

DOMINION SPORTS COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes 5 October 2023

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
5 October 13:30 HRS EST - VIDEOCONFERENCE
MEETING MINUTES

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DOMINION SPORTS MEETING MINUTES

Participants:

Brian Weaver	-	Chair
Jerry Lava	-	Vice-Chair
Keith Andrews	-	Member
Serge Thibaudeau	-	Member
Steven Van Muyen	-	Committee Coordinator

Absent

Nathan Lehr	-	Member
Kelly Therien	-	Assistant Coordinator

1. OPENING RITUAL

The meeting commenced at 13:30 Hours, 5 October 2023 via Zoom videoconferencing. The opening ritual was conducted.

2. SPORTS COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REMARKS

3. NEW BUSINESS

The Chair entertained new requests for agenda items. No new items were added.

4. 2023 NATIONAL YOUTH TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

A summary of the 2023 Legion Nationals was provided by the sports coordinator. A final report providing a summary of the event was also provided and is attached to these minutes. Although some post-event reports are still being conducted, the sports coordinator outlined some of the major feedback gathered so far:

- A. Food Services. The reviews for the cafeteria at Bishops University have been 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. There were some complaints about the quantity of food (too much) as some participants felt like the waste was excessive. However, from an organizational perspective, providing box lunches at the track worked well, limiting issues that arose with

athletes returning to the cafeteria to eat. The sports coordinator stated that the amount of food provided will be considered when discussing the 2024 Legion Nationals.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

- B. Residences. The residences at Bishops University were exceptional. For the most part, teams were split male and female into respective buildings, which worked very well. The organizing committee will seek to incorporate the same room layout plan in Calgary.
- C. Air Travel. Air Travel was well organized this year as it was completed through the BTS Travel Agent. This is a point to sustain for next year. Air Travel for a group this size is too difficult to manage without a travel agency providing significant administrative support.
- D. Free Time. For the 2023 Legion Nationals, there was significantly more free time during the evenings for the athletes than in previous years. This worked well although some participants complained that they didn't have much to do. Although optional activities were provided in the evening (swimming, games, etc) they could have been advertised better. In the future, the organizing committee will seek to implement optional activities and ensure the participants are aware of their availability.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

- E. 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.
- F. Closing Banquet. Overall, the closing banquet was a well-organized and enjoyable event. However, it was noted in several surveys that the speeches given by each team take way too long. Feedback asked for consideration to be given to reducing the speakers to one per team, in the language of their choosing, for future closing banquets. The sports committee will consider this feedback and revisit the possibility of reducing the athlete speeches during the closing banquet prior to the 2024 Legion Nationals.

In addition, it was also noted that some of the team's behaviour during the formal portion of the banquet was unacceptable.

Specifically, during the awards and speeches, some of the teams were intentionally being disruptive. For the 2024 Legion Nationals, the Head Chaperones will be briefed to ensure the teams behave respectfully and attentively.

ACTION: Head Chaperones

- G. Technical. There were some difficulties with Trackie moving to a new interface. However, Trackie technical support provided quick and efficient support where required. Restricting open athlete registration to only those athletes who meet standard worked very well as the 2023 Legion Nationals included close to record numbers for athletes. However, the process on Trackie can be difficult when having to manually validate seed times. Therefore, the sports coordinator will work with Trackie and Athletics Canada to determine a solution.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

- H. Communication. Communication was greatly improved for the 2023 Legion Nationals. Specifically, 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.

5. 2024 LEGION NATIONAL YOUTH TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

- a. The 2024 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships will be held in Calgary, Alberta from August 7-13, 2024 (August 9 – 11 competition dates). The Sports Committee will do everything possible to incorporate suggestions and lessons learned from the 2023 Legion Nationals. In addition, it is important that the Provincial Commands confirm their attendance so that appropriate logistical planning can begin. For the purposes of planning, the sports coordinator will coordinate the 2024 Legion Nationals with the assumption that all Provincial Commands will be participating. The anticipated numbers for each team are as follows:

2023 LEGION NATIONALS				
LEGION TEAM NUMBERS				
TEAM	ATHLETES	COACHES	CHAPERONES	TOTAL
PEI	7	2	2	11
NS/NU	36	4	4	44
NB	36	4	4	44
QC	40	4	4	48
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 should be noted that SK Provincial Command has requested to increase their team numbers for the 2024 Legion Nationals. This possibility will be confirmed during the Fall Site Visit to Calgary, Alberta.

