

CAMPA Athletes Representative Newsletter – Joshua Riker-Fox

1. AthletesCAN Forum – Vancouver, BC. September 30 – Oct 4

I've just completed my 3rd AthletesCAN Forum, and it has been incredible. Each Forum has been informative and full of value in the past. Vancouver was no exception. The Forum's focus was "Voices of 2010 and Beyond." A lot of discussion concerned the long term health of sport in Canada and how to make progress following the hosting of the Olympics, which will take place in the near future. On the first day, 16 National Team athletes partook in the KidsCAN School Day at the Richmond Olympic Oval for speedskating. It was an incredible day as the group of us spoke to over 800 local school youth. We made them work hard, learn, and laugh, as each student attempted the sports that are our passions. Following this, the AGM took place and 2 days of skill building sessions. Focus was placed on many items – Robert's Rules of Order, Reflections from now retired high performance athletes (Allison Forsyth – Alpine, Aaron Lowe – Figure Skating, and Mike Smith – Wrestling), Athlete Social Responsibility (Adam Kreek – Right to Play, Andrew Haley – Clean Air Champions, Scott Fraser-Dauphinee – Basketball), and Addressing Homophobia in Sport (Jennifer Birch Jones), along with a host of other valuable sessions.

The four days offered a unique moment to integrate with athletes from all other sport disciplines. This allowed me to learn the challenges they face, and the ways they are addressed. It is apparent that Canada's national team athletes have the ability to share so much important information with each other. This sharing can improve everyone's experience in sport. Each of our responsibilities as Athlete Representatives at this Forum is to bring the information back to our athletes. I will present as much as I can, but I remind all athletes to contact me at any time to discuss items.

On Friday evening, we went to Grouse Mountain for a late dinner. This was a nice team building effort and fun social event. We then had an Excellence Gala and dinner on Saturday evening. Steve Podborski was the keynote speaker, and he did a fabulous job. He is a speaker with high content quality and smooth delivery. I wish I had the opportunity to listen to him more. Steve was one the 4 Crazy Canuck skiers of the past. He is a legend as the first non-European World Cup medalist and he also won an Olympic downhill medal in 1980. His accolades likely extend far beyond these. Steve is also one of the founding members of AthletesCAN, which is now in its 17th year.

This morning, the AGM continued with an election to determine two new board of directors. Five candidates entered, and I was one of them nominated from the floor that morning. However, I had intended on running from the onset. After two incredible experiences at the Forum in the past, I realize that AthletesCAN is a vital vehicle for change and a necessary environment for me to learn from and give back to. All national team athletes in Canada are automatically members of AthletesCAN. Each of the nominees were strong candidates, but only two would earn positions based on the voting results from the Athlete Reps. We participated in 20 minutes of question and answer directed from the current board, and from the Athlete Reps on the floor. I am very pleased to announce that as of October 4th, Modern Pentathlon has a representative on AthleteCAN's Board of Directors. This is among many highlights of the weekend.

There are items that I will share with you as time progresses. One of my first recommendations will be that CAMPA should, when possible send two athletes to this Forum. So much value is derived; that we should do everything we can to have a Rep present, along with a local high level athlete. Another item is just a reminder that AthletesCAN has a relationship with Sport Solutions which is a group offering law advice (sport related) to national team athletes, should this need arise.

Thank you for reading. Train hard. And know that your Athlete Representatives are here to serve you, so stay in contact with us.

Joshua Riker-Fox

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