

## AOA President's report 2020

2020-04-24

I'll start by reviewing the current status of orienteering events in Alberta. As decided in cooperation with both clubs, all orienteering events have been suspended until May 31<sup>st</sup>. All youth and adult programs for the spring have been cancelled. Within the City of Calgary, there will be no orienteering events until after June 30 by an order of council that has closed all recreation facilities and cancelled permits for their use. And finally, the WCOC's, which were to be held in July, have been postponed until 2021. We will be following the government's lead on when and how orienteering activities will be resumed. I want to thank both clubs for their cooperation in making these decisions.

As a follow-up to the above, on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Dr Deena Hinshaw announced the following:

"... today, I want to clarify that the mass gathering restrictions currently in place also apply to all summer events or festivals in Alberta.

To be clear, the orders in place prohibit gathering of more than 15 people. They also require people gathered in groups of fewer than 15 to maintain a distance of 2 metres from one another.

Albertans are prohibited from attending any event that would violate these orders."

The AOA and both clubs are currently seeking clarification on what this means for summer orienteering events. We hope to find out more soon and, if necessary, make any updates to when orienteering can resume.

As many of you know, we had our casino scheduled for March 17 and 18 in Edmonton. This was just as the COVID-19 emergency was really ramping up. Despite this, Garry Atchison did a remarkable job of ensuring we had a full crew of volunteers at the start of our first shift – only for them to be told to go home as the casino made its own decision to close. Later the same day, the provincial government officially closed all the casinos. Despite our casino being cancelled at the last moment and because of Garry's extraordinary efforts, we will still receive proceeds from the first quarter funds pool, although it will be less than budgeted. Thank you Garry and all volunteers!

Apart from the casino, our other main source of revenue is a grant we receive from what was Alberta Sport Connection and is now part of the Ministry of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

As I have spoken about at the last two AGM's, the condition for receiving this grant falls under the "Funding and Accountability Framework" which works on a three-year cycle. At the end of each three-year period, a major review of every provincial sport organization's activities, in the form of a "scorecard", is held which determines their funding for the following three years. 2020 is the end of the current three-year cycle. As I mentioned last November, Bogi has been focusing her time on creating orienteering programs outside of Edmonton and Calgary with the aim of establishing orienteering in four sport zones which is the minimum requirement to keep receiving our grant money after 2020.

With this focus on outreach, as well as revenue diversification and policy development, I am confident we have done everything within our control to ensure we continue to receive funding from the province. Outside of our control was the decision to disband Alberta Sport Connection and manage

provincial sport organizations directly from the Ministry of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women as well as the impacts of the COVID-19 virus pandemic on the province's economy. I don't know what effect, if any, these will have on provincial sport funding under the "Funding and Accountability Framework".

Despite the difficulties the clubs are experiencing managing their finances as a result of cancelling all spring training programs, there may be additional time available to review policies. From a personal point of view, I don't find this to be the most enjoyable way to spend my time! However, our policies provide the rules and regulations around which our clubs are governed, so it is important to make sure they are still relevant, up to date and complete. One of the new requirements for all sports in Canada is to have "Safe Sport" and "Gender Equity" policies in place. We define Safe Sport as physical and emotional safety, which includes concussion and injury prevention, and environments free from bullying, abuse, harassment, discrimination and other forms of maltreatment. Gender Equity is defined as the fair allocation of resources, programs, and decision-making to all individuals without discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

Once again, Bogi has taken the initiative on this by creating our own framework of policies to ensure we are in compliance with the new regulations. These policies aren't just something to be hidden away or discarded as not relevant to what we do – they provide guidance for adults shadowing children in the forest and identify volunteer positions that may need background screening and how to go about doing the screening.

I encourage the clubs to contact Bogi and engage her to review their own policies. This may turn out to be a more fruitful exercise than you think!

I want to finish by thanking two AOA board members who are leaving the board after this meeting. Beth Cornish has been our secretary for the past three years and will be replaced by Clarence Kort. Kitty Jones has been past president since I took over as president in 2017 and was president for three years before that. Kitty can't be replaced, not just because she is so amazing but because the position of past present can only be filled by the past president. For all the time and effort Kitty has put into orienteering at all levels – club, provincial and national, we should be having a special ceremony and celebration for her at this meeting, but that will have to wait until we can get together in person, perhaps at our November retreat. Beth and Kitty will be missed for their experience, good judgement and sound advice.

I hope you all stay safe and healthy and look forward to meeting you at an orienteering event whenever they start up again.

Regards,

David Campden