Skate Nova Scotia website.	Coaching Committee	Ongoing

Outcomes

There are several anticipated outcomes from this plan:

- Coach retention

Providing coaches with development opportunities helps to increase their satisfaction with their coaching activities, and demonstrates that their efforts are valued. For coaches who want to pursue higher level careers in coaching, it sustains their interest, and helps them to achieve those goals.

- Athlete retention in the sport

When athletes reach a point where they decide not to pursue high level competition, they often leave the sport altogether. Involving them in coaching before they reach that point gives them an opportunity to determine if they will enjoy coaching as an option for continuing in the sport they love, and to develop coaching skills if they do.

- Program sustainability for smaller clubs and clubs in remote locations

Currently, if a small club or a club in a remote location loses a coach, it could force the club to close down or scale down. Having a strategy for ongoing coach recruitment and development, especially by using the FUNdamentals Leader role to allow parents and experienced skaters to try coaching in a low pressure role, will give these clubs some reserve capacity to deal with unexpected losses of coaches, or increased demand for coaching.

- More coaches

This plan should ensure that new coaches are recruited and developed to meet ongoing coaching requirements.

- Better coaches

Ensuring that coaching development needs are met will increase the skills and commitment of coaches, helping to ensure that participants have the opportunity to fulfill their potential in the sport.

- Coach funding

As volunteers, coaches give a lot to the sport. This plan should ensure their development and attendance at competitions is funded.