



Annual Report



PRESIDENT'S NOTE

By Chris Helyar

This marks my one-year anniversary as president of Canoe Kayak Canada. It is also the one-year anniversary of the first COVID-19 case reported in China. None of us could have predicted that we would be facing a pandemic that has so greatly impacted the world and so significantly changed how we all function from day to day. As with all of us, the activities, and areas of focus of the CKC Board in 2020 weren't exactly what we anticipated.

The CKC mission is "to encourage Canadians to enjoy the sport of paddling and achieve success at all levels of competition." The big question for us has been, how do we support a mission that is specifically focused on competition when in most of the country, competitive sports are prohibited?

I think we learned a lot this year about our community. Our members and CKC staff worked closely with local and provincial governments and public health agencies to figure out how to get our paddlers safely back on the water. Each jurisdiction was different... Nova Scotia was getting the approval to have crew boats on the water before BC clubs had anyone paddling. But we found that by sharing knowledge and experience, within and across our disciplines, our sport was able to return to training before many others. Staff have been collecting "lessons learned" information from you, and we're pleased to be able to share this as part of our virtual summit activities.

We know that the pandemic has created big financial challenges for our members, and we thank the federal funding agencies and the broader Canadian government for the initiatives that have helped us retain the staffing (and particularly coaches) that allowed programming to continue. Restrictions in most provinces on our members' ability to run programs with mass participation (such as dragon boat) or learn to paddle, and limitations on summer sports camps, have reduced revenues. Winter will be a struggle, as we turn to indoor training, and find that facilities are not available, or will be very limited.

The type of communication and sharing of ideas and experiences that got us through the summer will continue to be necessary as we dream of spring, without the access to warm weather training many of us have always appreciated. Like the entire Canadian population, we're going to have to embrace winter and being outdoors, even more. As others have said, the situation is very dynamic, and we need to be ready and flexible to find ways to keep our community engaged and excited about the eventual return to competition.

I wanted to take this opportunity to talk a bit about the CKC Board and its role. CKC operates under a "policy governance" approach, where staff are responsible for day to day operations, and the Board provides policy direction. In small, not-for-profit organizations (such as many of our member clubs), volunteers have no choice but to get directly involved in operations, as well as governance. Over the years, CKC has grown into a relatively large national sports organization (NSO), with highly professional and experienced staff. The job of the CKC Board is to monitor the overall operations of CKC and provide policy direction, through the CEO, to staff. Board members are available to participate on working groups for specific issues, and we're always more than ready to provide staff with assistance and advice, when asked to do so. But when operational challenges and issues arise, they should be addressed by staff, and ultimately, the CEO.

Some of the areas of focus of the CKC Board in this past year have been:

- COVID-19 safety policies and procedures
- Finalizing and approving the CKC safe sport policies and procedures
- Managing our relationship with the International Canoe Federation (ICF) through taking on event hosting and participation of Canadian volunteers in ICF activities

A major goal for the Board has been ensuring that we've got the systems and policies in place to guarantee CKC's financial sustainability. On a recent NSO call, Sport Canada reported that 30 percent of national sports bodies have had to lay off staff, and many are worried about their financial viability. This is particularly true for sports where they are highly dependent on revenue from events, and indoor sports where close physical contact is required and their membership is way down.

With the investment in our new governance structure, and development of an aggressive strategic plan, we used up much of our accumulated assets over the past 5 years. The Board has established a goal of rebuilding those assets, so that when our members need extra support, such as is the case with COVID-19, we'll have the staffing and resources to help. This means we'll be asking staff to think very carefully about priorities and costs, and it will likely mean that we'll sometimes have to say no when opportunities to expand our activities come up.

Looking forward to 2021, I expect that COVID-19 and helping our disciplines return to competition will continue to be the priority for CKC and the Board. Other initiatives we'd like to move forward on include:

- Enhancing the diversity of our membership. Does our membership reflect the Canadian population, and if not, what can we do to change this? Are there barriers (socio-economic, cultural, linguistic, attitudinal, etc.) that prevent people from experiencing paddling and the thrill and challenge of competition? How can we make sure that we recognize these barriers, and can work to eliminate them?
- Recognition of success and achievement among our members, not only for athletes in competition, but also for the coaches and volunteers that keep the system working. Some of our individual disciplines have experience with promoting recognition and awards within the disciplines, and we want to combine this with the work of the alumni group to establish a CKC-wide program approach.

Every year, the Board membership changes, as members complete their terms, and new appointees join. We believe that introducing new people and new ideas to the Board is important and will help prevent stagnation. This year there are four Board members who have completed their terms and will be stepping down. I'd like to thank them for their contributions and service, and I know that they'll continue to stay involved in our sport. The "retirees" are:

- Sean Cannon, sprint discipline
- Fiona Vincent, marathon discipline
- Julie Crépeau-Boisvert, whitewater discipline
- Genevieve Orton, athlete representative

The new Board members are:

- Mark Taylor, whitewater discipline
- Don Stoneman, marathon discipline
- Ben Russell, athlete representative

As I'm writing this, the Sprint Racing Council hasn't yet selected their new representative to the Board.

I really hope that next year we'll be able to do the Summit in person. I look forward to being able to meet and mingle with all of you, and to thank you for what you've done to keep canoeing healthy and vibrant. Until then, you can reach me at president@canoekayak.ca

Chris Helyar

CANOE KAYAK CANADA
ANNUAL SUMMIT 2020



Discipline Reports

DISCIPLINE REPORTS

SPRINT REPORT

By LA Schmidt

Wow what a year! When I was elected as Commodore of Sprint I would never have guessed we would be having the year we have had.

