



Board of Directors ZOOM Call Thursday, June 22 – 5:30 PM (Ontario)
MINUTES

Present:

Scott Neiles, President

Directors:

Brooks Penrod

Bob Stanton

Ryan DeBelser

Jackie Dugger

Scott Searle

Robb Andison

Kareena Zanolli

Staff:

Mike Branchaud, CEO

Donna Ozarko, Mgr. – Officials and Publications

Gilles LeBlanc, Mgr. – Operations

Angela Ballantyne – Mrg. Sport Development

Emma Lindblad, Mgr. – Communications

Cassidy Burton – Program Coordinator

1) Welcome and Land Acknowledgement (Neiles)

President Neiles opened the meeting at 5:30pm and thanked all for taking the time to join. He acknowledged that the Zoom call originated on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people.

2) Acceptance of the February 1 Board Minutes (Neiles)

Motion # 1 - Move to approve the February 1, 2023 Board Minutes

Penrod/Andison CARRIED

3) Approval of Agenda with power to add (Neiles)

Motion # 2 – Move to Approve Agenda with power to add

Dugger/DeBelser CARRIED

4) Men's National Teams (Penrod/LeBlanc)

U23 Men's National Team – WBSC World Cup Recap
Exhibition Games

Vero Beach, Fla.	
USA	W 7-3
USA	W 12-5

Pre-World Cup	
ISR	W 9-0
AUS	L 7-0

USA	L 7-6
USA	L 16-6

ARG	L 5-4
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World Cup

Qualifying Round	
VEN	L 2-0
WBSC	W 11-1
JPN	L 5-1
NZL	W 5-3
ISR	W 7-0

Super Round	
ARG	L 3-1
MEX	L 1-0
AUS	L 4-0

- WBSC Americas Qualifier expected to be held in 2023, currently no location or dates. While we do not need to attend the Qualifier due to hosting the 2024 Group Stage and 2025 Finals, we may send a team with the intent of giving international experience to some of our up-and-coming athletes who have a chance to be named to the 2024/2025 rosters.

U18 Men's National Team (U19 for 2023)

- Head Coach Mark Quinn and Assistant Coach Jean-Yves Doucet are in place.
- U18 Men's World Cup confirmed for November 11-19 in Hermosillo, Mexico.
- Currently no dates/location for WBSC Americas Qualifier.
- We are planning to either attend the WBSC Americas Qualifier OR hold a Selection Camp in the event we are confirmed for the World Cup (not both).
- Open identification camps and scouting were conducted in 2022.
- Quinn will scout the U20 Ontario Elimination Tournament in early July and U20 Canadian Championships in August.

4.1 Athlete Survey Results & Coaching Staff

It was noted that Doug Allin is head coach of the U23 MNT. Athlete Surveys were distributed and compiled. The survey results for the coaching situation were satisfactory/acceptable. Debrief meeting was held with Coach Allin prior to Board Zoom meeting.

4.2 Men's National Team scouting support

Stuart attended U23 Men's World Cup in Argentina and will scout several additional Men's tournaments. Lots of scouting is planned this summer with Stuart attending several high-end events with the financial support of Pete Hill.

Motion # 3 – Move to approve MNT Report

Zanolli/Stanton CARRIED

5) Canadian Championships (LeBlanc/Dugger)

General Update

- Host Conference calls completed with the exception of U20 Men's and Men's/Master's that are being planned in mid-June.

- Site inspections completed in Prince Albert (U15 B), Napanee (U20 M), Montreal (U23 W + W) and Brandon (U15 G). Planned in mid-June for Fredericton (U17 B), Langford (U19 W) and Dorchester (SP). No concerns for Saskatoon (U17 G + U23 M) or Surrey (M + Master's).
- 2023 Contact Chart completed/distributed.
- Host Guides / Supervisor Manuals being printed.
- Medal ribbons, awards and host gifts have been ordered.
- Supervisor travel has been booked and clothing ordered.
- SP Schedules Complete; FP Schedules being developed.
- Concern for the lack of teams for the U23W and Women's event. Will combine both events for the round robin portion. Minimal concern from the PTs to combine.

5.1 2023 Canadian Championship participation numbers

SP Confirmation of Participation (May 1)

	BC	AB	SK	MB	QC	ON	NS	NL	NB	PEI	NWT	YT	TOT	P/T
MEN SP	3	5	2	0	3	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	20	6
WOMEN SP	3	4	2	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	15	6
TOTAL	6	9	4	0	4	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	35	6

Fast Pitch Confirmation of Participation as of June 15

	BC	AB	SK	MB	QC	ON	NS	NL	NB	PEI	NWT	YT	TOT	P/T
U15 G	5	2	3	4	1	4	2	1	1	1	0	0	24	10
U15 B	0	0	4	0	0	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	10	4
U17 G	5	3	4	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	0	0	24	10
U17 B	1	0	1	0	1	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	10	7
U19 W	5	3	1	1	1	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	16	7
U20 M	0	0	2	0	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	8	4
U23 W	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3
U23 M	0	0	1	0	0	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	4
WOMEN FP	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3
MEN FP	4	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	12	6
MASTER	3	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	4
TOTAL	24	11	19	7	8	37	7	8	4	1	0	0	127	

