

Bobsleigh Canada Skeleton – 2014 AGM Chief Executive Officers Report

With a stated mission of developing world and Olympic champions, Kaillie and Heather's historic repeat as Olympic Champions was indeed the central achievement for Bobsleigh CANADA Skeleton.

A recap of season by our media consultant, Chris Dornan, shows the highlights in review:

There are peaks and valleys in any Olympic journey, and that is certainly true of Canada's bobsleigh and skeleton athletes during the 2013-14 Olympic year.

A team mixed with high-powered, medal winning veterans combined with a youthful energy and drive, the competition began in October for many of our nation's best athletes in hopes of earning a spot on the World Cup and Olympic squads.

Canada's bobsleigh athletes led the way to the World Cup podium beginning with the season-opener in Calgary. Kaillie Humphries continued her electrifying medal winning streak with a gold in Calgary while reuniting with 2010 Olympic gold medal winning brakeman, Heather Moyse. Kaillie drove the dynamic duo to a second straight Overall World Cup title with three gold, one-silver and a bronze medal before successfully defending their Olympic title in Sochi.

Depth may be the best way to describe the men's bobsleigh team. The newly formed duo of Chris Spring and Jesse Lumsden wasted no time making a statement with a third-place finish at the Calgary World Cup. While they did not find their way back to the podium again last year, for the first time ever Canada had three men's sleds all slide into the World Cup medals.

It was the veteran and the rookie that turned heads heading into the Olympic year. For the first time ever, Canada had two sleds on the men's podium at a World Cup, but it wasn't the veteran on top.

Building momentum throughout the year, Justin Kripps and rookie brakeman Bryan Barnett slid to their first World Cup victory, and podium, at the final two-man event on the World Cup in Königssee, Germany. Olympic bronze medalist, Lyndon Rush, along with two-time Olympic medalist – Lascelles Brown grabbed the bronze on the historic day for the Canucks.

While Team Kripps continued to build on the memorable weekend, it was Team Rush that was flying into the Olympics on a high note. Rush, along with Brown, David Bissett and Neville Wright, also slid to their only four-man podium in Königssee, with another bronze.

Meanwhile, on Canada's skeleton team, it was a race-within-a-race all year just to make the squad with multiple athletes bouncing back-and-forth between the World Cup and Intercontinental Cup circuits.

Sarah Reid led the way for the Canadians with two bronze medals en route to competing in her first Olympics.

But the highlight of the year belonged to John Fairbairn. One of the most consistent athletes on the team over the last quadrennial, John finally cracked the World Cup podium with a bronze-medal finish in St. Moritz.

While a changing of the guard is starting to take shape on the Canadian Skeleton Team, the future does bode well with several Canadian athletes regularly charging onto the podium on Intercontinental Cup and America's Cup racing.

The Canadian women proved at the Junior World Championships they will be a force to reckon with down the road.

Elisabeth Vathje became just the third Canadian ever to slide onto the podium at the Junior Worlds when she grabbed the silver medal. Sarah Reid and Robynne Thompson both have Junior World titles to their credit. Thompson, who spent a large chunk of the season on the World Cup circuit, was fourth this year.

Cassie Hawrysh, who started the season on the World Cup, racked up two gold and one silver medal after moving to the Intercontinental Cup after the holiday break.

Vathje, Madison Charney, Carli Brockway and Evan Neufeldt combined to win nine medals on the North America Cup skeleton circuit. Chrstine Bushie also had one silver in women's bobsleigh on the North America Cup circuit.

Seeking media and public relations opportunities for our athletes and partners is core to Bobsleigh Canada Skeleton's annual strategic plan. A number of initiatives this year including: team selections (Western Canada); Calgary World Cup; Olympic Team Announcements in Montreal (bobsleigh) and Calgary (skeleton) allowed us to extend our reach across the country. In addition, BCS also continued to drive media opportunities around a variety of recruitment camps across the country, and hometown events for athletes named to the Olympic Team.

While still addressing previous debt and needing to advance BCS with retained earnings in the future we finished 2014 with several financial successes, not the least of which was a positive profit/loss balance of \$152,845. While we are in a positive financial position for the single-year ending March 31, 2014, our auditor's did to a prior period adjustment for an expense which should have been noted to 2013 of \$87,689. Thus, the unadjusted net gain was \$65,156.

The other significant change in our audited statements is the decision to remove the Bobsleigh Canada Trust Fund from the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets (Deficiency). The Fund is now accounted for with a note disclosure. This decision was a result of an annual discussion about the appropriateness of having the Fund's assets listed on the BCS financials, when in fact while they provide potential funding for the objectives of Canadian bobsleigh and skeleton, BCS does not administer the Fund, nor is it our asset.

Our most significant gains were in the sponsorship and event revenue area with total revenues from the audited statements of \$827,873 versus \$230,763 in 2013, a positive gain of 72%. We signed Globe & Mail to a two-year contract and BMW Canada to a three-year contract. We also had significant success securing sponsors for the World Cup held in Calgary, one of the most successful World Cups we have ever hosted, from a financial point of view. These revenues were supported by only an approximate \$40,000 increase in event expenses.

I wish to thank our continuing sponsors, partners and supporters: Government of Canada through Sport Canada, Own The Podium, Canadian Olympic Committee, adidas, Globe & Mail, BMW Canada, Eurotech, Conceptum Sport Logistics, Canadian Sport Centre Calgary and Pacific, Winsport and Whistler Sport Legacies.

In closing, 2014-2015 will be a significant transition year. Reid and Bernie are hanging up their executive speed suits after 8 years with BCS. As President, Reid can hold his head high for the leadership and vision that he has shown in the role. He always took the high road and tried to instill in every decision that BCS was an "US", not a "we and they". Reid was an exemplary representative of BCS to the sliding sport world and will be missed. Bernie brought significant business and practical world thinking to the day-to-day operations of the Board and the Federation. He was always my administrative sounding board, willing to help with sage advice. Technically, Nathan's departure to the family business will leave a significant hole that will be very hard to fill. Nathan has been the backbone of our Federation for several Olympic cycles, with the last one being the most challenging, bringing bobsleigh and skeleton closer together. Nathan is a leader with vision and will continue to excel in that role, regardless of the affiliation. All will miss his committed personality and boundless energy. I believe we are a better Federation because of their tireless, and often thankless efforts. Thank you all.

Respectfully submitted
Don S. Wilson