

# 2016 SFC AGM High Performance Report

---

Submitted by Patrick Haynes, Vice-President, High Performance, September 2016.

The 2016 Olympic Quadrennial is drawing to an end. As I write this, the Rio Olympics have been completed and the Paralympics are about to start. Canada was represented by Cynthia Meyers (Trap), Lynda Kiejko (Pistol) and Doug Blessin (Rifle) in Brazil. I am sure that all our members are very proud of their accomplishments and look forward to what the next quadrennial offers.

Two years ago, I unexpectedly took on the role of VP-HP, in the middle of the quad. At the time, I was National Pistol Coach. My focus was redirected and my goal became to shepherd our HP program through the CAT Games, Pan Am Games, and ultimately, the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Given the urgency and timelines, planning and communication suffered.

To improve communications this year, I took the opportunity to speak with athletes and officials during the 2016 National Championships for Trap, Skeet, Rifle and Pistol. The conversations were frank, extremely valuable and, to be honest, challenging for all parties concerned.

Leading up to these talks, I had reviewed Sport Canada's funding framework, read reams of documentation and spoken with consultants at Own the Podium. The message received was very clear: our funding is predominantly tied to international performance results. Currently, of the evaluation that the SFC receives from Sport Canada, 60% of our ranking is tied directly to Excellence (high performance). Where we place at the World Championships, the Paralympics and the Olympics has a direct impact on how we are ranked against other national sport organizations. When we place low in the ranks, we emphasize the fact that we are not ready for increased funding. As other sports improve their performances and HP systems, we become in jeopardy of losing ground and receiving less funding.

As such, we need to do better across the board. This is not to say that our athletes, officials, coaches and volunteers aren't doing good work. Unfortunately, high performance sets the bar internationally. Being the best in Canada is admirable; but, our system and athletes are being compared to our international peers. If we want more support and opportunities, then we must perform at an internationally competitive level, regardless of discipline.

Consequently, I have directed the implementation of a performance tracking system that will allow us to better monitor our international performances and track them within an international context. Below, in Figure 1, we see an example of one report, which displays the Canadian athletes who placed above the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile in ISSF events during this quadrennial (2013-16). It allows us to review our athletes' performances against their competition. Instead of focusing on scores, we can review the field size, placement within that field and, finally, percentile ranking (which indicates what percentage of the field was below the athlete's performance). This allows us to consider who our top performers are, at which competitions we could have the most impact and where we could shift our resources.

year	comp_name	event	firstname	lastname	score_total	rank	field_size	pct_rank
2015	Toronto Pan American Games	TR75	Amanda	CHUDOBA	60.00	1	10	100.00
2015	Toronto Pan American Games	AP40	Lynda	HARE	375.00	1	24	100.00
2015	Toronto Pan American Games	SP	Lynda	HARE	571.00	1	21	100.00
2015	Toronto Pan American Games	FR60PR	Michel	DION	620.50	3	29	92.86
2015	Toronto Pan American Games	TR125	Curtis	WENBERG	113.00	4	29	89.29
2015	Toronto Pan American Games	SP	Lea	WACHOWICH	568.00	4	21	85.00
2014	Guadalajara Continental American Championships	SK125	Richard	MCBRIDE	119.00	5	38	89.19
2014	Guadalajara Continental American Championships	AP40	Lynda	HARE	377.00	5	40	89.74
2015	Toronto Pan American Games	TR125	Drew	SHAW	114.00	5	29	85.71
2015	Toronto Pan American Games	FR60PR	Gale	STEWART	620.40	6	29	82.14
2015	Changwon World Cup	AP40	Lynda	HARE	385.00	6	83	93.90
2014	Guadalajara Continental American Championships	TR75	Cynthia	MEYER	65.00	6	18	70.59
2014	Guadalajara Continental American Championships	SP	Lynda	HARE	571.00	6	35	85.29
2014	Guadalajara Continental American Championships	SP	Lea	WACHOWICH	563.00	8	35	79.41
2014	Guadalajara Continental American Championships	STR3X20	Shannon	WESTLAKE	568.00	10	39	76.32
2013	Acapulco World Cup	SK125	Richard	MCBRIDE	117.00	10	41	77.50
2014	Guadalajara Continental American Championships	AR60	Benjamin	TAYLOR	613.00	11	43	76.19
2014	Guadalajara Continental American Championships	FR60PR	Gale	STEWART	618.80	12	43	73.81
2015	Fort Benning World Cup	FR60PR	Gale	STEWART	624.70	12	64	82.54
2016	Suhl ISSF Junior World Cup	TR75	Elizabeth Grace	LONGLEY	63.00	12	39	71.05
2014	Tucson World Cup	SK125	Richard	MCBRIDE	120.00	13	69	82.35
2013	Changwon World Cup	AR60	Cory	NIEFER	620.10	14	51	74.00
2013	Nicosia World Cup	SK125	Richard	MCBRIDE	119.00	23	85	73.81
2015	Lonato World Championships	SK125	Richard	MCBRIDE	119.00	28	150	81.88
2014	Munich World Cup	SK125	Richard	MCBRIDE	119.00	34	119	72.03

Figure 1: Canadian athletes who placed above the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile in ISSF events between 2013-2016.

