



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

PAGE 1 OF 5

To start, I'd like to thank and express gratitude to all of our members, including the ones in attendance at this year's AGM. It's great to once again see members from different areas of province on the call.

Before touching on the previous season and the year ahead, I'd like to acknowledge and thank my colleagues, our volunteer Board of Directors, the coaches and summer program coordinators, our officials, our sport partners our members, and those who've led camps or clinics, served on committees, and represented our organization and its values with integrity and respect.

With the 2020-2021 season allowing some re-opening of programming, it's meant that we were faced with the challenges of restarting multiple programs simultaneously and getting those balls rolling again from a standstill, which is a much more difficult task than maintaining ones already in motion. I thank everyone for their patience and understanding as we tackle all of the different pieces our organization has to offer.

2021-2022 HIGHLIGHTS & CHALLENGES

GOVERNANCE

- Our Return to Play document was amended several times throughout the season and took into account public-health restrictions, Health Canada guidelines, and Badminton Canada's own pandemic policies. The Board recognized that our community and our events are attended by members of several age demographics and from multiple regions, including folks from populations that were more at-risk; our policies aimed to protect our most vulnerable. The MBA's Return to Play policy will be reviewed at the next Board meeting and prior to the first event of the season: the WWC Junior Open.
- We continued to qualify for the COVID-specific funding, which has helped enormously with operational costs throughout the pandemic.
- Our Code of Conduct and Appeal Policy were updated and approved in August 2021. Several more will be reviewed in 2022-2023 as we establish a review schedule for our various policies.

CLUBS & MEMBERSHIP

- The transfer to the new PlayerWeb membership system created several problems for many of our members. Many of these quirks have since been fixed and we are now working on making things smoother moving forward. The new player membership fee structure was retained for the 2022-2023 season.
- After receiving feedback from club leaders, I put the club membership fee structure back on the drawing board. After a lot of math and reaching out to clubs for feedback on proposed changes, the \$8/member rate was removed and replaced with a customizable pricing structure that clubs are able to tailor according to their needs. This change of course leads to more logistical work on our end, but the result is a much more equitable payment structure with changes that are beneficial to small and big clubs alike.

TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT

- The MBA Speaker Series held its first session with Olympian Toby Ng, and included a participant from Badminton PanAm in South America! More events are planned in the upcoming season.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

PAGE 2 OF 5

-
- Coach recruitment and work with new developing coaches was ongoing throughout the season. We're excited to see what that brings. The MBA will be bringing two Apprentice Coaches to the 2023 Canada Winter Games: Kyler Murray and Brad Stevenson, who was also selected as volunteer head coach for the 2023 North American Indigenous Games in Halifax.

PROGRAMMING

- Some tournaments were possible throughout the season, with periods where no competition was allowed. This made finding a flow very difficult, which was compounded by my needing to learn to use the tournament-planning software as we went along.
- The near-total ban on Community Use Permits in schools province-wide continued to make most club play impossible throughout the entire season, as the majority of our community clubs are run out of school gyms. Now that those clubs are restarting, we recognize their need for extra support.
- 2021 Summer Camps went ahead with modifications. Enrolment was higher than the previous year, but still low when compared to pre-pandemic enrolment. The All-Girls camp was again our most popular, and we added rural camps in Niverville and Reston, which were attended by athletes as young as 6 (many of whom have continued playing regularly). A half-day option was piloted in Niverville and proved to be quite popular. This was added to 2022 Summer Camps, with a small number of spots reserved for half-day attendees. We also collaborated the Manitoba Table Tennis Association (MTTA) on two camps, as well as with the Directorat the l'activité sportive (DAS), offering clinics within their multi-sport camps throughout the summer. Once again, this lead to more *en français* learning opportunities.
- We introduced both the *School Team Membership* along with school opens. These events will benefit from a longer advertisement window in 2022-2023, and planned meetings with different zones and school divisions.
- While we had hoped to re-launch the Developmental Winter Program in January 2022, this was not possible due to public-health protections put in place.
- We did launch (then suspended until August 2022) Grown-Ups' Clinics and Mini-Camps, offering beginner-intermediate adults a chance to learn with us as well. We aim to continue those this season.
- After the cancellation of the 2022 Manitoba Winter Games, we applied for funding to hold a sport-specific replacement event. Thanks to the generous grant we received for this, we were able to host the first-ever Junior Regional Challenge, which brought together players from all over the province to compete for their home regions. The event did not feature a team event, but rather calculated points accumulated per region (*per capita*). Sport Manitoba did inform me that not only did we host the largest sport-specific replacement event (the largest in our history with over 160 athletes), but we featured the best regional representation. Most of the coaches who'd signed on for the MWG agreed to work with regional athletes at the event; for that, I am incredibly grateful. Feedback from families was overwhelmingly positive and the event will remain on our circuit in the coming years with the intention of adding an Open Regional Challenge down the road.
- The Team Manitoba program continued and grew to include athletes named to the Canada Winter Games training team. While we'd hoped to launch Phase 2 (Regional Teams) in fall 2021, this did not happen and has been rescheduled to this fall.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