2024 Canadian Championships

Event	Location	Dates
U15 G	Île-Perrot, QC	August 14-18, 2024
U15 B	*St-Leonard-d'Aston, QC	August 14-18, 2024
U17 G	Calgary, AB	July 31 - August 4, 2024
U17 B	St-Gervais, QC	August 6-11, 2024
U19 W	Saskatoon, SK	July 31 - August 4, 2024
U20 M	TBD	TBD
U23 W	TBD	TBD

Event	Location	Dates
U23 M	Kitchener, ON	July 30 – August 4, 2024
WOMEN FP	TBD	TBD
MEN & MASTER FP	Saskatoon, SK	August 28 - September 1, 2024
MEN & WOMEN SP	TBD	TBD

5.2 2024 U15 Boys discussion re – QC

Since Quebec is not sending a team to the U15 Boy’s Canadian Championship, they lose their awarded bid for 2024 U15 Boy’s in St-Leonard-d’Aston. The event is now open for bids, and St-Leonard-d’Aston can renew their bid after October 1st if no other bids are received from the four participating provinces prior to that date.

Motion # 4 – Move to approve Canadian Championship Report

Dugger/Andison CARRIED

6.0 Border Battle (Zanolli/Burton)

6.1 Selection Process

The SP committee conducted comprehensive interviews in the beginning of March for the Men’s and Women’s Head and Assistant coaching positions for the 2023 Border Battle. Both SC and the SP committee express confidence in the chosen coaches. On March 30th the announcement of the appointed coaches was released through social media platforms. Towards the end of April, a panel of SP experts was assembled for both the men’s and women’s team. They were assigned to select the top 25 SP athletes, thereby initiating a ranking process based on athletes’ respective vote counts. Following a review and approval by the SP committee, the men’s roster was a total of 12 selected athletes, leaving three vacant spots to be filled by the Men’s head coach. Similarly, the women’s roster comprised a total of 18 chosen athletes, resulting in the Women’s head coach making three deletions to finalize the roster. In early May, the athlete invitations were sent out and on May 23rd, an official press release confirmed the final rosters. This year’s Border Battle is scheduled to take place from July 28 to 30 in Cleveland, Ohio. Efforts are currently underway to coordinate travel arrangements and secure accommodation for the teams.

Motion # 5 – Move to approve Border Battle Report

DeBelser/Andison CARRIED

7) Canada Games (Penrod/LeBlanc/Burton)

7.1 Penrod confirmed as Tech Rep for 2025

Brooks Penrod has been appointed Technical Representative. In addition, the age categories have been submitted to the CSG.

7.2 2029 sport selection process

The 2029 Sport Selection Process was initiated at the start of May. On May 10th, the Sport Selection “Intent to Apply” form was submitted for both men’s and women’s softball, expressing a strong interest in participation. By June 16th, SC will receive the final 2029 Sport Selection Process and questionnaire. The completed application is scheduled to be submitted by September 8th. The final decision is expected to be communicated to us by October 2023.

Motion # 6 – Move to approve Canada Summer Games Report

Penrod/Zanolli CARRIED

8) Women’s National Teams (Ballantyne/Dugger)

8.1 Camps and Summer Schedule

Three (senior) Women’s National Team ID Camps have been held with over 60 participants registered for the camps held in BC, SK, and ON. In addition, over 315 participants have registered for the Junior Women’s National Team camps held in BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC and NS. Members of the coaching staff as well as pool coaches and guest coaches have had the opportunity to evaluate players from across the country. SC has teamed up with College Sports Evaluations to offer an additional opportunity to attendees of the camps. Coach Rafter explains: *“In the last few years in softball we have seen huge improvements in the way we collect and use data. Data is not subjective it is an objective way to tell a player this is where you are, and this is where you stand compared to your peers. We collect and use similar data everyday on our national team because it is the best way to both evaluate and track improvements over time. We can now take these important measures, track them over time, and definitively say you have gotten better by “this much”. Understanding who you are as a player and what makes you good can also help you better leverage your skills. Knowing this importance of this data and evaluating players access to its collection, we at SC realized there was a gap. To close this gap, we have partnered with CSE (College Sports Evaluations). They are the gold standard when it comes to collecting clean and consistent data. This is a special opportunity to give you all the access to their testing.”* A full report on this pilot project will be available for the next BOD meeting.

SUMMER SCHEDULE

Final Selection Camp: Oshawa, ON - June 13-18

Team Training: Oshawa, ON – June 20-27

Exhibition Series, Clarksville TN - June 27- July 5

Canada Cup – Surrey, BC July 5- 19

WBSC World Cup Stage 1 – Italy – July 19 – 27

Motion # 7 – Move to approve WNT Report

Penrod/Dugger CARRIED

9) Coaching (Ballantyne/Searle)

9.1 Coaching Development Committee (CDC)

The CDC Terms of Reference were approved by the BOD on April 26th, 2023. This began the process of moving forward with a new committee composition. The application for chair and committee members is currently in development and will be made available to the public before the end of June. Applicants will be able to apply for both positions through an online process. Members will be interviewed and selected by the SC President or designate, SC Board Liaison or designate, and SC Manager - Sport Development as per the TOR.

