

2009—2010 Season Wrap-up

By Cyril Dorgigné

2009-2010 has been a very successful year for water polo development in the province. The Estevan Sharks won the Provincial League 12U as well as the 2010 Provincial Championship for the first time in their club history! Regina gave them strong opposition but the south end athletes kept improving all year. The 12U division has been a remarkable competition, with Weyburn Hurricanes, Regina Squids and Piranhas and Estevan Sharks each winning a championship over the past three years. If the trend continues, it looks like Saskatoon Pirates will be the favourite team for the 2010-2011 Season!

At the other end of the competition continuum, the Provincial League Open continued to grow in its 2nd year of implementation. Saskatoon entered a very successful Open women's team that reached the Silver medal at the Provincial Championship Open Division. The great dynamic of these open divisions, male and female, encouraged WPS and Manitoba Water Polo Association to join efforts and create for the first time ever, the Prairie League Open. This new competition will give an amazing opportunity to all our open members to compete, improve their skills, develop their team spirit, promote our sport...and enjoy Water Polo!



Provincials 2010

Finally our High Performance Program, in its 3rd year of implementation, brought the results projected in September 2007: 16U Team Sask Girls finished 4th at Nationals and 16U Team Sask Boys finished 5th. In addition to this, two athletes were named to the all star teams and 3 were selected to the Canadian Youth National teams this summer.

All of these satisfactions are very encouraging and shows that we're on our way to the top.

2010-2011 will be an exciting and challenging season.

The Provincial League and Provincial Championship handbook has been modified to make our province a national leader not only in the water, but also on the deck. Officials and Coaches training-certification will be one of the priorities of the season.

One other priority will be the recruitment of grassroots programming. Although our 12U program has shown great results over the past 3 years in skills development and athlete retention, every club has difficulty recruiting new members. Therefore a Provincial Recruitment Working Group will be created that involves all clubs. The goal of the group is to centralize and share all initiatives conducive to recruitment. In addition, a Summer Water Polo Working Group will focus on developing water polo initiatives during the summer months.

Athlete development programs are being improved by adding more provincial camps for the 14U division. Each PLB Sunday afternoon will be preceded by a Saturday evening and Sunday morning camp

and Christmas and Easter holidays will be used to conduct provincial camps.

As mentioned above, the Open categories League will evolve into the Prairie League and will include 3 Manitoba teams. This October – March event will become the

“showcase” of Water Polo in the prairies. Young athletes, parents, friends and others are invited to watch and support their team!

High Performance results in 2010 were excellent, even though Team Sask didn't win any medals. The level reached by our athletes matched the program expectation implemented in the fall 2007 and we will begin to “Provid[e] an EXCELLENCE program to the High performance athlete.” Therefore WPS is proud to open in Fall 2010 its High School Excellence program. This program will centralize the best athletes from the province and will provide the best water polo academy in the country besides the Senior National team centres.

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One more way that Saskatchewan Water Polo is leading the country!

2009-2010 brought us satisfaction and some great surprises. Leading into 2010-2011, WPS is becoming one of the top organizations in Canada, in the pool and via boardroom representation. Since the 2009 WPC AGM, Conrad Hadubiak has been a member of WPC's Board of Directors. Recently, Lily Olson was elected as Chair of WPC Officials Working Group. Congratulations to Lily and let us all continue to fly the colors of Saskatchewan across the country!

Water Polo Saskatchewan would like to thank Jymmi Kaye Demchuk for her extraordinary work over the past 16 years leading the organization. Her professionalism and competence was a factor in bringing our Provincial Sport Organization to the level we have reached. Thank you again Jymmi Kaye and the Water Polo Community wishes you the best for your very “busy” retirement!

In the meantime, Water Polo Saskatchewan would like to welcome the new Office Administrator, Amanda Walton. Amanda, who is new to the water polo community, will bring her experience in the administration of a provincial organisation as well as her natural enthusiasm.



WPS Goes International!

For some of us, season ends with Provincials, while others finish with Nationals in May, but for four rising talents, water polo was far from over. Rachel Krieger tells about her experience this summer with the Youth Women's National Water Polo Team:



Rachel Krieger

"I spent the first three weeks of July with the Youth National Team in Montreal, the Netherlands and Hungary. Since

my new teammates had been my opponents at Nationals this year, I wondered how long it would take to break the ice between us. Our first day of practice was full of team bonding and learning each other's style of play. It didn't take long for us to feel like a team and comfortable with each other. Over the next three weeks, we would be each other's support system along with our coaches and team manager.