First and foremost, thanks to all of you, clubs, coaches, athletes, officials, volunteers, divisions, Flag Officers, provincial organizations, ICF volunteers. You have worked so hard to keep the lights on and bills paid at your Canoe Clubs. It takes a village and you have all been there for your community/club.

Secondly, I would like to say thanks to our CKC staff, a small but mighty team, that works hard with irregular hours, weekends and such. Without your constant pulse for all that is going on, it would be difficult to have kept going. You have worked tirelessly and “thank you” doesn’t seem enough, however on behalf of the Sprint Discipline, we are grateful!

Once COVID hit us, we focused on getting everyone safe and back to Canada as soon as possible. From there, everyone cooperated beautifully as we tried to plan day by day in the beginning. We quickly learned to accept life with COVID and chipped away at trying to keep moving forward with all of you.

2020 highlights included:

- Laurence returns to our Team to prepare for Tokyo
- COVID action team established
- Tokyo postponed to 2021
- Safe Sport Document/feedback completed
- 2022 Worlds Committee work continues
- DDC/HPC/Coaches Committee/Officials Committee continued their important work in the organization
- Trophies and Awards Committee revitalized
- COVID advocacy Survey
- COVID calls to support Clubs/Divisions for support and sharing solutions
- 2020 Nationals at RCC postponed
- 2021 and beyond Nationals Contingency Plan
- 2021 Canada Games Postponed
- NAIG Games postponed
- Amazing Coast to Coast 2020 Multi Discipline Event held in August

With an Olympic year ahead of us in the Sprint Discipline I just can’t wait to watch all of our athletes don their Maple Leaf and line up on the start line to compete for Canada! Cannot lie, Women's Canoe is making its debut in Tokyo and I know I can speak for all and thank all those who have worked so hard in Canada to be able to watch you compete. As Graham says “Go Boats Go”. Just simply awesome!

In closing, we have said a few hellos and goodbyes this year to staff, I would like to thank Andreas Dittmer and Jessica Price who have left our staff. I wish you all the best and thank you for your time with

us. Having said that, we welcome Laurel McAdam, Maryn Sommerfeldt, Jon Pike, Matthieu Pelletier; welcome to CKC and we look forward to working with you.

I know that we lost several paddling friends this past year and my thoughts are with all who knew our gone, but not forgotten, paddling friends.

I am excited to work hard for another year as your COVID Commodore, I know there are better days ahead, we must stay resilient, and remember we are all in this together. We will come out of this stronger and having learned new things about our sport that will only make us better. The Sprint Development Report by Ian Mortimer is attached and includes more findings on our 2020 year.

Stay safe everyone, let's continue to work together and support one another as we have done so well in 2020.

It is truly an honour and pleasure to volunteer as the Commodore of the Sprint Racing Council.

Respectfully submitted,

L.A. Schmidt
Commodore SRC

WHITEWATER REPORT

By Warren Hastings

MARATHON REPORT

By Kristoffer Archibald

Proactive Communication

When we achieve these priorities, CKC will be a recognized and trusted partner in the paddling community.

2020 was an unusual year due to COVID-19 disrupting in-person events. Although digital platforms enabled much communication to continue, the combination of public health restrictions and advice against group activities meant the majority of marathon paddling events were cancelled. This may affect membership in the years following because community events often rely on word of mouth from past participants and the inertia of individuals having participated the previous year. The MCRC recognizes this challenge to local organizers and will examine ways of assisting with event promotion in 2021 (assuming public health guidelines permit in-person events).

The MCRC developed a prototype of a national Marathon Paddling website that will host a schedule of all marathon paddling events in Canada. A big thank you to Martin Gervais, the Quebec representative, who found time to develop this site. The next step is to find a member who is willing to maintain the site for the 2021 season.

Enhanced Grassroots and Club Development

When we achieve these priorities, we will have a strong vibrant integrated grassroots development system spanning all paddling disciplines

The Regina Marathon Canoe Club, a member of the marathon community, pioneered a successful program introducing new Canadians to paddling. The club received 64 applications (a significant number given the Regina Marathon Canoe Club's modest size) and accepted 42 participants. The club was strategic (a priority was placed on family groups) as they could only accept a limited number of participants due to limited equipment and volunteer capacity. All participants received coaching from volunteers that were certified by CKC's marathon coaching program. Participants learned a history of the canoe in Canada, on-water safety, paddling techniques, and environmental stewardship. Furthermore, they expanded their social networks and observed Canadian nature. Coaches met new members of the community and learned about the participants' cultures. This successful program increased the Regina Marathon Canoe Club's membership and expanded the CKC family. The MCRC hopes that other clubs across Canada will imitate this successful program.

Enhanced Performance

When we achieve these priorities, we will be a top performer at all levels, in all disciplines

No new coaches were trained in 2020 due to public health guidelines restricting group events. Since 2009, the CKC marathon coaching program has trained 200 coaches and certified 23 coaches.

Marathon competitions were suspended across the country due to COVID-19.

Effective Leadership

When we achieve these priorities, CKC will be more efficient and effective.

This year Fiona Vincent has stepped down from her role as the Marathon representative to the CKC board of directors. Fiona previously served as Chair of the MCRC for many years. She plans to continue her involvement with the MCRC as past Chair and Saskatchewan's representative. Don Stoneman of Ontario was appointed the new MCRC representative to the CKC board of directors. Don previously chaired the MCRC, before stepping down to lead the Ontario Marathon Canoe and Kayak Racing Association (OMCKRA). Under his leadership, OMCKRA greatly expanded its membership and introduced marathon paddling to many in Ontario. Don's addition to the MCRC expands the council by one member, which should enable the Council to accomplish additional work. Further succession planning will be discussed at the MCRC annual general meeting with a focus on stable transitions and continuance of administrative memory.



