

DOMINION SPORTS COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes 11 October 2024

Our Mission is to serve Veterans, which includes serving military and RCMP members and their families, to promote remembrance and to serve our communities and our country.



**DOMINION SPORTS MEETING
11 OCTOBER 2024 @ 11:00 HRS EST - VIDEOCONFERENCE
MEETING MINUTES**

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DOMINION SPORTS MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDANCE:

Garry Pond	-	Chair
Bob Underhill	-	Member
Keith Andrews	-	Member
Harold Defazio	-	Member
Serge Thibaudeau	-	Technical Advisor
Steven Van Muyen	-	Committee Coordinator
Kelly Therien	-	Assistance Committee Coordinator

1. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & OPENING RITUAL

The meeting commenced at 11:00 Hours, 11 October 2024 via Zoom videoconferencing. The chair opened the meeting with a land acknowledgement and conducted the opening ritual.

2. SPORTS COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REMARKS

The chair welcomed the members of the sports committee and expressed their gratitude for taking the time to meet. The chair expressed their excitement to serve on the sports committee and emphasized the importance of sport in the delivery of RCL values.

3. NEW BUSINESS

The chair entertained requests to add new agenda items.

4. INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

The committee took the time to introduce the new members of the sports committee. The sports committee has 3 new members, 1 returning member, and a returning technical advisor.

5. 2024 NATIONAL YOUTH TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The sports coordinator informed the committee that a summary report of the 2024 Legion Nationals was enclosed and had been included as part of the agenda. Additionally, through the collection of final reports and post-event surveys, important points to sustain and improve were briefly discussed. These included the following:

- A. Food Services. It was outlined that the reviews for the cafeteria at the University of Calgary were exceptional. The check-in system for fresh

meals worked extremely well, allowing all participants the ability to choose a meal according to their preference (quantity and selection). Meal selection was extremely inclusive (all special or unique diets were accommodated) and the system for dietary allergies was well organized, ensuring the safety of all participants.

Lunch during the competition days was provided on the track in the form of box lunches.

- B. Residences. It was noted that the residences at the University of Calgary were acceptable but not exceptional. For the most part, teams were split by floor and male / females split by wing (as much as possible). The building itself is old and most complaints centered around the washrooms (quality and quantity). Unfortunately, housing at the University of Calgary is limited so the accommodations will likely be the same as next year.

The biggest issue with the accommodations came with the check in process for those organizing the rooms. The organizing committee had a very difficult time working with U of C staff and often the room allocation was incorrect. This will be discussed with the university directly.

In addition, feedback suggested that the teams would prefer to be split male/female per floor. For example, floors 1 – 4 would be male and 5 – 8 female. The sports committee will work with the university in order to try and accommodate this request.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

- C. Air Travel. It was explained that air travel was well organized this year as it was completed through the BTS Travel Agent. However, issues at the airport (hailstorm) resulted in some of the flights being cancelled. This caused major issues with the Thunder Bay incoming flight and the Team NS/NU outgoing flights. In the end, new flights were booked for the teams because the provided flights were unacceptable. The Sports Committee will attempt to book with Air Canada next year to avoid these service issues (cost-dependent).

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

- D. Athlete Clinic Day. As outlined in the enclosed summary, the presentation given by the Legion Nationals Ambassador, Mike Trauner, was exceptional. Ensuring that Royal Canadian Legion values, and the sacrifice of Canada's veterans, are communicated during the Athlete Clinic Day will continue.

- E. Closing Banquet. Overall, the closing banquet was a well-organized and enjoyable event. For 2024, we let the teams decide if they wanted to have 1 or 2 athletes provide a speech at the closing banquet (in the language of their choice). This flexibility worked well with teams appreciating being given the opportunity to select athletes who really wanted to speak. This will be implemented again in 2025.

Additionally, there were some concerns with teams returning to the food line before other teams had a chance to eat. This might be mitigated by controlling it via MC or by asking McEwan hall to have 2 food lines so that 2 teams can move through the line at the same time.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

- F. Technical. There were no major issues with technical aspects of the meet. The registration process through Trackie is still extremely labour intensive but has been easier to manage with the entry standards process in place for open athletes.

- Para Events: As part of the 2024 Legion Nationals, we included a total of 16 Para Events (8 events split male and female). Unfortunately, we received zero registrations into these events. Athletics Canada has committed to working with the Legion to determine the reason for a lack of registrations and to come up with a plan moving forward for Para at the Legion Nationals. Therefore, the sports committee will continue to offer para events for 2025 (for open athletes). Further, the sports committee will seek the assistance of Mike Trauner in reaching para-athletes across Canada.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

- G. Communication. It was noted that holding an information and technical meeting via zoom with all the Head Chaperones and Coaches prior to their arrival worked very well. This meeting and format will continue into the future.