The Youth and Jr. Women's National Team as well as the Men's National Teams all practiced at an outdoor pool and the Olympic pool in Montreal. We were able to scrimmage with the Jr. Women's National Team a few times in preparation for our tournaments in Europe. We also got to see a Sr. Men's team game between Canada and Italy. It was a challenge to stay hydrated and rested for our two-a-day practices in Montréal's hot humid weather that was made even worse by an unrelenting heat wave.

The second week of July we flew to Emmen, Netherlands for The Butterfly Trophy tournament against teams from the Netherlands, Greece, Italy, Australia and Hungary. The heat wave followed us to Europe where we experienced humidity and temperatures in the mid to high 30's. To our delight the food was similar to our North American cuisine and our biggest challenge was once again keeping hydrated. After our tournament, we watched the FIFA World Cup Soccer Final in Emmen, Holland surrounded by a sea of orange. It was a once in a lifetime experience to watch the game while in the home country of one of the final teams. We joined Dutch

fans in the town square for the game and watched them celebrate even after the loss with fireworks, dancing and singing.

After the celebrations, we were on to the next country, Hungary. Before our tournament, we trained with the Hungarian team for 3 days. During our stay here, we quickly realized that Hungarian food would be more difficult to adapt to. We stayed in a small city by the name of Kecskemet where we inhaled sunscreen and water in the 40 degree weather before, during and after every outdoor practice. After our training camp, we drove to a very picturesque city on the Danube River called Dunaujvaros. We played in the Olympic Hopes tournament against Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Ukraine where we placed second. It was satisfying to come home to Canada with a medal after our hard work and effort."

Following the victory in Hungary, Rachel met up with Morgan Molde to attend Malibu Water Polo Camp. Morgan writes:

"Walking onto the campus of Pepperdine University in Malibu, California was like walking onto a resort. The campus was beautiful. There were square white buildings nestled in the California hills, a gorgeous view of the Pacific Ocean and just the atmosphere of the place was what made this camp that extra special. I learned later on that not only was this a beautiful place to be but it was also a very efficient and practical place to be. We never had to carry our luggage for they



Olympic Hopes 2010

drove it up there for us because carrying fifty pound bags up all those stairs would have been exhausting. We counted and to get from our dorms to the pool or the pool to our dorms we had to climb 150 stairs and we made this trek about four times up and down a day! Climbing this "mountain" after training sessions became very tiresome. The schedule was precise and the counselors always made sure that we were on time for our practices and eating times. Our dorms were very simple and small. Rachel and I shared a room and we also shared a common room with six other



Silver Medal Victory—Canadian Youth Women's National Team 2010



WATER POLO
SASKATCHEWAN



Pepperdine University Campus

girls. We were both lucky that we got along well with these girls. An interesting fact is that at this campus the family TV show "Zoey 101" was filmed here!

From our dorms to the cafeteria was around a mile walk. This was a very long walk for we were all very hungry but at the same time it was worth it for we knew that the food was always going to be delicious! Breakfast mainly consisted of scrambled eggs, a potato of some sort, fruit salad, juice and there was always something like pancakes or French toast sticks. For lunch we had a variety of things like corn dogs, hot dogs, grilled cheese, burgers, french fries that you could choose from and there was always salad and steamed vegetables as well as a special that day. Dessert was a must too. They had tons of cookies and squares and such! Supper was always the best meal for we had great food like pastas, meat and potatoes, more steamed vegetables and salad and, of course, there was more dessert! The thing I liked most about the food is that there were always healthy choices that tasted great and it was also a time to socialize with girls from around the USA!

You always hear about how Americans may not be the nicest people, but if you were to go to Pepperdine University and the Terry Schroder camp you would realize that this assumption is wrong. The coaches and the girls that Rachel and I were around the most were so nice! Same with the councilors because everyone was there to have fun and play polo. Most of the guys that helped out were from the Pepperdine men's team or alumni. Almost all of these guys also play on the national team. To watch them play was really interesting and you could learn a lot from them. One of the guys was actually an actor as well. If any of you girls ever watched "The Lizzie McGuire Show" and remember Ethan

Craft then you should be severely jealous of me and Rachel because we met him and talked with him! It's very interesting to see how popular water polo is in the states.