b. 2024 Legion Nationals Fall Site Visit, 27 – 28 October

The Sports Coordinator and the Technical Rep will conduct a site visit of the facilities in Calgary, Alberta from 27 – 28 October. The instructions for the site visit have been sent to the organizing committee and all required parties. Transportation (air travel) has already been arranged by the Sports Coordinator.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

c. Open Category Para Athletics

The Sports Committee has received a request from the 2024 Legion Nationals organizing committee to include a small portion of Para Athletics events at the 2024 Legion Nationals. Including para events would expand the ability of the Royal Canadian Legion to reach communities across Canada and ensure we are delivering an inclusive sporting event. The purpose of the Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships is to demonstrate RCL values to Canadian youth through the delivery of values-based sport, strengthening our communities and fostering personal and collective growth. Including para-events in the Legion Nationals aligns with this purpose and would demonstrate our commitment to all of Canada's youth. A summary of the proposal includes:

- Open category para-athletes only. Would not impact the Legion Teams.
- 4 Track events and 1 Field event per category (male/female). This would ensure a small number of athletes so that there is minimal impact on the 2024 Legion Nationals schedule.
- Costs to the Dominion Command budget would be extremely small (extra medals) and would not impact the 2024 Legion Nationals budget.
- Age category may need to increase from 12-20 for the Para events (this requires further discussion).

The 2024 Legion Nationals would act as a proof of concept. The plan would be to include a small number of para-events to determine the success and future feasibility of permanently including open category para-events in the Legion Nationals. It was recommended that the inclusion of para events in the 2024 Legion Nationals be approved in theory, with the sports coordinator exploring the feasibility of incorporating the events.

After careful discussion, it was agreed that the committee should explore the possibility of including para-events in the 2024 Legion Nationals (open category), as a trial run.

MOTION: It was moved to explore the possibility of incorporating para-events in the 2024 Legion Nationals as outlined above.

CARRIED

6. 2023 DOMINION MEMBER SPORTS CHAMPIONSHIPS

The sports coordinator outlined that the host instructions for the 2024 Dominion Darts and Cribbage Championships had been sent to the host branches so that they can begin their detailed planning. The details for the 2024 Dominion Championships are as follows:

2024 Dominion Member Sports Championships

Eight Ball: 24 – 27 May 2024

Host: Branch #10-051 Happy Valley-Goose Bay
PO Box 335 Stn B, Hpy-Vly-Goose, NL A0P 1E0

Cribbage: 26 – 29 April 2024

Host: Branch #07-033, Shediac, NB
386 Main Street, Shediac, NB, E4P 2G1

Darts: 3 – 6 May 2024

Host: Branch #06-251, Laval, QC
2000 Boul Cure-Labelle, Laval, QC, H7T 1L

As outlined in the previous sports committee meeting, significant concerns exist with the hosting of the 2024 Eight Ball Championships in Happy-Valley Goose Bay. These concerns largely center around the financial difficulty with traveling to the location. Feedback has been provided from NL Provincial Command, and from Branch #10-051, that they would be fine with changing the location of the 2024 Eight Ball Championships. Therefore, it was recommended that the sports coordinator reach out to the other applications that were submitted in 2021 to host the Eight Ball Championships (Happy Valley – Goose Bay was approved prior to the Covid-19 pandemic). This would include Branch #07-024 Hartland, NB and Branch #1-265 Aldergrove, BC (in that order). Although some teams would still have high costs, many of the teams would have no additional costs associated with travel to either of the two alternative branches.

MOTION: It was moved to send a request to Branch #24 Hartland, NB to host the 2024 Dominion Eight Ball Championships.

CARRIED

7. BID PROCESS

A. 2025 Dominion Member Sports Championships.

The Host Branch Call for Applications process for the 2025 Dominion Member Sports Championships began in February of 2023. In accordance with the Sports Manual, the deadline for submission to Dominion Command was August 31, 2023. However, to date we have received very few applications. Therefore, the sports coordinator will reach out to the Provincial Command Sports Reps to inquire about the submission of applications.

ACTION: Sports Coordinator

B. 2026 and 2027 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships

Dominion Command collected bid submissions to host the 2026 and 2027 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships in July 2023. In total, we received 6 competitive and detailed bid submissions:

- a. Kamloops, British Columbia
- b. Laval, Quebec
- c. Nanaimo, British Columbia
- d. Regina, Saskatchewan
- e. Saint John, New Brunswick
- f. Truro, Nova Scotia

The sports coordinator outlined that the original intent was to analyze the bids in accordance with the evaluation criteria matrix and recommend a selection prior to the end of October 2023. However, with the sports coordinator also filling the role as Director National Remembrance Day Ceremony, there is not enough time to ensure an analysis of appropriate depth (equal to the amount of work put into constructing the bids) is completed prior to Remembrance Day. Therefore, it is recommended delaying the selection of the winning bid until January 2023. If approved, the selection of the winning bid will become the number 1 priority of the sports committee following November 11th.