- H. Bilingualism. A lack of bilingualism was noted during the Opening Ceremonies and the Athlete Clinics. The sports coordinator will explore ways to further include bilingualism into these sub-events.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

- I. Athlete Village. The athlete village location was on a slight incline and some of the teams expressed that they would have rather been on the flat field adjacent to the track. This would also alleviate security issues that were experienced in the athlete village. The sports committee will explore the option of placing the athlete village in the adjacent warm up field. Although this will limit the teams ability to view the events from the athlete village, it is a more suitable location which will allow for better security of the teams.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

6. 2025 LEGION NATIONAL YOUTH TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The sports coordinator outlined that the 2025 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships will be held in Calgary, Alberta from August 6-12, 2025 (August 8 – 10 competition dates). It was noted that it is anticipated that all teams will be participating in the 2025 Legion Nationals. The anticipated numbers for each team are as follows:

2025 LEGION NATIONALS				
LEGION TEAM NUMBERS				
TEAM	ATHLETES	COACHES	CHAPERONES	TOTAL
PEI	8	1	2	11
NS/NU	36	4	4	44
NB	36	4	4	44
QC	40	3	4	47
MB/NWO	36	2	4	42
SK	36	3	4	43
AB/NT	36	4	4	44
BC/YK	40	4	4	48
ON	40	4	4	48
NL	17	2	2	21

It is important that the Provincial Commands confirm their attendance so that appropriate logistical planning can begin. If no update is provided, the sport coordinator will plan the 2025 Legion Nationals based on the provided team numbers.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

7. 2025 DOMINION MEMBER SPORTS CHAMPIONSHIPS

The sports committee was informed that the host instructions for all 2025 Dominion Sports Championships had been sent to the Host Branches and that detailed planning would commence following the Poppy Campaign and Remembrance Period. The details for the 2025 Dominion Championships are as follows:

2025 Dominion Member Sports Championships

Eight Ball: 23 - 26 May 2025

Host: Branch #07-004 Fredericton
199 Queen Street, Fredericton, NB

Cribbage: 25 - 28 April 2025

Host: Branch #05-112 Whitby
117 Byron St. S, Whitby, ON, L1N 4P5

Darts: 2 - 5 May 2025

Host: Branch #05-410 Port Stanley
310 George St, Port Stanley N5L 1C9

8. BID PROCESS

A. 2026 Dominion Member Sports Championships.

The sports coordinator informed the committee that the Host Branch Call for Applications process for the 2026 Dominion Member Sports Championships began in April of 2024. In accordance with the Sports Manual, the deadline for submission to Dominion Command was August 31, 2024.

The sports committee will conduct an initial analysis of the submissions with a view of selecting the winners in January 2025. It is important to note that with the rise of travel costs, the impact on members expenses to attending a Dominion Championship will be a key factor in the selection of a host branch.

B. 2028 and 2029 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships

The sports committee will be running a bid period for the 2028/2029 Legion Nationals in the Spring / Summer of 2025. The bid handbook for a Legion Nationals, including the bid selection criteria and analysis process, was updated for the last bid proposal. The new bid process was extremely efficient and allowed the sports committee to conduct a fair and objective

bid analysis / selection. Therefore, this same process will be conducted for the 2028/2029 Legion Nationals Bid Process.

9. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

The sports committee confirmed that they will attempt to conduct a committee of the whole meeting in early December. This will allow the sports committee to meet with each Provincial Command Sports Rep and discuss the sports program.

10. CLOSING RITUAL AND ADJOURNMENT

The chair concluded the meeting by thanking the participants for attending and by conducting the closing ritual.

Enclosed: 1

2024 Legion Nationals – Post Championship Report



Garry Pond
Chair



Steven Van Muyen
Coordinator

DISTRIBUTION LIST

DEC

Dominion Past Presidents

Dominion Sports Committee Members

Provincial Command Executive Directors

Provincial Command Sports Representatives

Dominion Command Committee Coordinators and Assistant Coordinators

Enclosed: 1 (2024 Legion Nationals – Post Championship Report)

2024 LEGION NATIONAL YOUTH TRACK & FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Post – Championship Report

The 46th Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships took place 7-13 August 2024 in Calgary, Alberta. The total registration was 968 athletes, including 327 Legion sponsored athletes, representing all 10 Provincial Commands, and 641 open category athletes. This was highest number of athletes to attend a Legion Nationals ever! The athletes were supported by 36 Legion sponsored chaperones and 31 Legion sponsored coaches, as well as 121 open category coaches. There were approximately 2,000 spectators, officials, and volunteers from all parts of Canada in attendance which included veterans, both retired and serving, covering all branches of service.