Unfortunately sometimes it was very hard to catch on to what our coaches and helpers were saying for a lot of terms that we use and ones that they use are very different. Did you know that they call the net a "cage?" I was very confused when they were explaining to pretend to be facing a "cage." Coach Jack was the head coach of the men's team at Pepperdine and he was a very hilarious yet effective coach. Everything that he explained was not new to Rachel or me but he used different ways of explaining the basics and it just made you look at something you already knew in a different light. The tactics were similar to the ones we use but their set up was backwards. Their umbrella was numbered completely backwards to ours as well as their man up. Very confusing when you are told to go to "one" and you swim to the wrong side of the pool then you are use to. Coach Kay was the only woman coach there and Rachel and I actually got some one-on-two time with her and she was very helpful and interesting to talk to. I also found that with the fifty girls there probably forty-six of them were the most aggressive girls you will ever see. They strived to do their best and always had a good time doing it. However,

Rachel and I easily fit into the top players.

For the first two days we had two practices a day for around two to three hours. Then for the rest of the week we had three practices a day. These weren't the most fitness required practices but they required much thought and a lot of repetition. We went over how to fake, how to pass, how to shoot, man up plays, man down plays and various other skills. The last practice of the day usually consisted of a scrimmage but since there were so many girls playing time was scarce. All around I would recommend this camp to anyone my age who wants to develop their basic skill. This camp would also be excellent for players under the age of 14. Even though this camp may not have been harder than the camps we're used to having here in Saskatchewan, it was good to experience different coaching techniques, and to be reintroduced to basic skills in a format other than originally learned."

Meanwhile, Russell Lenferna and Drake Greshner were among those selected for the Men's National Team. Russell writes about the experience:

"I really liked the way that the NT program works because everyone is fighting for the right to be there so there is a lot of intensity and effort. The whole group felt like it was advancing at about the same rate, and it never seemed like there was someone who stood out or who couldn't handle being there.

We had 9-11 practices a week, 6 days a week with Mondays off. The training was pretty intense, but I liked having all those practices. Since there was nothing in between the practices it felt like we were constantly building on what we had done in the earlier practice and I really liked that. We definitely had really hard practices with not enough rest between this practice and the next, but you survived and felt better for it.

The cuts for the Pan Am team were made on July 25, and there were no 94's taken on the trip. I had a meeting



View from the top—
Malibu Water Polo Camp 2010



WATER POLO
SASKATCHEWAN

International cont'd

with coaches, Scott, Bryan, and Quinn, and they said that the cuts were made positionally and there would be no 94's unless one came out looking

like a second Nich. Once we knew what team we were on the guys going to play in Cali practiced together and the Florida team practiced together. We learned six systems and worked on a different system each week. We learned man up, man down, six on six offense, defence, counter offense, and counter defence.

The 94's got a lot of opportunity to scrimmage together, and it always felt like we had really good chemistry. When our 94 line played the 94 line on the American team we got three ties, which unfortunately was some of the best results against their 1st line. During the camp all the play or scrimmage time was even, and in Cali we ran mostly line shifts. In the first scrimmage Quinn kept a running line and I felt like I got a lot of pool time, but in the next two Brian ran a 94 line and a 93 line and we ended up playing exactly half of the games. In the last two scrimmages Brian played to win

and I got a fair bit of play time. I wasn't on the starting 6, but i was always the first



2010 18U Men's National Team

one in to sub for the Hole Check when he came out.

We got a chance to play against the Senior Women's team and we beat them. They didn't seem very strong, and didn't work very well together. In Cali we won the first three scrimmages, and lost the last two. I feel that I played fairly well, checking and

playing 1 or 2 side. The American hole sets were not very good, and it was fairly easy to front them out. Often times they wouldn't even go all the way down to the 5m and we would just check them from behind. They were very different from what we were expecting, because they weren't faster, stronger, or smarter.

Drake I think did the best in the scrimmages of the three goalies in California, but unfortunately he missed the first two games. You could really see a difference between Drake and the other goalies in training though because they seemed like they were working a lot harder in shooting drills and stuff.

At the beginning of the summer, being away from home for six weeks felt like it would be an eternity but it really slipped by. Looking back, it feels like I was there only a very short time.

Estevan Update



The Estevan Sharks 12U water polo team started the 2009/2010 season with great enthusiasm. The kids and coaches quickly got into the Seal Program's swimming drills to improve skills. Some helpful tips were added by the Cadet and Bantam coaches from the HC and DC programs. Pool time was increased on Thursday and Sunday nights. The kids took it all in as it was evident at year end with very few practices missed throughout the season. The Sharks, with 7 veterans on the team, practiced hard and played hard but never stopped having fun. The new kids quickly adapted to the scene and by year's end proved to be good players in and out of the pool.

The 3 Provincial League dates, as well as Winnipeg's Neptunes and Bushido tournaments, all molded the kids for the Provincial Championships in Saskatoon.