MOTION: It was moved to delay the selection of the winning bid until early 2024.

CARRIED

8. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

The sports committee will plan to conduct a committee of the whole meeting in early December. This will allow the sports committee to collect all the post information for the 2023 Legion Nationals, conduct a review of the bid submissions for the 2026/27 Legion Nationals, and coordinate the delivery of the 2024 Member Sports Championships.

9. CLOSING RITUAL AND ADJOURNMENT

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



Brian Weaver
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 (2023 Legion Nationals – Post Championship Report)



2023 LEGION NATIONAL YOUTH TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Post-Championships Report

The 45th Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships took place 9-15 August 2023 in Sherbrooke, Quebec. The total attendance was 908 athletes, including 307 Legion sponsored athletes, representing 9 of 10 Provincial Commands, and 601 open category athletes. The athletes were supported by 36 Legion sponsored chaperones and 31 Legion sponsored coaches, as well as 108 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 2023, a remembrance theme of the 75th Anniversary of Peacekeeping 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 suffering major injuries 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 Norman Shelton, who attended on behalf of the Royal Canadian Legion QC President; Elisabeth Brière, Member of Parliament; Christine Labrie, National Assembly of Quebec, and Guy Marchesseault, Branch 010 President. The opening ceremony began with a parade led by Sergeant-at-Arms, Michel Rodrique, and his Color Party. The music was provided by piper Sylvain Ross. Additionally, the Canadian Forces Recruit and Leadership School official band provided music throughout the opening ceremony. Legion teams representing the participating Provincial Commands made for a wonderful opening. It should be noted that due to forecasted inclement weather, the opening ceremonies was held indoors at Bishops University. Immediately following the ceremony, Dominion Command hosted a reception on-site at Bishops University. Further receptions were held at Branch #010 Sherbrooke for the coaches and chaperones on Friday and Saturday respectively. The closing banquet was hosted at the Bishops University Sports Centre 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. Danny Martin.

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 75th Anniversary of Peacekeeping (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 UN veterans. On-site, a peacekeeping booth was set up which provided the public with information on the various peacekeeping missions Canada has contributed to. This booth was included UN Veterans who were able to speak to the public about their experiences. 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 first 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 11-13 August under favourable weather conditions. The facility at the Université de Sherbrooke 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, Daniel Quirion, the official's director, Cecil Lefebvre, and the technical advisor, Serge Thibaudreau. Six meet records were broken. The top Legion female athlete, receiving the LeRoy Washburn trophy, was Hannah Gates from Saskatchewan and the top male athlete, receiving the Jack Stenhouse trophy, was Caleb Piven from Quebec.

Logistically, the cafeteria from Bishops University provided all food for the Legion Teams while the stadium canteen provided food at the track. The food provided to the Legion Teams from Bishops University was excellent throughout the entire week. The quarters used to house the Legion teams were also in excellent condition at Bishops University. The transportation provided for staff and Legion teams was very flexible and, despite some logistical challenges transporting teams to and from the track, were sufficient in ensuring the transport went smoothly.

For 2023, an digital media campaign was conducted which included Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat. The digital media campaign was successful in reaching a large audience and bringing awareness to the Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships.

Additional promotion prior to the event was provided through advertisements at high





school track and field championships and interviews with local and provincial media outlets. During the championships, the track events were broadcasted via live streaming on AthleticsCanada.TV.

The Sherbrooke community led by the LAC Chair (Judith Lefebvre) and President (Sandrine Charron) worked extremely hard to provide the best possible experience for the athletes, coaches, chaperones, and guests. Additionally, Legion Branch #010, led by President Guy Marchesseault, provided exceptional support throughout all aspects of the event. The entire Sherbrooke community rallied around the program providing a volunteer base of over 200. Additionally, the 197 Frontenac Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps was involved in the opening ceremony, the medal presentations, the closing banquet, photography, and recruitment. The Université de Sherbrooke, Athletics Canada, Bitfarm, Athlétisme Sherbrooke, Yeti, 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.

The message of remembrance and the 75th Anniversary of Peacekeeping was woven throughout all aspects of the event. Pictures of some of the elements of remembrance at the 2023 Legion Nationals are provided below:

1. Medals





2. Hats

