

*Dartmouth Crossing **Speed Skating***



Dartmouth Crossing Speed Skating Club

Strategic Plan 2021-2024



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Dartmouth Crossing Speed Skating Club

Strategic Plan 2021-2024

INTRODUCTION

The Dartmouth Crossing Speed Skating Club, operating in the RBC Centre in Dartmouth and on the Emera Oval in Halifax, was founded in 2016, and established a full range of learn to skate and speed skating programs over the course of the 2016-2020 period addressed by its 2016-2020 Business Development Plan. The 2020-2021 season was dominated by the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. The club was unable to offer its introductory level programs because of the restrictions in place at the time, but successfully completed a full season for all other programs.

This plan addresses the next steps in the development of the club over the 2021 to 2024 period.

MISSION, VALUES AND VISION

Our Mission

The mission of the Dartmouth Crossing Speed Skating is to provide opportunities for persons of all ages, abilities and personal circumstances to learn to skate and to speed skate in a positive, welcoming and safe environment, and to develop a love of sport and physical activity on their journey to a lifetime of fitness as a recreational or high performance athlete or coach.

Our Core Values

We will act in accordance with the following core values in fulfilling our mission.

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION – We believe every person should have the opportunity to experience the joy of sport, to have fun, and to fulfil their personal potential. The club will strive to make its programs accessible and affordable for participants.

SAFETY AND HEALTH – The club's activities will follow Safe Sport guidelines and Speed Skating Canada safety requirements, and will contribute to the long term health and well-being of its members.

RESPECT, INTEGRITY AND FAIRNESS – Activities will be carried out with respect for all concerned, in a fair, open, and equitable manner.

EXCELLENCE – We will provide developmentally appropriate training and competition opportunities following Speed Skating Canada's long term participant and athlete development model (LTPAD). Coaches, officials, and administrators will be supported in their development so that all participants have the best experience we are able to offer.

COMMUNITY – Club activities will contribute positively to the larger community that in turn supports us.

Our Vision

As we fulfil our mission, observing these values, individuals and families will grow and develop as lifelong participants in and supporters of sport.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In order to achieve our mission and vision, we have established the following strategic priorities for the planning period:

1. Rebuild programs impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic;
2. Continue the evolution of club programs towards a more balanced model;
3. Seize opportunities presented by the 2022 Olympics and 2023 Canada Winter Games;
4. Strengthen the core infrastructure needed to support club development.

The strategic priorities are outlined below, with detailed plans in Appendices 1 to 4.

STRATEGY 1:

Rebuild programs impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic

1. Restart the Off to a Good Start programs and bring back to previous registration levels, maintaining the emphasis on inclusion and affordability.

The Off to a Good Start programs are foundational to the ongoing development of the club, and are also a key way in which the club gives back to the community that supports us. Most of our skaters are recruited through this program, which provides an affordable physical activity opportunity to young families in HRM. We were unable to offer this program in the 2020-2021 season.

2. Restart the Special Olympics 1 learn to skate level program.

The Special Olympics 1 program, delivered on an integrated basis with the Off to a Good Start programs, provides an opportunity for Special Olympics athletes to learn to skate, and eventually move into the Special Olympics 2 and 3 speed skating programs. We were unable to offer this program during the 2020-2021 season.

3. Rebuild the Speed Skating Skills Development, Masters 1, and Special Olympics 2 programs to previous registration levels.

The Speed skating Skills Development, Masters 1, and Special Olympics 2 programs were delivered during the 2020-2021 season, but at reduced levels. These programs provide ongoing recreational speed skating opportunities for those athletes not on the competitive track and provide essential skills training for those athletes who want to progress to the Competitive level.

STRATEGY 2:

Continue the development of club programs towards a more balanced model

We believe that the net has to be spread wide to achieve diversity and inclusion, and to find and develop the athletes who are the future of the sport. A large learn to skate/learn to speed skate program is essential to build a diverse athlete base and recruit new coaches, and interesting and challenging programs are essential to develop and retain them.

When the club was founded in 2016, its programs were heavily weighted to the Introductory level, but have been gradually evolving to a more balanced model. There is a need to continue this evolution, and to address the needs of skaters of all ages, genders, abilities and skill levels.

