

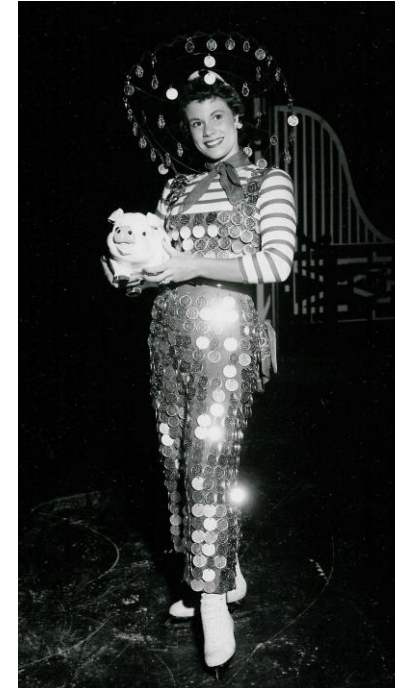
From Playground to Podium: The important role of Communities in delivering sport

*Annual Recreation Summit 2016
Lanark, Leeds & Grenville*

Caroline Sharp

My Background

- From Longueuil, Quebec
- Parents were athletes
- B.A. Mount Allison University
- CIS Varsity volleyball - 5 years
- Graduate Diploma in Sport Administration from Concordia University
- Coached volleyball at the College and University levels in Quebec
- Moved to Ottawa in 1989 and Carleton Place in 1992
- Both daughters played University hockey - one NCAA Div.I and the other CIS



My Sport Admin Background

- 17 years at Volleyball Canada, 10 as the CEO
- 6 years at the Canadian Olympic Committee responsible for Games Communications.
- Executive Director Canadian Fencing Federation since 2012
- Contracts - Ottawa Tourism, City of Gatineau, Sport Canada



CANADIAN FENCING FEDERATION
TEAMWORK. PERFORM. INSPIRE

Olympic Games

- 8 Olympic Games (Summer: Sydney, Athens, Beijing, London and Rio, Winter: Salt Lake, Vancouver, Sochi)
- 3 Pan Am Games (Rio, Guadalajara, Toronto)
- Worked with: Beach Volleyball, Volleyball, Archery, Softball, Baseball, Athletics, Badminton, Cycling, Fencing, Curling, Ski Jumping, Nordic Combined, Cross Country.
- Media Attaché, Press Chief, High Performance Centre Manager



What has my involvement in the Olympic Games taught me?

- ▶ There is a sport for everyone!
 - ▶ All body types
 - ▶ All heights
 - ▶ All physical skill attributes
 - ▶ All ages
- ▶ Athletes do not just come from large urban centres! Many learn their sport in their small towns and villages:
 - ▶ Ryan Cuthbert and Andrew Willows - Kayak / Carleton Place
 - ▶ Mike Brown - Swimming / Perth
 - ▶ Nicholas Tritton - Judo / Perth
 - ▶ Ian and Amy Millar - Equestrian / Perth
 - ▶ Sultana Frizell - Athletics / Perth
 - ▶ Heather Ross McManus - Trampoline / Almonte
 - ▶ Melanie McCann - Modern Pentathlon / Mount Carmel
 - ▶ Erica Wiebe - Wrestling / Stittsville



Communities play an important role in inspiring young athletes!

- ▶ Athletes always remember where they come from and speak about their home towns
 - ▶ Catharine Pendrel, Bronze in Mountain Bike in Rio comes from **Harvey Station, New Brunswick**. Was a horse rider in eventing before switching to mountain biking after riding the trails her brother created on their horse farm.
- ▶ Community and School Coaches are often at the root of their interest to pursue a particular sport
 - ▶ Nancy Mills/Carleton Place Volleyball
 - ▶ My experience



Olympic Games inspire people to try new sports!

- ▶ Inspired to take up sports

“The Olympics generates a great deal of interest in sports. Young people are exposed to new sports and often are inspired to try out for a sport, especially when it receives lots of publicity because of the success of our athletes.”

2012, Centre for Sport Policy Studies at the University of Toronto.

- ▶ Exposed to new sports

- ▶ Fencing, all combat sports, archery, modern pentathlon, shooting, speed skating etc. see increased interest following the Games.

Olympic Games inspire people to try new sports!