Motion # 8 – Move to go in camera

Dugger/Penrod CARRIED

Motion # 9 – Move to go out of camera

Andison/Penrod CARRIED

9.2 NCCP update

In discussion with SC's Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) representative, it came to our attention that there is no current version of a SC Operations Manual for NCCP clinics. This document would outline the processes that have been seemingly put in place without formal process. The document would outline how clinics are run at each level, how Coach Developers are chosen and paid, as well as additional best practices. The CAC supplied a template from Rugby that will be used as a guideline to create a softball specific version. It will be developed over the summer months, to be put into effect in the fall. In addition, it will also support P/T's with staff turnover and guide those within all roles of coaching with greater transparency and information. Additionally, SC has applied for some translation funding to go towards our Comp Dev online modules –which were originally quoted at \$26k+ this grant is only \$3k. We have not heard back on this but are hoping too soon.

Competition Development - In addition to the creation of a NCCP Operations Manual, the CAC representative also informed us that Comp Dev clinics/ as well as Pitching Instructor Beginner clinics should not be hosted by SC but rather the P/T's. This goes against the CAC mandate and should be changed immediately. As well, the Coach Developer's (CDs) running these clinics should be those who are geographically the closest. The goal is to have facilitators in each P/T. This would allow P/T's to create their own clinic schedules and work with the CDs to ensure their coaches get certified. Pending BOD support, the coaching program will move forward with supporting this change with the P/T's as soon as possible in order to allow them to organize Comp Dev clinics for this fall and winter. SC would support an online pilot where needed but would like to make this transition quickly. In addition, the CAC indicated that SC should be asking for a "reinvestment" fee from the cost of registration of each coaching clinic (at all levels). This revenue would go to supporting program development in areas that the CAC funding does not cover (i.e. Mentorship programs, professional development, in person MCD meetings, etc.). This would be in addition to the cost of materials. This fee could vary dependant on the level.

9.3 Master Coach Developer meeting

The CAC has strongly suggested hosting our MCD meeting virtually. Hosting this meeting in person annually uses up so much of our allotted budget. If needed, we could look at doing this in person bi-annually but at this point we are looking to move this online. While the P/T's do cover some of this cost, with the ability to host meetings online – it would not only alleviate that expense, but also condense the time of the meeting to cover critical updates.

Motion # 10 – Move to approve Coaching Report

Zanolli/Penrod CARRIED

10) Safe Sport – update and Governance code (Ballantyne)

Since SC joined Abuse-Free Sport, the new independent program to prevent and address maltreatment in sport, over 115 participants have signed the consent form. SC, and its stakeholders at the national level, will have access to the services of the Office of the Sport Integrity Commission (OSIC), which serves as the central hub of Abuse-Free Sport. The next step in this process will be to create a seamless system where participants and coaches at Canadian Championships sign consent forms and understand the services available to them should they have a maltreatment complaint arising from their

participation at a Canadian championship. Sport Canada recently (May 11) announced that all NSO's will be required to fully adopt the foundational governance principle and sign the Canadian Governance Code by April 2025. While SC has been exploring these changes, they will now be required. NSO's will also be required to have an athlete representative on their board of directors. This supports the proposed changes SC has been working towards in the governance review. Recently the idea of an athlete commission has been brought up and something that the BOD is recommended to explore. A public registry of sanctions will be put into place. P/T's have been asked who currently has a public registry (ON and BC), while others submit to their PTSO (SK). All P/T's were asked to be aware of where these sanctions are kept in house as we will need to move forward in creating a nationwide registry. An issue is individuals don't know where to submit their complaint. This causes financial issues for SC.

Motion # 11 – Move to approve Safe Sport Report

Stanton/Zanolli CARRIED

11) 2023 Blue Convention (Ozarko/Andison)

After a year's delay, the flagship event of our national umpire program saw over 150 umpires from across the country join together to connect, learn and celebrate. More than any single point, the fact that so many umpires of different ages, disciplines and experience levels continue to reach into their own pockets to attend demonstrates the commitment umpires have to personal excellence and supporting the sport. Central to the event is the learning. This year's presentation program was exceptionally strong, with over 20 individuals leading several unique sessions. We also had two tremendous keynote presentations with powerful messages. And, of course, we were able to celebrate the induction of several new members into the Canadian Indicator Club.

Discussion – hotel prices have risen, and it will be difficult negotiating hotel contract prices for 2025. The main issue is F/B prices are much higher to be able to get the meeting room complimentary. We will need to increase the registration fee to absorb this and potentially have instructors pay at least ½ registration fee. Looking into other options moving forward to be able to absorb some of the hotel expenses.