1. There is a higher dropout rate for girls starting at about age 13, and there are fewer female than male coaches. Programs will be implemented to address this gender imbalance, targeting gender balance at the Introductory level by the end of the 2021-2022 season, at the Intermediate level by the end of the 2022-2023 season, and at the Advanced level by the end of the 2023-2024 season.
2. To increase participation opportunities for Special Olympics athletes, the club will pilot a Special Olympics/Unified Sport speed skating relay program, and will reach out to Special Olympics programs in other parts of the province and in NB and PEI to participate in these events. This will also create opportunities for family members and other skaters in the club to become Unified Sports partners and directly participate in these events with the Special Olympics athletes.
3. Emphasis will be increased on using the Cutting Edge Pin Program to provide newer skaters with feedback on their skill development.
4. Participants in the speed skating programs need more racing experience. More interclub meets and mini-meets will provide some of this experience without the need to travel outside the province.
5. The programs for older skaters in the Competitive stream do not provide the number of training hours recommended in the Speed Skating Canada Long Term Participant and Athlete Development Model. Fees are already high for the Competitive programs. New funding sources will be identified to provide more arena ice time for these programs, including fundraising by the participants. Greater use of the free ice time on the oval, both winter and summer, should be included in the Competitive program requirements. Greater attendance at dry land training should be a requirement for participation in the Competitive program.

STRATEGY 3:

Seize the opportunities presented by the 2022 Olympics and 2023 Canada Winter Games

1. Interest in speed skating always increases in an Olympic year, with interest in registration usually peaking in January. The club's marketing program for the 2021-2022 season will leverage the increased interest generated by the Olympics.
2. The long track event at the 2023 Canada Winter Games, which are based in Prince Edward Island, is scheduled to take place on the Emera Oval in Halifax.

The Games normally include legacies for the Games host. It is anticipated that this could include a crash protection solution for the oval in Halifax. This would be a game changer for the club's long track program, which has been limited by the low level of crash protection at the oval.

A test event is usually scheduled a year ahead of time to ensure that the venue and its supporting infrastructure are ready for the Games. The test event is anticipated to be the Canadian Youth Long Track Championships.

The test event and the Games both present significant developmental opportunities for athletes, coaches and officials. The club's programming for 2021-22 and 2022-23 will be focused on maximizing these development opportunities.

STRATEGY 4:

Strengthen the Core Infrastructure Needed to Support Club Development

The club was founded by a small group of people with experience in running speed skating clubs. As the club has grown, and as the founders move towards retirement, it is essential to build the capacity to support the club's development on an ongoing basis. These are some of the needs:

- Establishment of a funding reserve sufficient to cover 90 days without revenues, to ensure club sustainability in the event of future major shutdowns;
- Succession planning for board of directors;
- Policy development;
- Recruitment and development of coaches;
- Active representation on the Speed Skate Nova Scotia Board of Directors;
- More active engagement of families in the club's activities; and recruitment of additional volunteers for many different functions, including program activities, pad crews, equipment

management, fundraising, and communication and management of website and social media presence.

SUMMARY

These strategic priorities are designed to ensure that the club recovers successfully from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 and continues its development towards the fulfilment of its mission.

APPENDIX 1: DETAILED PLANS FOR REBUILDING PROGRAMS IMPACTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
1. Increase the scope of the annual marketing campaign, to address the losses of participation in all programs.	Board of Directors	Summer 2021
2. Reach out to 2019-2020 participants to let them know that programs will be available in 2021-2022 season.	Registrar	Summer 2021
3. Restart the Off to a Good Start and Special Olympics 1 learn to skate level programs and bring back up to previous registration levels, maintaining the emphasis on inclusiveness and affordability.		Fall 2021
4. Outreach program to Dartmouth North, partnering with community organizations.	Board of Directors	July-August 2021
5. Rebuild the Speed Skating Skills Development, Masters 1, and Special Olympics 2 programs to previous registration levels.		
5.1. Prior to the 2021-2022 season, determine whether the Skills Development 1 program will be continued or merged with the Off to a Good Start/Full Speed Ahead program.	Board of Directors	July 2021

APPENDIX 2: DETAILED PLANS TO CONTINUE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLUB PROGRAMS TOWARDS A MORE BALANCED MODEL

Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
1. Implement programs to achieve better gender balance for both skaters and coaches.		
1.1. Contact Sport Nova Scotia and Communities, Culture and Heritage to identify appropriate programs and to identify funding sources for special programs and events.	Board of Directors	Summer 2021
1.2. Organize a camp for female coaches and skaters, led by a high-profile female coach.	Sheila McGinn	October 2021
2. Recruit a volunteer to coordinate pin program evaluation schedules and maintain records of results.	Board of Directors	Fall 2021
3. Increase the number of in-house mini-meets	Coaching staff	Fall 2021
4. Contact other provincial short track clubs to coordinate a schedule of interclub mini-meets.	Board of Directors	2021-2022 season and ongoing
5. Increase the training time available to skaters in the Competitive program to align better with the LTPAD:		
5.1. Identify new funding sources for increasing ice time for Competitive program skaters, including options such as fundraising by participants.	Board of Directors	Summer/Fall 2021
5.2. Establish participation in dry land training as a requirement of enrollment in the Competitive Program	Coaching staff	
5.3. Establish participation in training at the oval, both summer and winter, as a requirement of enrollment in the Competitive program.	Coaching staff	

APPENDIX 3: DETAILED PLANS FOR SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED BY THE 2022 OLYMPICS AND THE 2023 CANADA WINTER GAMES

Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
1. Include the 2022 Winter Olympics as a focus of the 2021-2022 fall and winter marketing campaigns.	Board of Directors	Summer/Fall 2021
2. Use the opportunities resulting from the 2023 Canada Winter Games long track event and its 2022 Test Event to build the club's Competitive programs, and to develop coaches and officials.		2021-2023
2.1. Focus the training of skaters in the qualifying age groups on preparing and qualifying for the Canadian Youth Long Track Championships to be held in Halifax in February 2022.	Coaching staff	2021-2022 Season
2.2. Focus the training of skaters in the qualifying age groups on preparing and qualifying for the 2023 Canada Winter Games (both long track and short track).	Coaching staff	2021-2022 and 2022-2023 seasons
2.3. Identify male and female coaches to develop at the Competition Development level to be able to apply to coach the Nova Scotia teams, both long track and short track, at the Canada Winter Games.	Head Coach	2021-2022 and 2022-2023 seasons
2.4. Identify officials to obtain development experience at both the Test Event and the Canada Winter Games.	Board of Directors	2021-2022 and 2022-2023 seasons

APPENDIX 4: DETAILED PLANS FOR STRENGTHENING THE CORE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO SUPPORT CLUB DEVELOPMENT

Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
1. Develop a funding reserve sufficient to cover 90 days without revenue in the event of another major shutdown.	Board of Directors/Treasurer	2021-2024
1.1. Establish a sponsorship funding initiative specifically to obtain sponsor ads for the new safety pads, with funding to be dedicated to establishing the funding reserve.	Board of Directors	Fall 2021
1.2. Prepare a form letter and ask families to contact their local city councillors, MLAs and MPs to support club funding requests.		
2. Establish a succession plan for members of the club's board of directors.	Board of Directors	2021-2022 season
3. Complete the club's suite of key policies	Board of Directors	Fall 2021 and ongoing
4. Recruit and develop more coaches for all programs, continuing to have a combined paid coach/volunteer coach model.	All	
5. Recruit members willing to take an active role in representing the club on the Board of Directors of Speed Skate Nova Scotia.	Board of Directors	Spring 2021 and annually thereafter
6. Develop opportunities to increase the engagement of skater's families in the activities of the club.	Board of Directors	Ongoing
6.1. Add a volunteer sign-up to the club's registration form, listing potential volunteer activities and requesting that at least one be selected.		
6.2. Institute a door greeting/information sharing table to replace the Covid-19 screeners.		
6.3. Consider development of a family learn to skate program		

Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
<p>6.4. Create other social events for families to participate in.</p> <p>6.5. Recruit volunteers for key roles, including an equipment manager and volunteers to maintain skates, coordination of communication, and management of club's social media presence</p>		
<p>7. Follow up progress on strategic plan initiatives regularly at Board meetings</p>	<p>Board of Directors</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

APPENDIX 5: TARGETED PARTICIPATION

These are the anticipated distribution of athletes in programs. There should be gender balance within each program.

Figure 1 Youth Programs

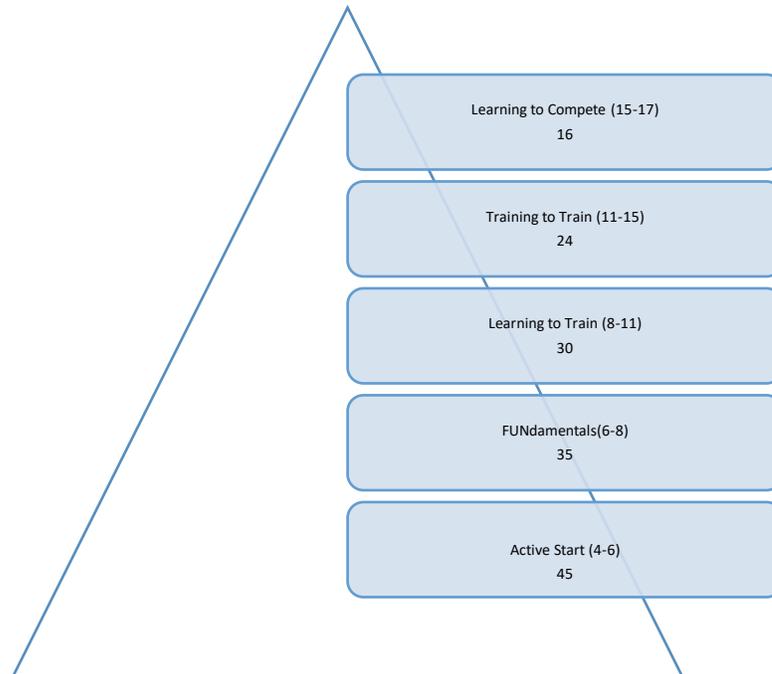


Figure 2 Recreational and Adult Programs