- ▶ Provide the means to realize potential!

“But if our public policy goal is to achieve a more active and healthier population, our responsibility does not end with high performance funding. Inspiration is not enough. It is tragic to encourage and inspire young people to participate in sport, and yet provide them with no means to realize that possibility.”

- ▶ The Canadian sport system is full of stories about lines of young people at, for example, rowing or speed skating clubs following inspiring performances by Canadian athletes, only to be turned away because the club was able to accept only a few new participants.
- ▶ We have to plan and prepare for increased participation just as we have planned and prepared for Olympic success.
- ▶ We need to be proactive - target potential athletes (e.g. Rugby's approach)

Examples of smaller communities that offer unique sporting opportunities

- Scaramouche Fencing Club, Chibougamau, QC - population 7,500



Community took advantage of local expertise to create a niche sport

- ▶ Sport of fencing requires little space:
 - ▶ Can be done on a gym floor with taped lines - no floor strips needed
 - ▶ Start up equipment is relatively low priced and can be rented to recoup costs
- ▶ Can be done by people of all ages - age 5 to 80
- ▶ Can be purely recreational or competitive
 - ▶ Armband program
- ▶ Safe! Very low incidence of injury. Safety is taken seriously and taught right from the start.

PETERBOROUGH

MULTI-SPORT

CLUB

PFC



PJC



PAC



FENCING JIU JITSU ARCHERY

PETERBOROUGH MULTI-SPORT CLUB was built from the ground up with a focus on values that would enable us to make a difference in the lives of our members and their families.

PMSC offers a friendly, supportive environment with lessons for the entire family in archery, fencing and jiu jitsu. Classes are available for all age groups, from 8 years through to adult and beyond.



Examples of smaller communities that offer unique sporting opportunities

- ▶ Dryden Judo Club, Dryden, ON - population 7,500
- ▶ 60 year tradition! Sensei Rush Mitani started the first club
- ▶ Hosted competitions in past in Dryden's Memorial Arena with 600 judokas from as far away as Hawaii
- ▶ Many of the leaders of the town now have a judo background



Examples of smaller communities that offer unique sporting opportunities

- ▶ Wrestling Club, Saint-Césaire, QC - population 5,200
 - ▶ Approx. one hour from Montreal in Eastern townships
 - ▶ Have developed athletes at Provincial, National and International levels

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Community sport creates large event with economic impact on the region

- ▶ Eastern Canada Wrestling Festival, May 2016:
 - ▶ Large youth event (1,000 + competitors)
 - ▶ Have strong tradition of hosting all levels of events creating strong local hosting abilities.

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Festival de lutte de l'Est du Canada

