



## Canadian Cerebral Palsy Sports Association

December 2007

### Canada finishes 12<sup>th</sup> at the 7 a side 2007 Soccer World Championships

The Canadian cerebral palsy national team lost their final game 5-2 to Australia on November 16<sup>th</sup> 2007. The Canucks finished in 12th place after back-to-back losses in the second round at the 2007 Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association Football 7-a-side World Championship, in Rio de Janeiro. Sefik Smajlovic and Dustin Hodgson scored the Canadian goals.

Said coach Drew Ferguson, "I feel that the team has played below our expectations. Some of the teams we played against have had a development program in place for several years and that showed as they were much stronger than us (Ukraine, Rep. of Ireland, and others we did not play such as Russia, England/Wales etc.). Teams such as these knew how to expose our weaknesses. Canada, not being traditionally a soccer nation, has limited our players knowledge of how to play.

Our goal will be to ensure that players become more aware of how to play under different circumstances."

"To backtrack, two years ago we began the paralympic soccer program. Teams like South Africa were able to beat us at the last World Championships in 2005. This year we faced South Africa and beat them handily 7-1. You can also take a country like Japan who has been able to invest a lot more money into their program. Two years ago we defeated Japan by a narrow margin of 1-0 while this year we beat them 2-0 but could have beat them by a larger margin."

"This year, we were also to add some younger players to the program. We had one 16 year old and one 17 year old. Both have gained invaluable experience competing at the highest level. Players like this will be integral to the program down the road."



### In other news....

#### 2008 Team Investors Group Amateur Athletes Fund Bursary

The online application for the 2008 Team Investors Group Amateur Athletes Fund Bursary is now available. Deadline for applications is **January 31, 2008**. For more information and for the 2008 application go to:

[www.athletescan.com](http://www.athletescan.com).

#### GM - Making Dreams Possible

This program provides a minimum of 100 grants of \$2,000 each annually for coach development in local communities, and ten grants of \$10,000 each annually to high performance athletes and their coaches. These grants are to be used to fund special projects that develop the skills and abilities of elite and community level coaches. The next wave of local sport club and high performance applications closes on **February 14th, 2008** with grants to be awarded in May. Application forms can be found through [www.coach.ca](http://www.coach.ca).

#### 2008 Canadian Boccia Championships

For all information regarding the 2008 Canadian Boccia Championships, please visit the official website at:

<http://www.londoncannonballs.ca/nationals/main.html>

## Busy Fall for Derek Whitson: Dual National Team Athlete



the World Championships where the Canadian Team finished 12<sup>th</sup> and missed out on qualifying for the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing next summer.

Derek has no intention to stop playing both sports: "I am hoping that the schedules for soccer and sledge hockey do not interfere with each other", he mentions. "It would be a tough decision if I had to choose one team. I love both sports and want to

play until I am cut from both teams for being too old".

Derek is an avid golfer too: "I love to golf in the summer. I have a 5 handicap and work on my game all year round", he said. "I want to be a golf professional and teach golf to all ages". If he put as much energies into golf as he has in sledge hockey and soccer, there is no doubt he will be able to achieve this dream too.

The number of athletes that are able to excel at the national team level in two sports in the Paralympic movement is very limited. Derek Whitson of Chatham, Ontario accomplished just that this fall.

The 18 year old cerebral palsy athlete was the back up goalkeeper for the Canadian seven a side soccer team at the Parapan American Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil this August. "My best experience in soccer, no doubt about it, is winning the Bronze medal at the Parapans, said Derek. "It was the first medal in Canadian soccer history and to be a part of that team was a memory I will never forget. I got to see how far we have come since we first started, to now where we can compete, and knowing we will only get better". Just two months later, Derek realized another dream when he was named to the 2007-2008 national sledge hockey team.

In November, Whitson travelled the world to follow his two passions. He first left for Norway with the sledge hockey team where he played in one game. "It was an awesome experience", he said. "Everyone that was there had their heart into everything we did and it helped me feel more comfortable around my new team. We're a big family, the guys have to work as a team and the chemistry is amazing". He left Norway early to join the soccer team in Rio for



## Thank you BMO!



CCPSA would like to thank the BMO Employee Charitable Foundation for their 500\$ donation to our equipment program. Peter Strittmatter of BMO made the official presentation to espoir team member Martin Dubois during a practice of the Dragons Rouges de l'Outaouais