Staff Reports

CANOE KAYAK CANADA
ANNUAL SUMMIT 2020



ACTIVITY REPORTS

CEO UPDATE

By Casey Wade

2020 has certainly been a challenging year for all in the Canoe Kayak Canada family. 2020 started well with reinstatement of Laurence Vincent Lapointe, our world champion canoer, for a no-fault doping violation. Extensive effort went into this and the right and fair decision was ultimately reached.

As we came out of this challenging phase, of course the COVID-19 global pandemic hit, and the world changed. It had a direct impact on all of us and on our sport. I'm not too sure where the past nine months have gone, but we've perhaps been busier than ever navigating the pandemic both internationally and nationally on several fronts.

From an international perspective, we worked with the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Committees to make the difficult decision in April to be the first country to withdraw from the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We again made the difficult decision to withdraw from all ICF International Events- the first country to do so. These were the right decisions and ones that were quickly followed by many other countries.

We continue to work closely with the International Canoe Federation and COPAC to manage the pandemic and its impact on international events, including final qualification events to ensure our top athletes line up in Tokyo. We continue to track the landscape in an uncertain future. Decisions are often made on limited notice as we work to get back to a new sense of normal.

From a domestic standpoint, our focus was immediately on setting up capacity to manage and make responsible and reasonable decisions to help guide our sport at both the national and domestic level.

One of the first things we did was to establish a CKC COVID-19 Working Group to help us establish criteria and guidelines for decision making with direct focus on health and safety of individual, family and community, led by Federal and Provincial and local guidelines. Return to Sport protocols were implemented with the health and safety of our athletes and sport in mind. We can't thank enough our Board of Directors, Discipline Councils and High-Performance Committees, with a special thanks to both Adam Klevinas and Dr. Don McKenzie for their respective legal and medical advice.

We were able to provide guidelines for virtual training early in the pandemic and later establish National Team training camps in the mid to late summer. We also circulated guidelines within our domestic system and we were happy to see larger numbers of paddlers in the mid to late summer on the water training and competing. This included our multi-disciplined Coast to Coast to Coast Paddling Challenge in late August.

There is no question that the lifeblood of our sport system is within our clubs, provinces, and divisions. It's critically important that we worked hard to support you in maintaining the financial health and well-being of our system. We held virtual Town Halls across the country to provide financial guidance for organizations and individuals effected by the pandemic. These meetings were well attended by all. We also did not charge Membership or participation fees this year so that resources could stay in the respective regions.

Throughout all of this, I know everyone has worked hard and all levels. I'm especially proud of our exceptional staff and how they've come together, often tired and overworked, but always with a

positive and energetic outlook and approach to lead and get through these unique times together. We have faced challenges on a daily and weekly basis, and this continues today. It's great to be surrounded by a talented and wonderful team.

As CEO, I'm reminded of the great privilege it is to work with all of you with a focus on helping create an environment together for CKC to succeed. While we have lived and continue to live in uncertain times with the global pandemic, I feel optimistic that we'll get through this as a stronger Canoe Kayak Canada family. And this family includes the tremendous group of dedicated, expert committee members and volunteers and an expectational staff, including our world leading coaching team.

I engage every day in numerous team initiatives, activities and challenges while working with great staff, volunteers, athletes and coaches; reaching from the grass roots to the podium as we continuously work to strengthen one of Canada's leading sports. These activities, that range from domestic to high performance to Safe Sport and COVID management, are summarized in other reports, so I won't repeat those updates here.

With that said, much of the planned corporate projects and activities shifted to the pandemic crisis in 2020. Below is a summary of some key activities of 2020 and those planned moving forward.

CKC Strategic planning – Vision 2024

As mentioned last year, we continue to be guided by our organization-wide strategic plan adopted by our community in early 2017 with unprecedented input and engagement. While the pandemic put a pause on looking to 2024, we will begin the process of working with our Planning Committee along with our expert Council committees to take stalk as to how we're doing; refine key indicators and objectives as needed and begin a process in 2022 and early 2023 to "restamp" our vision 2032 plan.

High Performance Implementation

As I've mentioned before, we continue to make significant head way with our high performance system. Central to our high performance needs was to hire world-class high performance leadership staff and coaches and to look at ways to ensure that the heart of our system, our clubs, are working in close partnership to strengthen our program from the ground up, with all collective resources pushing in the same direction. We continue to do important work, reflected in reports below.

I remain particularly proud of the world leading team we now have and the significant shift toward a very strong team culture which is so important to succeeding. The team works hard, is focussed on achieving world best results and is having fun doing so.

We made a very focused commitment to build our system. You'll hear through domestic and HP updates in greater detail on this.

Staffing Update

With the COVID pandemic, all CKC staff have worked on a regular basis from their respective home offices. The RA House of Sport has remained available for use, but with a large open concept portion of the building by design, the great majority of House of Sport staff from several sport organizations remain working from home.

We continue to streamline staff responsibilities as best we can to provide a multi-disciplinary approach to our work. With the postponement of the Tokyo Olympic Games, we remain in a transition staffing phase through 2021.