The kids and their families enjoyed the trips out to Winnipeg. The Neptunes' tournament exposed the kids to water polo and its grueling tournament schedule. But they came home with a gold medal so any pain was quickly forgotten. The Bushido 5 on 5 was equally as great as the kids now got to swim in the main pool along with the bantams and cadet/ youth. Parents fell in love with the sport as they could watch from the seats located high

above the deck. And it wasn't that cold this year.

With the final PLA in Weyburn, the coach kept the PLA standings a secret so as not to take away the focus from the games at hand. Sharks team 1 and 2 played very well, each going undefeated in round robin play. The team 1 final had the Sharks once again up against the Winnipeg Neptunes. This match was a nail-biter.

The lead changed hands throughout the game. It came down to the final seconds but in the end the Neptunes' 1 point lead was enough to win gold with a 9-8 victory.

Despite the loss to Winnipeg, the day ended in sweet victory for the Shark club as the Provincial League Play against Weyburn and Regina finished its 4th round. The Shark's total points from the previous 3 League Plays had them in first place. With victories against Regina and Weyburn in the round robin play, this sealed the first place and a Provincial League gold medal for the club.

The gold medal was hard fought and well deserved, but now their sights were set on



2010 Gold Medal Champions—Estevan Sharks 12U

the Provincial Championships in Saskatoon. With some time between the Weyburn PLA and Provincials in Saskatoon, added challenges were introduced to practice. The kids were divided into two groups for the Shark Cup. The Bantam and Cadet kids also joined in. Some crazy relay swim-offs and relay passing drills were just a few fun ways to build team spirit. The team went into Saskatoon excited and ready to play.

Parents and kids loved the new pool. All the kids played well. The gold medal game went down to the final seconds. And to the kids' excitement and relief, the Sharks 12U water polo team won the final. It was a great finish to a great year.

I Love Water Polo Coaches!

By Amanda Walton & Lambry Stamatinos

This summer, WPS Summer Student, Lambry Stamatinos, and Provincial Coach, Cyril Dorigné, made their way throughout Saskatchewan to give summer clinics with a slightly different approach. In

cooperation with WPC, WPS introduced the *I Love Water Polo (ILWP)* program. Developed by former Olympic athlete and coach, David Hart, *ILWP* is an introductory, grass roots water polo program for kids ages 8 – 13. The program offers participants the ability to learn the game of water polo and the basic skills involved in the sport, while also helping to enhance balance and coordination skills. Different from Regina's *I Love Water Polo* program, *ILWP* has a broader perspective that places emphasis on communities and promoting the NCCP Community Coach course. The first of the NCCP coaching courses, this course allows members of the community who have little to no previous water polo experience to understand the rules and learn the techniques of water polo and then be able to teach them to their community. "What makes the *I Love Water Polo* program different from previous summer programs," said Stamatinos "is that it addresses the sport's need for coaches. We can give clinics and get kids excited about the sport, but that won't go very far if they have no one to coach them afterwards."

ILWP clinics are composed of two parts, a participant clinic and a coaching clinic. Participant clinics are held at local community pools to engage kids in the game of water polo with the hope of recruiting

coaches. By seeing the *ILWP* program in action and how much the kids enjoy it, clinic coordinators hope to get lifeguards and pool managers (aquatics directors, rec directors) interested in taking the training and implementing the program in their communities. "Ideal coaching candidates are people who are good with kids, enjoy learning new sports and have some teaching experience." (LS) *ILWP* offers various levels of skill development similar to swimming lesson programs. Communities can use *ILWP* to supplement their swimming lesson program or as an after school or weekend/evening activity program. "What's important is to get more people at younger ages involved in water polo and we do this by spreading awareness of the different components of swimming, that there are more divisions than speed swimming and lifeguarding." (LS)

everyone is basically the same skill level. "The easiest players to train in water polo are the ones who have no previous swimming experience because you don't need to undo previous training, all they know is water polo." (LS)

ILWP teaches children and instructors alike. When asked what this program has taught him, Stamatinos replied, "It taught me different methods of coaching and how to integrate skills into the games better. For instance, in Sharks and Minnows you can put in a ball so they learn to swim with it in order to tap people on the head with it. Or you can put all of the balls in and have them do head-up front crawl to get them, or just one ball to teach them passing." The reception at each venue is different as well, so instructors learn to be flexible. Different places ran differently. Some places had a lot of kids who were interested in learning skills, while at others the kids were only interested in playing games. The challenge then is to implement all of the skills into the games.