The program continued to consist of, for Legion athletes, instructional clinics, practice sessions, social activities, and the actual meet. For 2024, a remembrance theme of the 10th Anniversary of Afghanistan was prominent throughout. For Provincial Command teams, the highlight of the event was having the opportunity to listen to Mike Trauner, Canadian Forces and Afghanistan Veteran, speak about his experience in Afghanistan and going on to become a decorated athlete.

The Royal Canadian Legion Dominion President attended the event and was the official guest of honour. Additionally, the Royal Canadian Legion Vice-President and Sports Committee Chair, Comrade Brian Weaver, was present throughout the event. In attendance as well was Comrade Rosalind LaRose, AB/NWT Command President. The opening ceremony began with a parade led by Sergeant-at-Arms, Stu McCann, and his Colour Party. The music was provided by piper Jim Ross. Legion teams representing the participating Provincial Commands made for a wonderful opening. Immediately following the ceremony, Dominion Command hosted a reception on-site at Foothills Athletics Park. Further receptions were held at Branch #238 Bowness for the coaches and chaperones on Saturday and Sunday respectively. The closing banquet was hosted at the MacEwan Hall at the University of Calgary on Sunday evening. During the closing banquet, the President's Award, which recognizes individuals who have demonstrated exceptional dedication, support, and service to the Legion Nationals program, was presented to Mr. Norman Shelton.

From the opening ceremony through to the closing banquet, Canada's contributions to freedom and the sacrifices of our veterans formed the cornerstone of this event. This was projected through the content of speeches, event publications, local and national media outlets and event paraphernalia sporting the 10th Anniversary of Afghanistan (i.e., on volunteer t-shirts, event bags, hats, bibs, event booklets, etc.). Other areas of remembrance were the medals presented which featured silhouettes that paid tribute to the Afghanistan Veterans. On-site, numerous Afghanistan Veterans were in attendance and were provided an opportunity to present medals. Additionally, two minutes of silence, the act of remembrance, and the laying of a wreath by the guest of honour, were all done during the opening ceremonies.

A major highlight of the event was the attendance of the Legion Nationals Ambassador,

Afghanistan Veteran Mike Trauner. Mike lost both his legs from an improvised explosive device while serving in Afghanistan in 2008. Mike has since gone on to be a successful national athlete, winning multiple medals including 2 Invictus Games gold medals. Mike spoke to the Legion Teams during the athlete clinics and was present throughout the competition. His experience and perseverance inspired all the athletes and helped educate the public on the sacrifices serving Canadian Forces members, and Veterans, make for Canada.

The meet was held from 9-11 August under favourable weather conditions. The facility at Foothills Athletics Park was in excellent condition and enhanced the overall competition. The meet itself was carried out over a full three-day period under the excellent organization of the meet director, Kim Cousins, and the technical advisor, Serge Thibaudeau. Five meet records were broken. The top Legion female athlete, receiving the LeRoy Washburn trophy, was Kiana Charest from Ontario and the top male athlete, receiving the Jack Stenhouse trophy, was Gursheer Gabri from British Columbia/Yukon.

Logistically, the cafeteria from the University of Calgary provided all food for the Legion Teams while food trucks provided food at the track. The food provided to the Legion Teams from UofC was excellent throughout the entire week. The quarters used to house the Legion teams were in adequate condition at the University of Calgary.

The Calgary community led by the LAC Chair (Paula McKenzie) and Co-Chair (Jessica Steinbach) worked extremely hard to provide the best possible experience for the athletes, coaches, chaperones, and guests. Additionally, Legion Branch #238 provided exceptional support and hospitality during the chaperones and coaches reception. The entire Calgary community rallied around the program providing a volunteer base of approximately 200 people. Additionally, the Southern Alberta Area, Regional Cadet Support Unit provided support during the opening ceremony, the medal presentations, the closing banquet, photography, and recruitment. Athletics Canada, Calgary Track Council, Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada, and Programmed Insurance Brokers Inc. were diamond level sponsors, along side many other local sponsors, who made the event possible.

In summary, the 2024 Legion Nationals was a great success, and the Dominion Sports Committee looks forward to building upon that success during the 2025 Legion Nationals.