

SBTA Technical Report

It was an exciting year for many of our athletes! From hosting the Canadian Championship event in Regina and having many of our young athletes experience that event for the 1st time to 23 Saskatchewan athletes travelling to France to participate in the International Cup and Grand Prix- a first for many as well!

Our year began with the Escalate to Excellence Clinic and Annual SBTA awards banquet that was hosted by OTC and SMI in Saskatoon. The clinic is for athletes competing in BN through A levels. There were many excellent twirling sessions led by our clinicians Dale White, Ginette Groome and Elaine Robbins from the US and Ai Notahara from Japan and the US. The athletes were treated to some very challenging classes and the coaches also participated in sessions as well on multiple baton, the 6 degrees model from Japan and bodywork and artistic expression. The awards banquet recognized the many achievements of our Saskatchewan athletes as well as club and board volunteer of the year winners.

The fall training continued with the SBTA sponsored Training Assistance Program (TAP) gym time. This program has been in place for many years, where the SBTA funds gym time in our 2 major centers for all SBTA athletes (no matter the skill level), to be able to practice in an adequate gym space for no charge. Much of the gym time is booked during the fall, to allow the athletes the most opportunities for practice while they are still in training mode, vs in the spring, when competition season is upon us. This program continues to be widely used by many athletes in both Saskatoon and Regina and we will continue to offer it as funding allows.

Continuing with athlete development, we host 2 pre-competitive/C level clinics for the local athletes that are just starting into our pre-comp and competitive events. The events are hosted by the clubs in each major center in Saskatchewan and the clinicians are the A and elite level athletes in each community who have competed at the highest levels, both nationally and internationally. The proceeds from these events are then pooled and divided amongst all the Saskatchewan athletes who will be travelling to international events that season.

We also host “Fun Competitions” in the 2 major centers in Saskatchewan as well, to give our newest members an opportunity to see what a competition day looks like, without the pressure of being “judged”. They receive comments and feedback from former twirlers as the “judges”.

Our competitive athletes were able to participate in 4 open competitions hosted by each of the 4 larger clubs in the Province. Twirl-a Miracle, Spring Surprise, Queen City Classic and Rising Stars. Twirl a Miracle and Rising Stars were 1 day events with the CBTF events as the focus. The Queen City classic was held over 2 days with the 2nd day

being devoted to Icup events. Athletes that were planning to attend the Icup qualifier were able to perform their routines for comments and scores before Master judges and the groups were able to receive critiques and scores from our judges as well. Our provincial championships were held in Saskatoon this year, in conjunction with the Spring Surprise Competition.

Saskatchewan was the host province for the Canadian Winner Championship event in July. This was hosted at the University of Regina and was a very successful event due to the participation of members from all clubs in the province. Thanks to the organizing committee and Jeff Johnson, the competition director, for their dedication to hosting a wonderful event.

Our skills development program continues to be successful with clubs participating in 4 different badges days throughout the year for a total of 104 badges. We would like to continue to see this program group throughout the rest of the Province.

From a coaching and judging standpoint, we had 3 Saskatchewan participants travel to Calgary to complete the Master's certification course last season. With the upcoming completion of the coaching re-alignment, we hope to host a couple of certification courses this fall.

SBTA provides training courses to some of our parent volunteers who clerk for our judges. We held a clerking course again this year to give more parents the opportunity to learn this important skill.

There were many promotional opportunities undertaken by many of the clubs and the SBTA this year. There were several local community events where baton twirling was a participating group in both Regina, Saskatoon and other centers. Clubs participated in both winter and summer parades. There were performance opportunities at local farmer's markets, dance conventions and other local venues.

Saskatchewan athletes also lead 21 summer programming sessions to over 400 kids in Regina and Saskatoon this year. These provide our athletes with the opportunity to earn some money as well as share this sport to many local kids and community areas.

Technical meetings in Saskatchewan continue to be held by teleconference in an effort to keep the technical membership up to date on any changes that are happening, or to solicit feedback and input for things like the CBTF fall conferences, etc. It continues to be a challenge within the Province to maintain regular technical meetings and plans as many of our members are involved at many levels in our sport and time is short for all. I would like to thank all the members of our technical committee for continuing to make the effort to help develop and grow the sport in Saskatchewan.

Nancy Lightheart
SBTA Technical Chair