The biggest challenge to the program, however, is not how well the clinics are received, but working with the facilities. "Overall most communities were interested. The lifeguards there were interested in taking the course to run water polo in their communities." (LS) However, except for the larger cities, most of the communities where clinics were offered do not have indoor pools. Future programming then is limited to the summer months when outdoor pools are open. According to Stamatinos, "Our biggest challenge for the fall will be contacting the lifeguards from the summer program to get them to take the coaching course and to keep in touch with them throughout the winter to run programs for next summer, since they will have no facility to practice in during the winter." Perhaps this will lead to a recreational summer league between towns with the chance to run small tournaments.

How will the *ILWP* program benefit water polo in Saskatchewan? By increasing participation in and awareness of the sport, throughout the province we can bring in more communities to play the sport which will benefit competitive and rec leagues alike in the long run.



Want to be involved in ILWP? Spread the word and participate!

WPS is hosting a Facilitator Clinic!

For people with water polo experience, who will teach the community coach course to their surrounding communities/different communities.

1860 Lorne Street, Regina, Lower Boardroom
11AM—5PM, September 26, 2010

With more people certified to train community coaches, we can be sure that water polo is accessible to all of Saskatchewan

ILWP clinics began in July and were held in Shellbrook, North Battleford, Assiniboia, Swift Current, Watrous, Mossbank, Dundurn, Wadena, Shaunavon, Gull Lake, and at community pools in Regina. Participants numbered as many as 20 at the clinics, ranging between ages 6 and 13. Stamatinos said, "It was surprising that so many kids have no idea what water polo is. Some had never swum before and most of them don't have the opportunity to swim except in the summer, so they're not aware of different levels or aspects of it." Luckily, *ILWP* is geared at introducing the sport to communities and uses games as well as drills to teach basic water polo skills to participants. The games are not water polo, but teach the kids water polo skills as they play. The *ILWP* program is equivalent to a competitive beginner program. It teaches the same skills as competitive water polo, just less of them. At the clinics, kids learn how to maneuver in the water, as well as skills like head-up front crawl, passing with one hand, spinning and have fun doing it. The kids are all new to the sport, so

Contacts & Calendar



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A child is much more likely to participate in sport if a parent is either a participant or a volunteer.

(Kremerik, 2000)



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SPORT

IT'S MORE THAN A GAME



Calling All Parents!

Your Club needs MO for 12U & 14U teams

Training clinics will be run in your respective clubs

2010

September 11	WPS Board Meeting	Regina
Sept 17 – 19	WPC Annual Summit	Calgary
October 6	PLO – Regina Derbi #1	Regina
October 17	PLA 1	Estevan
October 23 – 24	Provincial Bantam Camp #1 (DC and HC Athletes + invited athletes)	Regina
	PLO – Trip of Saskatoon	Regina
October 24	PLB 1	Regina
October 30	Board Meeting/ AGM	Regina
November 7	Grass Roots Trophy	Winnipeg
November 12 – 14	Sask Open	Regina
November 21	PLA 2	Regina
November 28	PLO – Trip of Regina 2	Winnipeg
December 4 – 5	PLO – Trip of Regina 1	Saskatoon
December 8	PLO – Regina Derbi #2	Regina
December 11 – 12	Provincial Bantam Camp #2 (DC and HC Athletes + invited athletes)	Regina
December 12	PLB 2	Regina

2011

January 12	PLO – Regina Derbi #3	Regina
January 14 – 16	PLO – Trip of Saskatoon	Winnipeg
January 16	PLA 3	Weyburn
January 21 – 22	PLO – Trip Manitoba 1	Regina
January 22 – 23	Provincial Bantam Camp #3 (DC and HC Athletes + invited athletes)	Regina
January 23	PLB 3	Regina
	PLO – Trip Manitoba 1	Saskatoon
February 4 – 6	PLO – Trip Manitoba 2	Regina
February 6	PLO – Trip Manitoba 2	Saskatoon
February 11 – 13	Bushido Invit	Winnipeg
February 25 – 27	PLO – Trip Manitoba 3	Regina
February 27	PLO – Trip Manitoba 3	Saskatoon
March 4 – 6	PLO – Trip Regina 1	Winnipeg
March 10 – 13	Nationals 22U	TBD
March 17 – 20	Alberta Open	Calgary
March 23	PLO – Regina Derbi #4	Regina
March 27	PLO – Trip Regina 2	Saskatoon
April 2 – 3	Saskatoba Provincials	Saskatoon
April 24	Easter Camp	TBD
May 5 – 8	Nationals 18U	TBD
May 20 – 23	Nationals 16U	TBD