12) Umpires – eLearning clinics (Ozarko/Andison)

Our provincial and territorial partners continue to express concerns with recruitment of new umpires. One of the primary challenges for new umpires is to identify and attend a clinic. Single date / location events often conflict with other commitments or present geographic challenges. Many sports, including hockey and baseball, have moved to develop and support entry level web-based training platforms as the single-entry point to their officiating certification programs. While we have looked at this option in the past, the price was very expensive to move forward. However, with renewed requests from P/Ts to provide additional support for recruitment initiatives, we have returned to explore the possibility. We have had conversations with the **Respect Group** (the same provider for SC's web-based DI education programming) about what it would take to develop an asynchronous, web-based "Entry to Umpire" program that would encompass the theory component of the Level I certification clinic, allowing new candidates to access the initial training anytime – anywhere. It is expected that after successful completion of this "course", new umpires would then work with local leadership to complete a Level I mechanics component, which would result in full Level I certification. This delivery model would benefit individuals by providing easier access at their convenience and cut down on the face-to-face time demands with the expectation that decreased barriers to entry will lead to increased access. In addition, this will help ensure consistent content delivery in all areas of the country. It may also provide additional

access for coaches and others who need / wish to access the basic umpire course. The ODC continues to consider a proposal to chart a pathway ahead. The biggest barrier will be to build a funding model to support the development and future sustainability and a viable pathway to possibly expand the platform to Level II and Level III programs. Moving forward, more research with our PT partners is required.

13) WBSC umpire change in selection (Ozarko/Andison)

The WBSC has recently adopted a new selection protocol that will affect current WBSC certified umpires who wish to attend WBSC World Cup events.

Moving forward, the WBSC will follow the International Olympic Committee governance recommendations regarding sport integrity, bribery, and match-fixing. These changes impact the current selection process SC uses to nominate officials to World Cup events as follows:

- The WBSC will directly appoint umpires (and other tournament technical officials) and selection input from National Federations (e.g. SC) will no longer be required. For example, SC was not consulted in the recent appointments to the 2023 World Cup and Group Stage events.
- The WBSC will select umpires for World Cup and Group Stage events (including World Games) from amongst the eligible pool of certified officials for the event being considered. The exact criteria and process being used for appointment has not been shared with National Federations.
- The eligibility process for selection remains unchanged (Initial Certification or Renewal of Eligibility) during a Rules Cycle (the current cycle runs from 2022-25). Previously certified officials must still complete the Renewal of Eligibility Process, which includes successful completion of the WBSC rules assessment, successful completion / reporting of the WBSC Fitness measurements (these must be certified by the National Director of Umpires), and the submission of a recent and positive on-field evaluation or letter of attestation from the NDU to your current on-field skills and abilities.
- The WBSC may request a list of names from National Federations for upcoming events. While there may be brief comments attached to each name, individuals will not be ranked.
- The WBSC will contact and advise selected umpires directly. SC will only be advised after the appointment.
- Appointment announcements will be embargoed by all parties and cannot be announced until the first pitch of the tournament under the WBSC sport integrity process.

It is not anticipated that this will affect appointments to other events, including WBSC-Americas Qualifiers, Pan Am Games, and exchange programs. As we receive more information – likely after the new WBSC Director of Umpiring is appointed and announced – we will update this communique. We understand that this change may result in anxiety and many questions. We have many of the same questions. We recognize that this is a significant change to previous protocol and practice as outlined in SC policy and we will be working to update our policy to reflect the new WBSC protocols. In conversations with other NF umpire program leaders, a couple (USA and AUS) have indicated that their NF have communicated (or will) with WBSC to gain a greater insight into the new process. We have also discussed with several members of the WBSC Umpire Commission, whose mandate includes (or at least it did), making recommendations for World Cup assignments, and they all report they were not consulted in the recent appointments for 2023 events. Looking at the historical assignments process in baseball, one of our concerns is that appointments to major events will be limited to a few umpires, to the detriment of our programs. It appears that assignments for Canadian umpires to major WBSC baseball events tend to be limited to the same three or four umpires – some appearing at multiple

events per year. Our international assignment plans continue to roll out. We have indicated to WBSC Americas that we are fully prepared to support two umpires to all WBSC Americas Qualifiers and the Pan Am Games in 2023 and have submitted nominations for all events. While WBSC Americas is usually a bit slow to respond, we remain hopeful that we will be successful in our objectives. Whipple to draft a letter to the WBSC stating our concerns with the selections process with Neiles/Branchaud to do the delivery to the WBSC along with posed questions.

Another issue has risen of which the Board should be aware:

Our written policies state that umpires will not be eligible for international assignments in the year of Blue Convention if they fail to attend the conference. This policy is critical to the continued sustainability of the conference, and we have withdrawn assignments from officials who have failed to meet this policy in previous years. This year Pat Chiquette from QC was assigned to a USA Softball Slow Pitch National Championship but failed to attend, so we notified him that his assignment was being withdrawn. Softball Quebec later advocated on his behalf asking for reconsideration based on two elements; that policy is not posted publicly, and Pat (as a new Level V) was not aware that he was required to attend, and our umpire program policies have not been fully translated into French. After reconsideration we have reinstated Pat's assignment.

As a result, three mitigation measures are currently underway.