We have a great leadership team, with responsibilities as follows:

- 1) Graham Barton, while remaining as CTO through the 2021 Olympic Games, continues on-site head coach responsibilities as well. This is a very familiar role for Graham where he has had great success in the past with several medal performances under his leadership.
- 2) Ian Mortimer has shifted into significant high performance work. This is part of the transition plan post 2021. It provides an opportunity for Ian to transition and learn through hands-on experience which will make the shift much smoother next year.
- 3) Emily MacKeigan has assumed a senior management role within the High-performance program.
- 4) James Cartwright has taken on more WW Canoe Slalom “HPD” type responsibilities to allow Graham to be more Sprint focused.
- 5) To support Ian in his shift to high performance and James with a growing WW high performance role, we have advertised for a Senior Manager of Domestic Programs, with the intent of keeping this position in place over the long term.
- 6) Laurel MacAdam has returned to CKC in a coordinator role offering strong support to both the domestic and high performance programs.
- 7) Scott Best plays an important coordinator role for our WW program, database program and with special projects that emerge from time to time.
- 8) Our Communications team is led by Colleen Coderre (on a part time basis), with the support of Maryn Sommerfeldt.
- 9) Both Kathy Hare (part time Finance and Office Manager) along with Joanne Hache (part time Finance Coordinator) have offered tremendous support to the organization.
- 10) We are delighted that our Head Coach, Anders Gustafson, will be returning to CKC in late March/April 2021
- 11) As you will read in the CTO report, we have built up the Sprint and WW coaching staff to provide a world class coaching team for our athletes and to ensure a strong link with our domestic, and up and coming athlete talent.

Organizational Alignment

While organizational alignment was postponed with the onset of the COVID pandemic, it is critical that we, as a collective organization, take a close look at how we’re doing with our committee alignment under or new governance structure. We agreed in 2015 that we would move forward, do our best, learn and adapt with the clear focus of doing things better. We have done some very good things, but we know that we can do better as continuous improvement will lead to an even stronger organization. More focus will be placed on this review in 2021.

Committee and Partner Meetings

In my capacity as CEO there are several committee and partnership meetings that occur throughout the year. As in past years, these include CKC Board and Board sub-committee meetings, SRC, HPC and DDC meetings, HR and organizational alignment meetings, WW Council and HPC meetings and athlete and coach meetings. Externally, meetings with the International Canoe Federation, typically at major international events, Sport Canada, Own the Podium, COPAC, marketing and sponsorship partners,

Sport Matters, Canadian Center for Ethics in Sport, Canadian Paralympic Committee, Athletes CAN, Coaching Association of Canada and the Canadian Olympic Committee have taken place for funding, high performance, sport community partnership interests, high performance planning and anti-doping matters.

International Activities

The 2020 ICF Congress scheduled for early December in Manila, in the Philippines, has been postponed due to the COVID pandemic. The ICF has not decided yet on the date and format of the Congress in 2021. The current thinking is a possible virtual Summit in April 2021 or an in-person Summit in Thailand in April 2021 or an in-person Congress following the Tokyo Games, sometime in the Fall of 2021 (location to be determined).

As you are aware, we have four Canadians represented at the ICF level.

- 1) Frank Garner, ICF Sprint Chair and ICF Executive Committee member
- 2) Dr. Don Mckenzie, Chair of the ICF Medical Commission and ICF Board Member
- 3) John Edwards, Chair of the Para Canoe Committee and ICF Board Member
- 4) Mike Chambers, appointed as ICF Ethics Commissioner this year

All play a valued and key role in supporting the work of the ICF to strengthen Canoe Kayak globally. Both Frank and Don are planning to step down at some point in 2021 when the date and format for the ICF Congress is set and elections conducted.

We also continue to work with a small international Canoe Kayak CEO working group of a few “like-minded” countries. The group consists of Canada, the UK, Denmark, Germany, Australia, New Zealand and France. Simon Toulson, Secretary General of the ICF, joins us on a regular basis for these discussions.

CKC Revenue Generation and Fund Development

As you can appreciate, revenue generation in 2020 has been limited, but will be a continued focus in 2021. Key sponsorship partners funding raising initiatives are summarized below:

- 1) Apogee agreement for competitive gear to continue through 2021
- 2) CKC casual clothing agreement with Craft clothing for national team training gear and our casual clothing, to promote brand and generate revenue
- 3) Nelo Canada boat support for our athletes
- 4) Fundraising partnership with Canadian Olympic Foundation
- 5) ZIZU sunglasses
- 6) ImmediaC – Event results and website development
- 7) Salus Marine Sponsorship – On-water safety gear
- 8) Fundraising activity for both Sprint and WW Slalom
- 9) Continue close working relationship with the COC and “National” Lobby firm working to secure a 20% increase in core funding support across sport representing approximately \$40M. The focus, while still under discussion, will likely shift to investing in sport for COVID recovery and the health of all Canadians through sport participation.

CKC Alumni Program and Fund Development

Like everything else, the CKC Alumni Council activities came to a halt during the pandemic. What was promising to be a year with a calendar full of community engagement opportunities has unfortunately fallen flat. At the height of uncertainty around Tokyo 2020, alumni from the boycotted 1980 Olympics came forward to offer words of wisdom to our Olympic team who were navigating a very unique experience that not many others could understand. We delayed our Women's Canoe crowdfunding campaign, along with all associated Olympic events. Our alumni council pivoted to working on building a Hall of Fame with an expected Inaugural Class to be inducted at the CKC Summit in 2021. Additionally, the 1980 and 2000 Olympics teams will be recognized this year digitally as they are celebrating anniversaries, with their reunion being rescheduled for Summit 2021.

On the philanthropic side, we are building out our donation policies and how CKC can better support community fundraising, in addition to larger, national campaigns. The CKC fund development and engagement program strives to develop and cultivate past and current athletes, parents, fans and community members to enhance CKC's mission to encourage Canadians to enjoy the sport of paddling and achieve success at all levels of competition.

This program has two major outcomes:

1. Grow the culture of philanthropy within, and around CKC by engaging its community
2. Diversify CKC's current revenue model through investing in philanthropy for long-term sustainable growth and success

As well as focus on two distinct streams within CKC - *For the Sport* and *For the Leaf*. *For the Leaf* will encompass high performance fundraising for national team athletes and *For the Sport* will support grassroots community initiatives like club growth, access to sport, diversity and equity.

