

2010 Saskatchewan Winter Games Proposed Fill Policy *(revised April 27, 2009)*

Background

Overall athlete participation in Saskatchewan Summer and Winter Games shows two diverging trends.

First, for Saskatchewan Winter Games over 5 Games cycles from 1990 through 2006, total participation (based on a percentage of the total maximum number of athletes that could have participated) has remained fairly constant at around 81 -82%.

Secondly, for Saskatchewan Summer Games over 5 cycles from 1992 through 2008, total participation has declined to the point that the Lloydminster games included 700 fewer athletes than full participation levels or only 68% participation rate.

The Saskatchewan Games Council has identified and implemented a number of initiatives which will enhance support and interest in the Saskatchewan Games, thus attracting more athletes to participate in the Games.

The primary objective of this proposed fill policy is to raise the competition level as it relates to the LTAD model whereby 'fill' participants would be required to meet the minimum competitive standards by the PSGB. Ensuring the safety of the athletes is also an important factor in providing a competitive experience for the athletes.

Actions to date

- 1) Adopt a new focus for the Saskatchewan Games program which provides an opportunity for the provinces developing athletes, coaches and officials to participate in a multi-sport event in preparation for a higher level of competition. This new focus also includes an expectation of PSGB's to include athletes in the "Train to Train" (LTAD) stage of development.
- 2) Discussions with provincial sport governing bodies in developing action plans which will encourage sport development and determine the District team selection process.
- 3) Develop strategies with a number of Games partners, which focus on promoting and creating an awareness of the Sask. Games program (ex: SHSAA, SPEA, SUMA)
- 4) Ongoing communication with District sport committees relating to promotional initiatives, logistical support, communication and cooperation in working with provincial sport organizations in the Games.

- 5) Clarifying and communicating the roles and responsibilities of the games partners.

Proposed Fill Policy

In analyzing Games participation trends and through consultations with PSGB's, District Sport Development Representatives and other Games partners, it became apparent that the challenges of ensuring maximum participation and maximizing District team sizes on a sport-by-sport basis, would require some new solutions and new ways of thinking. One new solution that has met with a most favorable response has been the concept of initiating a Fill Policy to help maximize participation and size of competing teams on a sport-by-sport basis.

Recognizing the efforts of the host community as they plan, organize and generate funds to ensure a quality high profile multi sport event is successful ,a great deal of time, energy and resources are allocated from within the community. It is disappointing for the host when the participation numbers are finalized and they come in well below the original projections. This creates some apprehension in wishing to host another event and sends the wrong message to the sporting community.

In consultation with a number of other provincial jurisdictions, which host multi sport games, the Council has researched a number of options which increases participation at the provincial games.

One of the initiatives implemented by other jurisdictions is a Fill Policy which focuses' on allowing Districts ,which have a full complement of competitors at the conclusion of the District team selection, to add additional members to a District which is not able to field full team.

The number of athletes competing at the provincial level would not exceed the maximum number of projected athletes from all Districts.(ex: X Country Ski has a District team size of 12 athletes per district x 9 = 108. This would be the maximum allowed at the provincial event). As all financial expenditures costs are based on maximum participation at the Games, additional costs for the fill participants is not an issue.

Criteria

- 1) The sports inclusion on the sport calendar is based on participation from each District, therefore every effort must be made by the sport to ensure a full complement of developmental-stage appropriate athletes (ie. 'Train-toTrain') from each District. A clear message will be communicated to the provincial sport governing bodies that this policy does not abdicate their responsibility for developing sport in all Districts within the province
- 2) The replacement athlete MUST be fully eligible and have participated in a District play down or selection camp. The selected fill participants will become part of the

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- District team (as determined by the athlete eligibility criteria) and will be included in all components of the teams logistical support.(Transportation, uniforms online registration etc)
- 3) Replacement individuals will compete for the District they are a resident of.
 - 4) The fill selection procedures will differ from sport to sport; therefore the Council must approve these procedures well in advance of the games. For the 2010 Saskatchewan Winter Games, selected sports will be requested to submit their procedures for selecting fill athletes by July 1, 2009. In future games, selected sports will be requested to submit fill selection procedures within the designated timelines for the technical package submission.
 - 5) The Saskatchewan games Council recommends that two to four sports are piloted for the 2010 SWG in implementing the Fill Policy.
 - 6) Joe Griffith and Flag points will only be awarded to individual who have initially made the district team. Fill athletes will be eligible to compete for medals, but their results will not be included in Flag points or Joe Griffith award calculations.
 - 7) Additional coaches and managers will not be included in the Fill Policy.
 - 8) Team sports will not be included in the Fill Policy, however, future discussion and consideration of 'Team Sport Fill Policy' provisions may occur should circumstances dictate so.
 - 9) PSGB's must ensure, through a logical and transparent process, that athletes designated as replacements are within the appropriate stage of athlete development (Train to Train or higher), to ensure the integrity and caliber of the competition.

Summary

With the revised purpose and goals of the games, the Saskatchewan Games program should support the Long Term Athlete Development implementation plans of sports on the Games calendar. In a number of sports, the availability of facilities, equipment or human resources may challenge some Districts to ensure they have a full complement of athletes.

The Fill Policy will provide an avenue for sports (PSGB's) that have facility challenges or that may not have athletes distributed evenly thorough-out the 9 Districts to maximize opportunity for a maximum number of developing athletes. At the same time, the policy should allow Districts that have a large participation numbers in a given sport to provide opportunities for additional athletes participate at the games. Finally, maximizing the total number of participating athletes at a given Games will validate the significant role and volunteer efforts put forth by host organizing committees for each and every Saskatchewan Games.