- A full translation of all our umpire program policies
- Posting of all umpire program policies on our website
- Development of an "on boarding" package for all new Level V umpires including clear expectations and policies

14) Border Battle/CAF approvals (Ozarko/Andison)

BORDER BATTLE - Due to injury, Sandra Forand has indicated she will not be able to attend the 2023 Border Battle. On behalf of the ODC, we are pleased to recommend **Jeff McKay (ON)** as her replacement at the event. Jeff is a newer Level V but has had impressive results at recent elite level events. **UPDATE** Jeff McKay had to decline, Sandra Forand has reaccepted. Board approved via email vote.

Motion # 12 – Move to approve Jeff McKay to Border Battle (**see underlined UPDATE above)

Stanton/DeBelser CARRIED

CANADIAN ARMED FORCES NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP DUIC

The CAF annually requests a Level V DUIC from SC to work with their Chief Official (Softball) – currently Lenny Galbraith – in support their National Championship. This program has been going on for around 20 years. This has proven to be a great starting point for one of our newer Level V Evaluators. This year's event will be held in Borden, ON. The CAF program covers all costs. On behalf of the ODC, we are pleased to recommend the appointment of **Mark Heagle (ON)** to this event. Mark is a veteran Level V but this will be his first supervisory position at a major event.

Motion # 13 – Move to approve Mark Heagle as DUIC for CAF Championship

Stanton/DeBelser CARRIED

15) NDU applications and process (Ozarko/Andison)

Jeff Whipple has not decided to re-apply for the NDU position. The deadline for NDU applications was May 31, 2023. We received applications from the following Level 5 umpires: Brent Chadwick, Frankie Billingsley, Mark Gough, Scott McLaren and Terry Richter. Neiles, Andison and Branchaud conducted interviews and final selection and announcement will be made on or before June 30.

Motion # 14 – Move to approve Umpire Report

Andison/DeBelser CARRIED

16) Hall of Fame Nominations (Ozarko/DeBelser/Stanton)

We had a total of 10 nominations for the Hall of Fame. The following are recommended for Board Approval.

Athlete Brian Patton (Woodstock, ON)

General Highlights: 2018 SC HoF inductee as member of Toronto Gators (1993-96), 2017 OASA HoF Inductee, 2017 SC HoF inductee as a member of the 1992 Cdn Men's World Championship Team, 2011 ISC HoF Inductee, 4 time First Team All-World Selection, 12 consecutive ISC championships with 9 top 4 finishes, Member of Team Canada for 17 years, Captain of Team Canada 7-8 years. Meets all the criteria and was a leader on the Men's National Team for many years.

Coach Rosemary Theriault (Lindsay, ON)

General Highlights: Cdn Championships - Senior Women – Head Coach Whitby Eagles 2010 -2017 Gold in 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017, Silver in 2011 and 2016 and 4th in 2013; Senior Women – Head Coach Kars Aces 2018 -2022 - Silver in 2018 and Bronze 2019. International - Head Coach -Team Canada Maccabi World Games 2013 to present (2013 and 2017 Silver, 2022 Bronze), Head Coach North American Select in France and Netherlands 1995-2004 -Gold 2000. Awards (long list but highlights) Whitby Sports Hall of Fame 2004, Durham College Sports Hall of Fame 2017, Israel Maccabi Sports Hall of Fame 2017, CNE Hall of fame -Softball 2018. Meets all the criteria and won many consecutive Canadian Championships as a coach.

Official Mary de Brun (Prescott, ON)

General Highlights: ODC Member 2000-2004. Canadian Championships, Midget Girls – Burlington, Sr. Women's - Burlington 1995, Sr. Men's Waterloo 1996, Supervised Sr. Women's Owen Sound 2001, Supervised Sr. Women's Charlottetown, PEI 2002, Supervised Sr. Women's Stellarton, NS 2003, Supervised Sr. Women's Charlottetown, PE 2004. International - Officiated Sr. Women Worlds Japan 1996 - Gold Medal plate, Officiated Sr. Women Olympic Qualifier Venezuela 1999 Gold Game, Officiated Sr. Women Olympic Sydney Aust. 2000 Gold medal plate. Meets all the criteria and worked Gold Medal Games at World Championships and Gold Medal Game at the Plate.

Builder Pat Sparling (Guelph, ON)

General Highlights: PWSA BOD including a 3 year term as President. Promoted the development of "Respect in Sport". Founding member of Softball ON whose mandate was to develop/deliver softball policies as well as serving as treasurer. Elected as chair of Softball ON BOD in 2011. AWARDS: 1986 Fort

Erie Hall of Fame, 2002 - Syl Apps Award, 2012 - Rose Hodgson Award, 2018 - Softball Ontario Hall of Fame – Builder, 2019 - PWSA Hall of Fame – Builder, 2023 - 50 year pin from Province of Ontario. Meets all criteria and is the consummate volunteer having given quality service back to her Provincial Organization

Team Orioles (St. Catherines, ON)

General Highlights: The Orioles were inducted into the SPO Hall of Fame in 2008 and were the first-ever Team inducted. Since 2005, the Orioles have earned 7 Gold Medals at the Canadian SP Championships (2005, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018), 1 Silver (2006), and 1 Bronze (2013).