Scheduled 2020 Events Postponed to 2021

| Item | Date | Location |
|--|-------------|----------------------|
| Women Paddling Yoga Alumni Event | Summer | TBC Pointe-Claire |
| Alumni Social | Fall | National |
| Show Us Our Alumni Merch Sales | July/August | National |
| Alumni Grow the Sport Campaign | September | National |
| CKC Summit Alumni Reunion | TBC | Ottawa |
| Women's Canoe Campaign Launch | TBC | TBC Toronto? |
| Olympic Send off | TBC | TBC Toronto |
| Olympic VIP Reception | TBC | TBC Tokyo |
| Alumni Event Sprint Nationals | TBC. | Rideau |
| Olympian Reception Sprint Nationals | TBC. | Rideau |
| Alumni Event Whitewater | TBC | TBC |

In closing, while 2020 has been challenging for all, adversity brings out strength of character. Our community has come together, with your collective leadership, which has been so critically important at

this time. This will no doubt serve us well as we move into 2021, with some uncertainties, but always with a focus to be strong and to succeed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Casey Wade', with a stylized, cursive script.

Casey Wade | Canoe Kayak Canada
Chief Executive Officer | Chef de la direction

HIGH PERFORMANCE REPORT

By Graham Barton

Last year at this time I wrote the following statement in my annual report: “This has been the most challenging year of my career in sport”. Boy was I wrong! I also included in my 2019 report this quote from Robert Burns which was so very applicable to what transpired in that year: *“The best laid plans of Mice and Men often go awry”*. For 2020, the pandemic has thrown a bag of wrenches into the best laid plans. It has challenged us to think not only about a Plan A and B but to consider C, D, E and F and more. I think Dr. Suess shared some words of wisdom that I feel are relevant to our fight against Covid-19.

“When something bad happens, you have three choices: You can let it define you. You can let it destroy you or you can let it strengthen you.

As I sit here in mid-November on the west coast considering what to report on in a year where all competitions were cancelled, I realized that this will be my last annual report. Had the best laid plans been just that then I would have been retired now and heading to a warmer climate to enjoy the beach not to sit in a motorboat with one of our coaches or draft a selection document. However, my closing remarks from last year’s report were in many ways prophetic.

“At the outset of this report I indicated the many challenges that confronted us in 2019 but as I sit here in Florida and watch our athletes go out on the water daily to try and be the best they can be, it reminds me why I do what I do, and it helped me to recognize that the challenges are what make us stronger and that I truly believe that no matter what curveballs life throws at us we will persevere, and success is on the horizon.”

I believe we are stronger, and I have seen evidence of this both on and off the water in 2020. Covid-19 was not something anyone wanted, and my heart goes out to anyone who suffered or lost a loved one, but I do feel in many respects it challenged us to adapt and to lead. Our athletes are working hard and are committed to training without a competition on the immediate horizon, our coaches kept them on track and while early on it was virtually it was not long before they too enthusiastically reengaged to ensure the future success of our athletes. As well there are many people behind the scenes that make this all possible and this was never more evident than in 2020. Kudos to our volunteers who committed to finding a way to keep our sport viable and active at a time when many sports could not open their doors.

When I decided that I too would commit to another year I did so not because I felt that it could not be done without me. I chose to stay because of the team we had built. We have some of the best staff any organization could have. Some real rock stars that showed once again that Canoe Kayak Canada are leaders respected and relied on by the wider sport community.

From our quick exit from training camps last March in the USA and Europe to establishing the Covid-19 task force and Return to Sport protocols to planning in a Covid-19 world including a virtual Coast to Coast to Coast Paddling Challenge, staff have spent innumerable hours on zoom, planning for our clubs, our athletes and our coaches. We will continue to do so long as the possibility exists for our athletes to compete once again.

Our Slalom and Sprint Teams have been back at it since June following all Public Health Restrictions and specific CKC safety protocols. Options in the rest of the world are now limited so a shift to the west coast for both teams has allowed us to continue preparation for the Tokyo Games. The Sprint Team is on Vancouver Island and the Slalom Team is training in Chilliwack.

Due to the planned dates of qualification next spring for the sprint team and the current Covid-19 situation around the world and in particular in the USA an alternate location for our Canoe Sprint Olympic and Paralympic Team Trials has to be one of our contingencies. We are currently working with Canoe Kayak BC and the City of Burnaby to assess the viability of hosting these trials on Burnaby Lake in mid-March.

We just had our annual meeting with OTP. We were pleased to hear that Sport Canada has indicated that there will be the same level of funding in the overall sport bucket for 2021 -2022 and I am confident that that our medal potential for Tokyo will ensure sustained support for our teams. We will get confirmation on these levels at the end of January.

On the staffing front, unfortunately Andreas Dittmer returned to Germany to take on the lead role for Men's Canoe in his home country, he will be missed, however we were able to ensure a seamless transition and I am pleased to welcome Jon Pike, former Head Coach of the Maskwa Aquatic Club as our new National Men's Canoe Coach for the Sprint Program.

On the Slalom side a little over a year ago we made a transition into a new staffing model and I am pleased to report that International Coach, Anthony Colin and Development Coach Michal Staniszewski are doing a tremendous job.

As part of the overall technical leadership model and succession plan, a Senior Manager of Development will be added to the CKC office staff. The Head Coach of Sprint will also return from his sabbatical as part of a team competing in the America's Cup in April.

Following Tokyo, a review of programs and staffing will finalize and tweak our technical model for the Paris and Los Angeles quadrennials, marking the completion of our efforts to transition from one leadership team to another and to coincide with my plans to step down in September of 2021.