PAGE 3 OF 5

2022-2023 HIGHLIGHTS, CHALLENGES, AND PLANS

GOVERNANCE

- An on-boarding package is being finalized for incoming Board members, in order to make their transition onto the Board smoother and ensure that each new year starts off strongly.
- 2021-2022 Minutes have now been posted to the website, and a document including all minutes from the previous fiscal year will be prepared and added in the coming weeks.
- This season was made more difficult by illnesses and the sudden bereavement of some board members. Supporting our volunteers remains a top priority of mine and I am grateful for their continued presence and service to our organization.
- This past spring, the Competition Committee reviewed a proposal to restructure our tournament circuit, event series, and events themselves. Many of the proposed changes and the overarching goals behind the new vision were proposed over the past several years by Paul Poirier before his election to the Board in September 2020. In 2022, research was done by Mr. Poirier and by the Technical Development and Programs Assistant, Kevin Barkman, on how best to tackle the recurring issues that are brought forward yearly by our members. Based on this months-long research and feedback received in the past years, a draft was completed and finally sent to the Competition Committee in late August. The Committee met and was offered feedback and following the meeting, the draft continued to be reviewed and edited over the following week, with updated versions of the document being forwarded to all Committee members after edits. The proposal was approved on September 8th and published on the website; social media posts were disseminated just over a week later.

The proposal touches on many issues and adds two new event series: the *School Series* and the *Community Series*. The first was created to help bridge the gap between the school badminton community and ours, while the second was launched as a means for the MBA to offer support to member clubs who wish to hold smaller-scale events for their club community. Support for these event series was worked into the most recent renewal of our sponsorship agreement with Yonex, and I'm looking forward to spreading the love in grassroots programs

This year, the Competition Committee will be tasked with reviewing our *Selection for Athletes, Teams & Coaches for Provincial Teams Policy*, our *Team Manitoba, Regional Team, and Canada Winter Games (for 2027) Technical Packages*, as well as overseeing and gathering feedback on the new competition-circuit format and regulations, so that we can adjust as needed after a mid-year and year-end review.

- In the next few weeks, the Bi-Lateral Committee will help finalize a comprehensive and far-reaching application for the Government of Manitoba's *Small Capital and Special Initiatives Funding* grant. This Committee will also spend time this year working with new para athletes and programs to offer more training and competition opportunities.
- We will be reaching out to members to once again form a Policy Review Committee, with the intention to review our *Respect in Sport Policy*, our *Screening Policy*, our *Conflict-of-Interest Policy*, our *Selection for Athletes, Teams & Coaches for Provincial Teams Policy*, our *Discipline & Complaints Policy*, and our *Privacy*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

PAGE 4 OF 5

Policy. As it stands, in the absence of an MBA-specific document, we and our members are bound by the equivalent Badminton Canada policies. This year's work will mainly involve reviewing said policies and adding Manitoba-specific amendments or additions when deemed necessary.

CLUBS & MEMBERSHIPS

- *Club Membership* and *School Team Membership* packages are scheduled for review starting in February. We hope the updated *Club Membership* fee structure is beneficial to clubs and will be reaching out to them in the new year to for feedback.

TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Our Technical Development and Programs Assistant took the lead on this past summer's coach training, planning two days of on- and off-court coach training for our summer camp & clinic leaders. The sessions were also attended by two of our Board members: Yuns Oh (who launched a drop-in para-badminton program in 2021-2022 and has started coaching) as well as Lionel Curé (coach with over 35 years experience, Learning Facilitator in-training, and MBA outreach coach since 2018).
- Our summer coaching roster featured many new faces, and we hope to continue working with them in the future. Documents to ensure follow-up on training and mentorship were prepared to help us better support new coaches as they gain knowledge and experience.
- Our Junior Officiating Program is set to launch in the next week and will offer introductory mini-lessons for junior athletes. These athletes will be invited to act as line judges and scorekeepers at junior events. The goal of this program is two-fold: to help junior athletes and their families become more knowledgeable about the game and competitive events, and to introduce members to officiating at a younger age so that the path to officials' training becomes less intimidating and more welcoming of young officials. Both of these goals will contribute to improved competition and improved sustainability of our officials' roster.

PROGRAMMING

- The tournament circuit has been expanded to include the *School Series* and *Community Series*. We will be working with tournament hosts on the incorporation of para events in our already-existing tournaments.
- Similar to our *A Guide to MBA Tournaments* and our *Guide to Team Competition* documents, a series of how-to and FAQ documents will be prepared and publish to help new and veteran members alike become more familiar with our processes and community.
- The Technical Package for Regional Teams is being developed, with plans for a launch this fall. This would be the long-awaited Phase 2 of our Performance Pathway.
- With Director Paul Poirier, we've started the process of introducing badminton to the post-secondary sport environment in a more structured and official way. This project is still in its early stages, with some programming planned for this season. After consultation with the Manitoba Collegiate Athletic Council (MCAC) and some institutions, we currently are aiming to have a handful of university and/or college teams in place by the 2024-2025 season.
- The Developmental Winter Program is slated to restart this year. We are currently working on rental agreements with a handful of schools and hope to have more details soon.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

PAGE 5 OF 5

-
- 2022 Summer Camps ended with plenty of ideas for next year. This year, we introduced half-day options as well as 3 new rural camps. While the camps went well and enrolment was up, we conducted a term-end review process with coaches to discuss adjustments and improvements to ensure 2023 Summer Camps build on this year's program and continue to improve, while offering options to athletes with limited access.
 - Our *Smash the Curve* initiative was re-branded under the *School of Badminton* umbrella and now includes Grown-Ups' Clinics, para-badminton clinics, mini-camps, summer camps, athlete and school clinics, and more. We will be continuing with these initiatives.
 - We participated in the Para Expo in Brandon, which featured several wheelchair sports. This was organized for us by the Technical Development & Programs Lead and our clinic was led/facilitated by Vice-President Yuns Oh and myself. The event was a success with over 20 participants. We will be partnering with these organizations again and are grateful for the opportunity to meet with organizations helping para sport.

In sum, I'd like to thank our incredible team of volunteers and staff. As we head into what will hopefully be my first "nearer-to-typical" season, I'm incredibly grateful for the team that surrounds me, from coaches who stepped up to mentor less-experienced colleagues, an summer administrative assistant who was an absolute game-changer, volunteers at tournaments and events, coaches and officials, folks who offered feedback, and our Board members who have continued to do their best and give their time and energy despite over two years of difficult and unprecedented circumstances — there's no instruction manual for what we've faced.

I'd also like to thank President Barrington Nichols, who is stepping down after two terms of service. I'm immensely grateful for your time, energy, and guidance these past few years; not to mention your calm leadership in what was sometimes a chaotic process. I'd also like to thank Cheryl Bartel and Paul Poirier who have agreed to keep serving the organization in the hopes that they can accomplish what they originally set out to do. Thank you to the members who agreed to have their names put forth as nominees by our Nomination Committee; welcome.

Finally, to our members: thank you for your support, your questions, and your feedback. Communities cannot move forward without growth and accountability, and we thank you for your continued presence as we work toward ensuring our community is a welcoming, inclusive, equitable, and competitive space for all.



Mélanie Curé
Executive Director