13 au 15 mai 2016

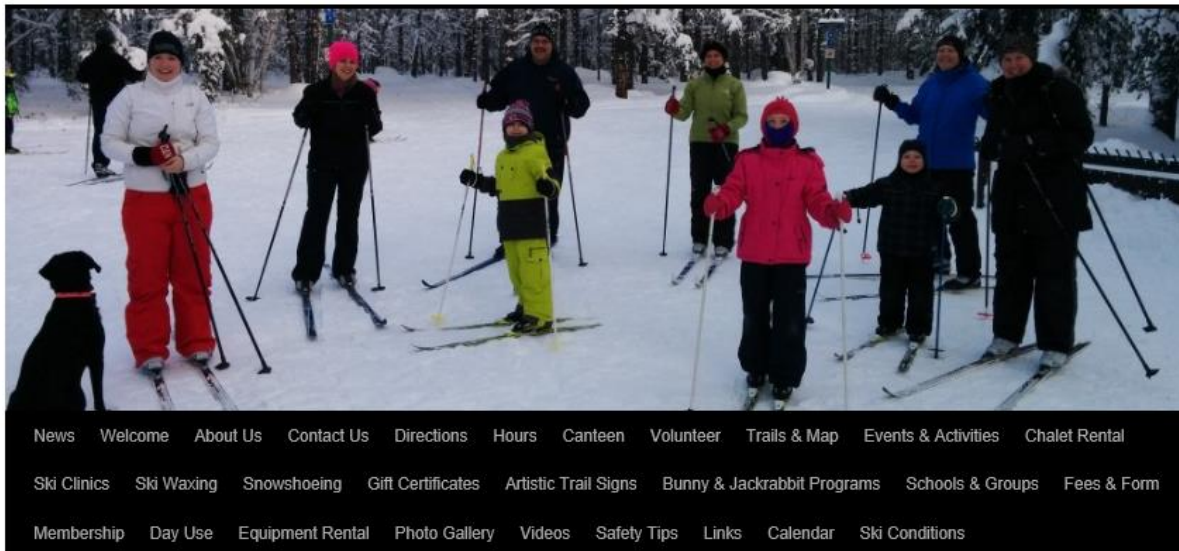


Examples of smaller communities that offer unique sporting opportunities

- ▶ Iroquois Falls, ON - population 4,500
 - ▶ Consider what assets your community naturally has to offer.

Iroquois Falls Cross Country Ski Club

Cross Country Skiing, XC Skiing, Classic Skiing, Skate Skiing, Ski Club, XC Ski Club, Snowshoeing, Snowshoe Club, Northern Ontario, 100% Smoke Free

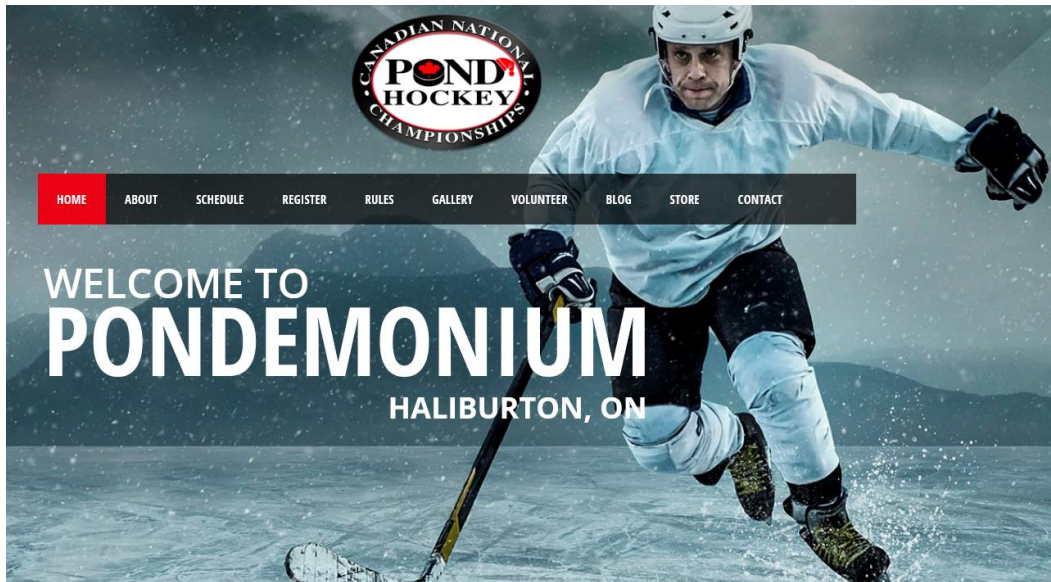


The way forward ...

- ▶ Does the interest and expertise already reside in your community?
 - ▶ If yes, what can you do to help them establish programming? (Smiths Falls EOVC example)
 - ▶ If no, or you are not aware of expertise in the sport, contact the PSO for the sport. Many have resources and/or contacts that can help build the program.
 - ▶ Alternatively, you can provide resource assistance to have someone receive the training. Most PSO's have initiation level leadership development that trains leaders to provide instruction for beginners.
- ▶ If you build it, they will come ...
 - ▶ Advertising and promotion are challenging for new sports programs. Any help that you can provide with this through your existing resources is very helpful.
 - ▶ Initiation programs through schools. Many sports can provide demos and clinics for schools to try new sports and at very low cost.

Think outside the Box...

- ▶ Create a niche sport specialty for your area
 - ▶ As the sport grows, so will opportunities for profile and the hosting of events/festivals. (Wrestling and fencing examples)
 - ▶ Consider alternative formats of traditional sports (Pond Hockey)



Final thoughts ...

- ▶ All Olympians started as recreational athletes in their sport
- ▶ Sport leaders/coaches/teachers play important roles - Communities can help provide resources in capacity (facility access, registration tools etc.) and promotion. It's not just about direct funding. Help make it easier for the club or program to succeed.