Slalom is on the verge of completing a fully qualified team for Tokyo with three spots already achieved and the final spot to be secured in the spring of 2021. On the sprint side we have already qualified 9 Olympic and 1 Paralympic quota at the 2019 Senior World Championships. Based on the rankings and qualification events in the spring of 2021 we are poised to race all events on the Sprint Program with the potential to secure between 15 and a full 18 quota complement.

For the first time the Sprint Program will allow the possibility for an Olympic Champion to also be World Champion in the same year. A Senior World Championship will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark following the Games in Tokyo. For Canoe Sprint this will be the first competition of the Paris preparation phase and a great opportunity for our next generation to experience international competition on the big stage in preparation for the next Olympic Games in 2024.

It has been a challenging couple of years, but I do believe that stability is on the horizon and success for Canada will follow. Recent news about promising vaccines lead us to believe that Tokyo will go ahead in some form or another and as I said at the outset it means we must make every effort to give our

athletes the best opportunities to be successful at those Games. We will continue to monitor, gather intelligence , ensure safe protocols and continually adapt our plans.

**A positive thinker does not refuse to recognize the negative; he refuses to dwell on it. Positive thinking is a form of thought which habitually looks for the best results from the worst conditions -
Norman Vincent Peale**

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Graham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and a long, sweeping tail.

Graham

DEVELOPMENT REPORT

By Ian Mortimer

Achievement, Collaboration, Excellence, Inclusion, Integrity

Proactive Communications

When we achieve these priorities, CKC will be a recognized and trusted partner in the paddling community.

Shift to Crisis Management Communication

The COVID-19 crisis led much of our CKC communication efforts to shift to the sharing of key information around the pandemic and its effect on our CKC community. We have had to shift our role to both supporting Provincial and Territorial jurisdictions in their messaging and providing as much support as we can to the entire community around protocols, cancellations and return to paddling planning. This has been a time of great strain, but also unprecedented sharing and communication as we have worked through 2020.

Learnings from 2020 Coast to Coast to Coast Paddle Challenge

The Coast to Coast to Coast Paddle Challenge, our first truly multi-disciplinary and virtual event, was a success at the end of August. Along with the success of this event in engaging our community across the country, key learnings and development on our communication side were achieved and will be applied to our national events, virtual and in person, as we move forward.



Enhanced Grassroots and Club Development

When we achieve these priorities, we will have a strong vibrant integrated grassroots development system spanning all disciplines.

Coaching Development

COVID-19 led to a pivot to online learning for much of our Coach Education system across the country in 2020. CKC worked with different Provincial delivery partners who collectively were able to deliver several community Initiation and Introduction to Competition workshops using online platforms. These new platforms opened the possibility of participants joining from across the country and is an exciting development as we look ahead to our plans for the future. CKC is delivering our first virtual Sprint Competition Development program this winter and will be looking at aligning our new program development with online delivery.

CKC's Women in Coaching Mentorship program was able to deliver the initial opportunity to two participants who traveled to the Sprint Camp in Florida pre-shutdown, however the International and Summer based opportunities were not possible in 2020.

Key program development target is a Community Initiation framework that can be the basis for multi-disciplinary delivery. The leadership from our members across different programs already being delivered (New Canadians, Indigenous Programming, Canoe Kids, Pools in Schools), will inform this framework.

Connect with CKC Webinars

Six *Connect with CKC* webinars were conducted this spring which offered multi-disciplinary professional development conversations tackling different topics. Member participation in these webinars was overwhelmingly positive.

Emerging and Evolving Paddling Discipline Strategy – SUP as Pilot

Emerging and Evolving Paddling Disciplines continue to present opportunity for CKC to grow our community and provide benefit to paddlers across Canada. SUP as a paddling discipline presents a great potential pilot area to model a new collaborative approach to supporting paddling development based on the pillars of: Evolving Internal Governance, Collaboration around Race Support, International Competition Support and Coach Education. An initial step in exploring this pilot will be an open discussion call with SUP community members in December.

New Canadians Program

Canoe Kayak Canada was successful in securing support for five pilot communities to deliver programming specifically designed to introduce paddling to New Canadian populations as part of the Sport Canada Innovation Initiative. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions only one of these communities has been able to deliver this programming to date. However, this single pilot run by the Regina Marathon Canoe Club was a great success with a large amount of interest for the program among New Canadian populations in the city. The full report on this pilot [is available here.](#)

Front left to right: Michael, Coach Dale with Jasper peaking out, Tianxing, Haiyan. Back left to right: Coach Bev, Bei, Coaches Liam & Flo



Indigenous Paddling Program Development

The CKC pilot through the department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada was wrapped up after delivering programming to communities in Kahnawake and Ditidaht First Nation in partnership with Canoe Kayak British Columbia. After discussion and advice from CKC's Indigenous Advisory Council and reflection after an unsuccessful application to Sport Canada's Sport for Social Development in Indigenous Communities Program, CKC has taken the approach of focusing on supporting Indigenous Communities in making their own applications to the current funding cycle and recommitting to working as a partner and supporter of Indigenous led programming.

Enhanced Performance

When we achieve these priorities, CKC will be a consistent top performing nation at all competitions in all disciplines.

Team Red

Team Red activities were affected by a lack of in person opportunities for competition and training camps in 2020. At the same time, an increased need to focus on remote training, reporting and virtual interactions has led to an acceleration of our ability to connect with the paddlers and coaches in our community. This will lay important foundations for our ability to connect with our community of development paddlers in the future.



Effective Leadership

When we achieve these priorities, CKC will be more efficient and effective.