Meets criteria with an outstanding record of Gold Medals at Canadian Championships

Motion # 15 – Move to approve Hall of Fame Nominations

Dugger/DeBelser CARRIED

17) WBSC Update (Branchaud)

Update. 2025 World Games in China will have both Men's and Women's Softball. The event is planned to be played in August which is a concern as Prince Albert is hosting Men's World Cup in July 2025 (main concern being the World Games in China close to the same time and the qualification process).

Qualification process not announced but WBSC wants top teams. Branchaud has been appointed to the WBSC Men's Fast Pitch Commission.

18) WBSC Americas events/planning (Branchaud)

Update. Although there have been 2 virtual meetings, there is still no confirmation on the events which again is discouraging and makes planning difficult. 2023 is supposed to have U18 Women's Qualifier, U18 Men's Qualifier for World Cup (November 2023) and Men's Qualifier.

19) Budget and planning (Branchaud)

The budget for April 30 was reviewed/discussed with a new budget commencing June 1. Note – contra would be approximately \$120,000. We will add as much as we can in May expenses to cut deficit for next year as funding is a lot less (no OTP, no covid etc.). The new per diem is \$60/day which began June 1. As in the past, all expense claims will have a 30-day window to be filed.

Motion # 16 – Move to approve Budget update

Dugger/Penrod CARRIED

20) Staffing update (Branchaud)

There were seven applications for the reception position and shortlisted to two being interviewed. One candidate was strong; however, she was retired and could not commit the required time to the position. For the summer months, it was decided that the intern (Kaitlyn Hickey) will assume duties for the position until September 1 and a call for applications will go back out in the fall.

21) Bylaws/Governance – new comments (Neiles/Branchaud)

There were very few questions initiated on the last PT call. To be noted, Branchaud received the below noted email from Sport Law:

**Temporary - Bylaw #2
Board Transition Plan**

1.1 Board Transition – This By-law #2 is enacted and the following sections of the Association’s By-laws will be temporarily repealed to the extent necessary to give effect to the provisions of this By-law #2 until this By-law #2 is repealed:

- a) 3.1 – Composition of the Board
- b) 3.2 – Terms

1.2 Current Board Composition – The current Board composition of the Association, as of June 2023, consisted of the following individuals with the year their term expires:

- a) President (SN) – 2023
- b) Director (RD) – 2023
- c) Director (JD) – 2024
- d) Director (BP) – 2024
- e) Director (SS) – 2023
- f) Director (BS) – 2024
- g) Director (KZ) – 2024
- h) Director (RB) – 2023

1.3 Directors-at-Large – Each Director position becomes a Director-at-Large. Following each Annual Meeting, the Board may assign portfolios to Directors at its discretion and may elect Officer positions pursuant to these By-laws.

1.4 Elections and Expirations at Annual Meetings – The following elections and expirations will occur at the next two (2) Annual Meetings of the Association and the Board composition is described:

- a) 2023 Meeting
 - i. The following terms expire:
 - i. SN
 - ii. RD
 - iii. RB
 - iv. SS
 - ii. The following positions will be elected:
 - i. Three (3) Directors-at-Large for a three-year term (“A” Directors)
 - ii. Two (2) Directors-at-Large for a two-year term (“B” Directors)
 - iii. The Board composition following the 2023 Annual Meeting of the Association is:
 - i. JD – exp. 2024
 - ii. BP – exp. 2024
 - iii. BS – exp. 2024
 - iv. KZ – exp. 2024
 - v. Three (3) Directors-at-Large (“A” Directors) – exp. 2026
 - vi. Two (2) Directors-at-Large (“B” Directors) – exp. 2025
- b) 2024 Meeting
 - i. The following terms expire:
 - i. JD

- ii. BP
- iii. BS
- iv. KZ
- ii. The following positions will be elected:
 - i. One (1) Director-at-Large (“B” Director) for a one-year term
 - ii. Three (3) Directors-at-Large (“C” Directors) for a three-year term
- iii. The Board composition following the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Association is:
 - i. Three (3) Directors-at-Large (“A” Directors) – exp. 2026
 - ii. Three (3) Directors-at-Large (“B” Directors) – exp. 2025
 - iii. Three (3) Directors-at-Large (“C” Directors) – exp. 2027

1.5 Repeal of this By-law #2 – After the elections at the 2025 Annual Meeting, the Board transition period will have completed and this By-law #2 should be repealed.

22) Other Business

None noted.

23) Next Meeting

Tentatively September 29/30 in Ottawa.

Motion # 17 – Move to Adjourn

Penrod/Stanton CARRIED

ADDITIONAL NOTES as presented in written reports, but not discussed.

As written report from Cassidy Burton, Program Coordinator

As Timbits Softball - T-shirts and Medals

The T-shirt orders for the Timbits program have been successfully delivered to each participating association. An appropriate quantity of medals has been allocated to accompany the Timbits T-shirts, with all the medals arriving prior to the start of the season. This ensures that each association has an equal number of medals to distribute with the Timbits T-shirts.

Canpitch - Canpitch Videos

The highly anticipated launch of the Canpitch Videos took place on February 2nd on the SC website. Promotional campaigns were undertaken across social media platforms along with an email blast, to maximize outreach and awareness. As a result, a total of 129 people has purchased the Canpitch videos.