Looking at Figure 1, you may note that the Commonwealth Games are missing. First, it does not offer Olympic or Paralympic quotas and, as such, it is not on our Olympic pathway. Second, and more importantly, Sport Canada does not put these Games into their ranking/funding equations. As has been repeatedly demonstrated, one can win a Gold medal at the Commonwealth Games and it will not impact Sport Canada's view of that sport. These factors significantly impact their value.

In addition to international performance tracking, I am working with the National Coaches to identify training metrics which will be captured in a database. We will encourage all athletes to submit their numbers on a bi-weekly/monthly basis. The purpose of this project will be to track your training efforts and correlate them to performance. Additionally, it will provide the coaches with discussion points. He or she can review your training activities and offer support and advice. We want to make your participation on the SFC teams meaningful; but, without concrete information, the coaches are limited.

Two other initiatives were suggested by Own the Podium, both which entails the development of Gold Medal Profiles and Performance Pathways, specific to individual events. These will allow us to analyse athlete performance gaps and develop specific training activities for improvements over time. Instead of saying that an athlete needs to hit (on average) five clays to make it into a World Cup finals, we would describe the gap over time (+2 this year, +1 next year, +1 year after...) The pathway directs performance improvements over time, according to where the athlete is today and what the Gold Medal Profile looks like. We build towards the future. The problem becomes manageable and directed to performance.

Lastly, I have asked the National Coaches to increase their interactions with athletes. Going forward, the National Coaches will be the discipline coaches at all major Games during the next quad. We will be hosting webinars and conference calls, in addition to training camps, to foster dialog. Athletes will be encouraged to develop strong relationships with the National Coaches, to allow them to be more supportive. Additionally, we must ensure that knowledge learned at major Games is shared with all

athletes. Athletes' personal coaches will be welcome to participate at world cups; but, these personal coaches will not be part of Games' support staff, as long as the National Coach positions are filled.

## **The 2017-2020 Quadrennial**

The SFC has a very tight budget, both with finances and human resources. We are unable to be all things to all people. In the past, we have spread our resources too thin and, as a result, we have not performed as well as we could. With that in mind, I produced a pathway which reflects the events which best allow us to meet our Olympic goal. (The Paralympics has a different pathway which will be developed shortly.)

As Figure 1 demonstrated, our strongest rankings come within our continental championships: the Championships of the Americas (CAT Games) and the Pan American Games. Both of these events have Olympic quotas available. The best opportunities for us to send Canadian shooters to Tokyo 2020 are obtained via strong performances at these two events.

The importance of the CAT Games has increased over the last quad: starts for the Pan Am Games are earned at the CAT Games. If we don't have our best athletes delivering peak performances at the CAT Games, then we may not have a full team at the Pan Ams, which reduces the odds of sending athletes to the Olympics. We must increase our focus on the CAT Games, to ensure our Olympic berths. Given this pathway, the upcoming quadrennial looks different from previous years, mimicking the structure of an annual plan over four years.

### **2017: Preparation and training.**

I have asked our National Coaches to focus their efforts on the delivery and support of multiple SFC Team training camps. As a group, we must all learn to perform better. We need to hone our skills and develop an infrastructure that supports performance. Competition should take a backseat to becoming technically, tactically, physically and mentally better. High performing athletes will be identified for greater support. How the training camps will be administered is still under development; but, we are looking at a balance between large centralized camps (Pan Ams Range) and smaller distributed regional camps at various centres of excellence.

### **2018: Selection, Preparation and Performance CAT Games**

Our two primary 2018 events are the World Championships in South Korea and the CAT Games. Sport Canada mandates that all carded athletes must compete at the World Championships. As well, we need your best performances at the CAT Games to ensure Pan Am starts.

Consequently, instead of attending the Commonwealth Games (with the exception of the Full Bore Rifle Team), the SFC will be holding spring selections for the CAT Games. The Commonwealth Games consume time and money (for administrators, coaches and athletes) which could support success where it counts. Support will be allocated to the CAT Games spring selection trials, as well as training camps and support leading up to the CAT Games. Finally, administrative support (as needed) will be provided to the Full Bore Rifle team for the Commonwealth Games. Selection procedures are being discussed;

but, the current model favours a specific single event, with multiple matches and finals. Emphasis will be placed upon qualification scores with additional points awarded for placement in Finals.

### **2019: Selection, Preparation and Performance Pan Am Games**

Our primary goal will be strong performances at the Pan Am Games, to secure quotas for Tokyo 2020. We will have spring selections for the Games, as well as training camps to further enhance SFC athlete performances. Competitions will be used to enhance our preparation for the Games.

### **2020: Selection, Preparation and Performance Olympic/Paralympic Games**

Our primary goal will be strong performances at the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo. We will have spring selections for the Games, as well as training camps to further enhance SFC athlete performances. Again, competitions will be used to enhance our preparation for the Games.

## **Moving Forward**

I came into the VP-HP role unexpectedly and was surprised by the realities of the position. The handoff of the portfolio was poor. I inherited some problems and made a few of my own. There have been some bumps along the path. I've learned a great deal and will apply that knowledge going forward.

As a Federation, we have to break from some of our established beliefs. We must accept Sport Canada's reality and adopt a focused high performance program. We must work within our means to achieve world class performances at targeted, supported competitions. We must improve in all areas, as athletes, coaches, officials and administrators. We need to work toward specific goals, act daily with them in mind and document every step along the path. This will set us up for greater success in our journey to the 2024 Olympics, wherever they may be.