COVID-19 Response and Support

The majority of our time as an organization this year has been dedicated to our response and support to the COVID-19 crisis within our community. Through the initial months of the crisis, CKC worked and collaborated at an unprecedented rate with our members to develop and support the implementation of COVID-19 protocols. CKC also worked to understand and access financial support to help withstand the pressure on our member organizations. Additionally, CKC has worked extensively with our national partners to support sport wide efforts to ensure our protocols and resources reflect the best practices across the country. We are now in a difficult period of sustained restrictions which are moving in a troubling direction as we enter the winter months. CKC will continue to provide support in updating our protocols and preparing our contingencies for the 2021 season. This will start with a specific COVID-19 review and planning session webinar on December 1st.

Data Registration System

CKC has worked with immediaC through the first year of our roll out of our data registration system, ckcmember.ca. CKBC was a key early partner in shaping and rolling out this system, and this process certainly proved challenging and highlighted the unique challenges that CKC's highly variable governance models bring to building a single system to support our membership. CKC has gathered extensive feedback from year one of the system, and has developed a robust plan to update the system with key fixes and modifications, and a focus on the core functions needed for CKC to properly roll out its operations with its varied partners.

One key functionality we are building out for 2021 is a simple but direct membership signup process through which Clubs/Organizations will renew their annual membership in CKC. This process will address a key risk area of ensuring our members are properly registered with CKC and that key policies are acknowledged and contact information is collected. The leadership of CKBC, ADCKC and others will be followed in designing this streamlined process.

The focus of adaptability and flexibility for members to use their own systems and to integrate with our ckcmember.ca system remains front of mind with the plans for our year two roll out.

Safe Sport Policy

CKC has passed and continues to evolve its comprehensive Safe Sport Policy handbook. Our system has become a leading example of an aligned system across the sport sector and will continue to evolve with both the shifting of national and Provincial/Territorial landscape and on-going feedback from our community. The phase we are now in is one of education and support to our membership in adopting the CKC Safe Sport Policy Manual within their own organizations. To facilitate this process, [a membership declaration](#) has been created and we are targeting April 1st, 2021 as the date by which members will have adopted the CKC Safe Sport Policy Manual within their own organization, as well as the target to understand and comply with screening and educational requirements.

As part of our CKC 2020 virtual Summit, CKC is offering webinar opportunities to provide full details of our Safe Sport Policy Manual, including key responsibilities relevant to Member implementation and to answer questions.

CANOE SLALOM AND COACH DEVELOPMENT REPORT

By James Cartwright

I am pleased to provide this report on the status and to recapture recent developments in CKC's Canoe Slalom and Coach Development Programs. At the time of writing this report it is approximately nine months before the start of the postponed Tokyo Olympic Games. As is the case for all sports, the slalom National Team operations and high performance planning have been turned upside down following countless event cancellations and travel restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite these challenges, our teams remain committed to achieving our objectives and sending a full team to the Tokyo Olympic Games while striving for the podium in Tokyo. Several noteworthy shifts and recent developments related to the Canoe Slalom and Coach Development priorities are summarized below.

- CKC has selected Cameron Smedley, Michael Tayler and Florence Maheu to the Tokyo 2020 Team.
- The new technical leadership structure has proven to be more resilient and capable of delivering athlete development strategies that meet CKC's objectives for both the Tokyo and Paris pathway programs.
- Coaching roles are clear and this has improved CKC's capacity to support Tokyo and Paris programs.
- CKC Coaching staff have supported the development and implementation Covid-19 countermeasures when we returned to on-water paddling.
- A successful pivot of all slalom high performance projects was performed in the early summer to provide domestic development training camps throughout the summer in Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec.
- The Tokyo pathway team has remained based in Ottawa since March with a handful of short training camps within Ontario and Quebec to train at other paddling venues.
- CKC's slalom coaches have implemented a number of successful development and high performance training camps in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, and British Columbia.
- Léa Baldoni has won Canada's first women's Extreme Slalom medal placing second in the Pau World Cup extreme slalom event.
- Coach development workshops and webinars have been executed to shift NCCP education into online workshops.

Proactive Communication

Given the restrictions on in-person meetings and group gatherings, great efforts have been made to conduct frequent virtual meetings with coaches, athletes, and committees. These strategies were critical and have enabled coaches and athletes to stay connected and to communicate in the early stages of the pandemic and throughout 2020. Important lessons have been learned and online virtual meeting platforms will continue to assist in CKC's community and stakeholder outreach.

Enhanced Grassroots and Club Development

NCCP Coach Development

As has been the case with most in-person meetings in 2020, work has been initiated to shift NCCP workshops into online webinars. Several Community Initiation and Introduction to Competition NCCP workshops were conducted using online meeting platforms and this strategy has enabled coach candidates from across Canada to participate in NCCP workshops despite restrictions on in-person meetings. In addition, a Sprint Competition Development webinar series will be piloted this winter.

International Immersion and Women in Coaching Mentorship Opportunities

Two female coaches were selected to participate in CKC's women in Coaching Mentorship program and joined the National Team training camp in Florida before the team returned to Canada during the March Covid-19 shutdown. The objective of this program is to support the advancement of female canoe kayak coaches. In addition, the program also aims to support the development of the selected coaches' leadership and technical analysis skills while working closely alongside National Team support staff.

Connect with CKC Webinars

Six *Connect with CKC* webinars were conducted throughout May and into June to offer multidiscipline professional development conversations tackling different topics. Member participation in these webinars was overwhelmingly positive but numbers did begin to decline as paddling and summer programs reopened.

Enhanced Performance

Cameron Smedley (C1M), Michael Tayler (K1M), and Florence Maheu (K1W) were selected to the Tokyo Games following the conclusion of the Penrith Open international whitewater competition in February 2020. The women's canoe team will compete in the 2021 Pan-Am Championships to qualify the women's canoe quota for Tokyo.