The feedback received so far has been positive, confirming the quality and value of the Canpitch Videos. The Canpitch Committee is planning an in-person meeting to further develop pitching components such as arm care. This meeting aims to further enhance the Canpitch program, ensuring it continues to provide comprehensive and effective guidance to beginner pitchers.

LTPD - Committee Meeting

In early May, the LTPD Committee convened for an in-person meeting to address various matters, including

the group’s expectations and ongoing projects. Among the current projects include the development of a skills assessment resource for beginner level coaches operating within the U9-U13 developmental stage, the creation of a Male Gold Medal Profile, and the establishment of a competition pathway graphic. Much like the coaching development and diversity, equity, and inclusion committees, the group’s dedication will be reassessed alongside a review of the terms of reference.

Skills Assessment

Regarding the skills assessment initiative, Stage 1 has been successfully completed, entailing the creation of a foundational resource outlining the methodology for evaluating each skill. Several teams had the opportunity to pilot the skills assessment, marking the transition to Stage 2. In response to feedback received from both the pilot teams and the LTPD committee, efforts have begun to enhance the layout of the resources, ensuring its suitability for beginner level coaches, more so designed for those with no prior softball experience while also optimizing accessibility. The aim is to finalize Stage 2 during the current off-season and progress to Stage 3 at the beginning of the next season, thereby gathering further feedback and data to visually track individual progressions and establish norms for each age group.

As written report from Angela Ballantye, Manager, Sport Development

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

The new DEI Committee had their first call on April 30th. On that call we introduced new and old members, discussed the terms of reference, reviewed the action plan, and invite Inclusion Incorporated to present highlights from the Inclusion Index on the next call.

The May meeting focused on the Inclusion Index summary (which will be available in the next BOD report as we are awaiting more details from Inclusion Incorporated) as well as planning initiatives for both Pride month and Indigenous Heritage month.

With the delay of the application and selection process, as well as commitment conflicts during ball season the committee’s recommendation is to amend the TOR to state that they would meet a minimum of 8 times annually.

As written report from Emma Lindblad, Manager - Communications

Website Analytics (Monthly Breakdown)

Month	Page Views	Bounce Rate	% Page views Difference vs prev. Month	% Bounce Rate Difference vs. prev. Month
March	74,277	58.99%	39.83%	-3.91%
April	127, 326	55.93%	+76.17%	-5.16%
May	128, 905	62.94%	+1.24%	-12.54%

*Page Views: The total number of pages viewed.

*Bounce Rate: The % of single-page sessions in which there was no interaction with the page.

Press Releases

Total Sent (March-May)	Total Open Rate % (English + French)
26	1,082.7%

*Total numbers indicate combined English and French press releases. Our French database is much smaller than our English, therefore, our data will look swayed.

*Total Open Rate: The number of people who click and open each press release. The goal is to have a high number/percentage, indicating that the subject lines are compelling. The average open rate is 17.92%, meaning we are well above the average each time we send a press release.

Social Media

Facebook

Month	Followers	Posts	Reach	Engagements	Change from prev. 90 days
April	15,828	50	78,791	12.3K	- 28.7%
May	15,828	19	50,934	12.2K	-27.9%

Twitter

Month	New Followers	Posts	Impressions	Engagements	Change from prev. Month
April	-21	98	205K	6,724	+ 13.9%
May	0	44	125K	3,385	-2.7%

Instagram

Month	Followers	New Followers	Posts	Reach	Impressions	Engagements	Change from prev. Month
April	14K	371	49	19.5K	356,371	2,954	+63.5%
May	14K	246	17	11K	67.1K	1,845	-37.6%

Followers: Number of accounts that follow us.

Posts: Content sent through the channel (posts, pictures, videos, etc.)

Reach: Number of unique accounts that have seen the post.

Impressions: Total number of times posts have been seen.

Engagements: Number of likes and comments on posts.

*With the U23 Men's World Cup in April, the social media numbers are higher than March and May. When events take place and the cadence of our posts increases, there is a higher volume of impressions and engagements, and overall eyes on our posts.

As written report from Donna Ozarko, Manager – Officials and Publications/Jeff Whipple, NDU

Registrations

While we are far away from final registration numbers, we feel optimistic that our national program registrations will increase significantly in 2023, possibly even returning close to our pre-covid numbers. After our numbers dropped from 3700 umpires in 2019 to just over 1400 in 2020, we rebounded to around 2700 in 2022. While this may seem like a large gap to close in a year, two significant initiatives have transpired. First, after data showed the effectiveness of web-based entry-level education, ALL provinces have now moved to virtual Level I clinics – increasing access to many additional new recruits.

In addition, and even more significant to registration numbers, Softball Ontario will now register all their youth umpires as Level I umpires in our program. This is estimated to add over 500 new registrations for our program. While this is significant to our revenue stream, it also will provide youth umpires in Ontario with an equal advantage provided to youth umpires in other provinces, including access to U15 and U17 Canadian Championships.

Anecdotal evidence from other sports who participated in a recent sports official's recruitment and retention discussion led by university researchers leads us to believe that our joint recruitment efforts has resulted in a significant replacement of numbers of officials in comparison to other sports.