Three of five 2020 Canoe Slalom World Cup events were cancelled and very few international competition opportunities have been accessible to our team this season. The team was preparing to compete in the 2020 World Cup in Pau, France on November 7-8 but our travel plans were abandoned days before the team's departure due to the rapidly evolving public health orders and travel advisories that were enforced the week of the team planned departure. Fortunately, two Canadian athletes already living in Pau, France were able to compete in this event. Léa Baldoni won Canada's first silver medal in the women's extreme slalom kayak event.

The Canadian team did however manage to compete in the Penrith 2020 Canoe Slalom ICF Ranking Race held in February 2020. This was a very deep international field with the top nations from Europe as well as USA in attendance. It is important to mention that 6 of 7 Canadian athletes advanced to the semifinal in 2020 when compared to only 2 Canadian athletes advancing to the semifinal at the same event in 2019. In addition, all but two athletes improved on their individual result in 2020 when compared to their performance at the same event in 2019.

Table 2: Summary of Senior National Team International Results in 2020 compared to same event in 2019

| Athlete | Event | YOB | Oceania Open 2020 | Penrith Open 2020 | Penrith Open 2019 |
|-------------|-------|------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Ben Hayward | K1M | 1990 | DNC | 29 | 35 |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----|------|-----|----|-----|
| Michael Tayler | K1M | 1992 | DNC | 21 | 84 |
| Trevor Boyd | K1M | 1999 | DNC | 95 | 71 |
| Lois Betteridge | C1W | 1997 | DNC | 27 | 23 |
| Haley Daniels | C1W | 1990 | DNC | 21 | 40 |
| Cameron Smedley | C1M | 1991 | 5 | 30 | DNC |
| Florence Maheu | K1W | 1993 | DNC | 26 | 60 |

Effective Leadership

One of the biggest successes of the 2020 season has been the positive impacts observed following the implementation of the slalom coaching structure. This structure has proved to be effective and has enabled CKC to prepare athletes for Tokyo while also supporting long-term athlete development programs for Paris and Los Angeles. The National Team coaches have stepped into their respective roles and CKC leadership continue to receive positive feedback from both athletes and community stakeholders regarding this shift.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

By Colleen Coderre

It has been an unprecedented year – the most accurate and common statement issued in 2020. As the realities of the pandemic hit us back in March and all activities grinded to a halt, our primary communications strategy shifted focus to supporting CKC messaging out to our members who were navigating the complexities of the pandemic. A barrage of disappointing event cancellations ensued – most notably pinnacle national events and the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

In late April, CKC launched a digital campaign called ‘Stay Home with Team Red’ – a motivational video series on IGTV highlighting our National Team athletes sharing tips on training at home while reminding our paddling communities that we are all in this together. CKC also launched and promoted ‘Team Red – Connect with CKC’, a webinar series offering a wide variety of learning opportunities for athletes, coaches and paddling members.

CKC successfully hosted our first-ever virtual event – the Coast to Coast to Coast Paddle Challenge presented by Nelo Canada. The participatory event was [streamed live](#) with outstanding participation from our paddling communities across Canada. The purpose of this event was to connect our diverse paddling community and encourage paddlers to get out and have fun on the water.

We continue to build on our brand recognition strategies, adding more focus and investment in visual assets to enhance the value and connection to the CKC brand. Additionally, we have worked closely with our partners in sponsorship to ensure their brand is reflected professionally and positively within our paddling community and beyond.

And finally, as we reimagine what an Olympic and Paralympic Games will look like in 2021, I am working closely with the Canadian Olympic Committee, as a Team Canada media attaché, to support our Olympic hopefuls, from a media perspective, in the lead up and onsite at the Games. The Canadian Paralympic Committee is also keen in strengthening and collaborating on media support and partnerships. We anticipate the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games to be the highest profile Games in our history. We will continue fostering positive relationships with our media partners, including the Olympic and Paralympic rights broadcast holders, the Canadian Broadcast Corporation.

I would like to extend my thanks to CKC Communications Coordinator Maryn Sommerfeldt and all the CKC staff, led by Casey Wade, for their outstanding work and team support throughout this unusual year. We look forward to continued collaboration with all our CKC stakeholders. Who’s ready for 2021?

ATHLETES REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

By Ben Russell

Over the past year the CKC Athletes Committee (CKCAC) has met once. The purpose of this meeting was to provide the discipline updates to the committee and solicit input for projects for the upcoming year. While these discussions were largely interrupted by the COVID19 pandemic, the AC was consulted throughout CKC's response to COVID-19 to ensure athlete safety was at the forefront of decision-making during the ongoing return to sport. The AC likewise continued to provide feedback to CKC's Safe Sport Policies. The AC is now in the process of onboarding new members and setting our goals for 2021.

Role of CKC Athlete Committee

The CKC AC is comprised of all the athlete representatives from the different discipline councils. The key duties of the committee include:

- Ensure and support discipline councils and committees to elect or appoint their respective athlete representatives and define the athlete constituency represented by such individuals
- Gather and disseminate feedback from their respective athlete groups to relevant committees, councils and the board of directors.
- Gather and disseminate information and materials from the councils, committees and board of directors.
- Review and provide feedback on selection criteria and athlete agreements before the documents are made public.
- Review and provide input on competition rules for the disciplines.
- Ensure at least one of its members is included in the development of policies and criteria for team selection and AAP nominations, including delegation of decision-making to subcommittees and staff.
- Engage in advocacy specific to its members.
- Review the Terms of Reference annually and provide input to the board on desired changes.

Goals for 2020-2021

In order to support CKC as an athlete-centered organization, the athlete committee will enter 2020-2021 with three main areas of focus:

- 1) AC Onboarding and documentation
- 2) Safe Sport awareness
- 3) COVID safety measures