2023 Canadian Championships

As we look forward to a great summer of excellence at the national level, we are working diligently to provide quality officiating to multiple Canadian Championships. Our primary round of nominations has been received (each province / territory may nominate one qualified umpire to each event) and approved. Once event team numbers are confirmed we will work quickly to identify projected demand and work with our P/T partners to fully staff the event.

At this point, we expect the challenges to be the U19W (we will need to lean heavily on BC and AB), Men's FP (as the Masters side continues to grow the demand increases while BC has indicated they have few umpires to provide as host) and the SP events (the sheer size of the events creates a huge demand, although hosting in Ontario may relieve the pressure from BC last year).

2023 Canadian Championship UIC / DUIC Nominations (Previously Approved by the Board)

**Larger event, 2 DUICs*

U15 Girls, Brandon, MB – Aug 9-13 *

UIC – Valerie Pelleck (MB)

DUIC – Susan Strafford (BC)

DUIC (2) – Tony Kuleza (MB - Level IV)

U15 Boys, Prince Albert, SK – Aug 9-13

UIC – Frank Fargey (MB)

DUIC – Brendan Moat (SK)

U17 Girls, Saskatoon, SK – Aug 9-13 *

UIC – Audrey Desmarteaux-Houle (QC)

DUIC – Mike Semchuk (AB)

DUIC – Duane Bakken (SK – Level IV)

U17 Boys, Fredericton, NB – Aug 2-6

UIC – Mike Morrissey (ON)

UIC – Ron Campbell (NB)

U19 Women's, Langford, BC – Aug 2-6 *

UIC – Brent Chadwick (SK)

DUIC – Daryl Way (ON)

DUIC – Kiera Hamm (BC - Level IV)

U20 Men's, Napanee, ON – Aug 15-20

UIC – Frankie Billingsley (ON)

DUIC – Steve Gallagher (ON)

U23 Men's, Saskatoon, SK - Aug 2 - 6

UIC – Mitch Zuk (MB)

DUIC – Terry Richter (AB)

U23 Women's / Women's FP, Montreal, QC – Aug 16-20

UIC – Tonya Ribalkin Zanon (BC)

DUIC – Genevieve Gaudreau (QC)

Men's & Masters FP, Surrey, BC – Aug 30 - Sept 3

UIC – Ian Brown (BC)

DUIC – Scott McLaren (BC)

Women's SP, London, ON – Aug 13-19

UIC – Don Farr (BC)

DUIC – Sandra Forand (ON)

Men's SP, London, ON – Aug 13-19 *

UIC – David Jones (ON)

DUIC – Don England (ON)

DUIC - Jason Clark (AB)

International Assignments

2023 International Assignments (Previously Approved by the Board). WBSC selections pending WBSC confirmation.

SP

2023 Border Battle

Sandra Forand (ON)
Don England (ON)

European Exchange

Jeff Butler (NS)

USA National SP “A” Championships

Mark Gough (AB)

USA Men’s C SP Regional Championships (1)

Pat Chiquette (QC)

Fast Pitch**2023 WBSC U-18 Men’s World Cup (APPOINTED BY WBSC)**

Patrick Hazelton (NS)
Ed Otterman (ON)

2023 WBSC Group Stage World Cup Qualifiers, Dublin (APPOINTED BY WBSC)

Marni Bodnarchuk (BC) (Dublin)

Trevor Topping (ON)

2023 WBSC U-15 Women’s World Cup

Emma Jerome-Smith (AB)
Sarah Eve Jacob (QC)

2023 WBSC Americas U-18 Men’s Qualifier

Mathieu Leclerc (QC)
Patrick Hazelton (NS)

2023 WBSC Americas Men’s Continental Qualifier (2) – *Note: we may want to reconsider these assignments as both Trevor and Ed have received WBSC World Cup Assignments for 2023*

Trevor Topping (ON)
Ed Otterman (ON)

2023 WBSC Americas U18 Women’s Continental Qualifier

Emma Jerome-Smith (AB) – (If not selected for U-15 WBSC World Cup)
Mike French (PE)

Pan American Games (W)

Laura MacMillian (BC)
Clinton Harvey (NS)

European Exchange

Diego LaManna (QC)

USA Men’s Major FP National Championship

Kris Hartley (AB)

New Zealand Exchange, Jan/Feb 2024 (1)

Frank Fargey (MB)

WBSC Certification Seminar

It has been quite a process to get WBSC approval to host a WBSC International Umpire Certification Seminar. Despite submitting a proposal to WBSC in January to host an event at Canada Cup (in collaboration with USA Softball), we remained frustrated in obtaining an answer. We had asked WBSC to sanction the event and

provide funding for Chris Drumm to attend as one of three clinicians (Scott McLaren and Frankie Billingsley will be the others). In early May we received word that development funds have been transferred to the continental associations for distribution and that we would have to start over with WBSC Americas and WBSC Americas were not prepared to consider a request. Finally, after setting a June 1 deadline and after intervention from WBSC VP Craig Cress, we received approval June 1.

We are now finalizing the logistics but we expect to hold a successful event with up to ten candidates - five from each National Federation (the delay caused the numbers to dwindle from 13 original candidates).