

ASRAB: In Action

Alberta Sport and Recreation Association for the Blind

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Volume 2

2010 Western Canadian Goalball Championships – March 6 & 7!

Calgary to host the Western Goalball Championships for the seventh year in a row.

On March 6th and 7th, 2010 ASRAB will be hosting the 2010 Western Canadian Goalball Championships. Teams from Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Manitoba will be coming together to compete in the two day tournament taking place at the Calgary French and International School in Southwest Calgary. Everyone is invited to come out and watch the games happening from 9AM-5PM on Saturday and 9AM-3PM on Sunday. Also be sure to check out the ASRAB website (www.asrab.ab.ca) during the tournament for updates on the standings!



Interested in Volunteering?



The Alberta Sports and Recreation Association for the Blind (ASRAB) is always looking for volunteers to help us in all of our programs. If you are interested in volunteering please contact the ASRAB office at (403)262-5332 or by email at katie@asrab.ab.ca

CONTACT ASRAB

Phone: 403.262.5332

Toll Free: 1.888.882.7722

Fax: 403.265.7221

Email: katie@asrab.ab.ca

Website: www.asrab.ab.ca

[Update on the Tandem Cycling Program from Stephen Burke](#)

The National Cycling Centre, Canadian Sport Centre, Calgary has been training athletes with various physical disabilities for 12 years and over that time many athletes have attended Paralympic Games, World Championships and other National and Regional competitions. Presently, there are a number of athletes training in Alberta with disabilities including visual impairments, amputees, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injured and others including polio, apraxia and spina bifida.

In 2009 the program experienced a notable gain of athletes from the visually impaired community; in part due to funding received from Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation to coordinate and host a number of "Have a Go" days in Calgary and Edmonton. The Edmonton Clinic had the best attendance from the blind and visually impaired community with 5 participants attending the road and track training sessions. The Calgary Clinic had one of those participants as well as 3 others attend the track and road training as well as Classification.

Since last summer the interest in cycling has developed and we now have 2 athletes training in Calgary and 1 other in Edmonton; so we went from a nonexistent program in 2007-2008 where there were no blind or visually impaired athletes in the province training for cycling to 3 dedicated athletes training with a coach and a number of others who are interested in cycling for the recreational experiences it offers. In addition there have been a number of youth identified in the Calgary area who are interested in cycling for the social-recreational benefits as well as the pleasure families can have together on a tandem bicycle.

The Alberta Bicycle Association (ABA) has published the Race Calendar for the 2010 Season and there are a number of events that will be tandem-friendly including road races, time trials and track races. The Canadian Cycling Association (CCA) is having a western provinces talent ID camp in Calgary from June 1-6, Development and high performance athletes will work alongside 2 national level coaches on the road and at the Glenmore Velodrome. The Para Cycle Program National Road Championships will be held in Beauce Quebec June 26-27 while the Track Championships will be held in Bromont Quebec July 9-11. Between those two dates the 2nd UCI World Cup will be held in Quebec City from the 1-4 of July. Athletes will be working towards making the National Team for either the Road or Track team that will attend the UCI Para Cycle World Championships in Cali Columbia from August 12-22.

The National Cycling Centre-Canadian Sport Centre Calgary training program is an inclusive program where athletes with various disabilities train together on the bike and in the weight room. Organized bicycle training takes place on Tuesday and Thursday from 2-4 or 7-9 depending on the athletes schedule and on Saturdays from 1-3 PM. Our strength training program is based on a 2-3 session/week program and on Wednesday mornings from 6:30-9:30 athletes attend supervised training sessions with Julie Cowans (she is also working with the Provincial Goalball Team). Bicycle training is done on a road bike with a static trainer with adjustable resistance. Testing is done every 8-10 weeks and athletes workouts are based on these findings (Maximal Aerobic Power, Maximal Heart Rate). The program started in Mid-October and is now focusing on the Spring Training Camp in Penticton BC. The dates for this camp are April 2-10, accommodation, transportation, meals, ride support and other services are included in the camp fee. This year we are chartering a bus to take the athletes out and back so this

has impacted our budget somewhat; however when asked every parent was more than willing to pay for the bus as they all felt the camp will be of great benefit to athletes. The camp is aimed at Youth and Para Cyclists however master riders are also welcome to attend.

The Para Cycle program has a number of bikes in its inventory including 2 road tandems and 1 track tandem that ASRAB purchased 5 years ago when there were two other athletes training in Calgary. Luckily one of the National Team Pilots lives in Calgary and we are going to be accessing one of the tandems used by this team for this summer's races and camps. The two other road bikes are getting old and are in need of some TLC, for the moment they are adequate but if we end up with 2-3 High performance Athletes in Alberta these bikes will not be able to ensure their top performance at the National or International level competition.

This year should be interesting as I am expecting that 3-4 Athletes from the Program in Calgary will graduate to the National Team for the 2010 UCI World Championships. Within that group I believe that we have 1 athlete with a visual impairment. One of the next steps is to secure the most competent pilot we can find to ride with this athlete. I am very certain that if we focus on the Track-Velodrome events that an x-national team athlete who lives here in Calgary will be able to help with this development however I still need to find a pilot for the Road training and racing.



I am looking forward to one of the most successful years in my career as a coach here in Alberta. I started the Program specifically for blind and visually impaired athletes in 1998 and over the years my experience and knowledge expanded and the other categories merged into the pool but at that time interest from the blind and visually impaired community dropped so I am very excited about the developments and the potential we have here in the Province this year. I welcome your comments, questions and expressions of interest. Please contact me directly at: sgburke@calgary.ca.

Sincerely,

Stephen Burke, ChPC BKin

National Cycling Centre-Canadian Sport Centre Head Coach
sgburke@calgary.ca

Canada's Best Compete for National Title!

The Alberta Sports and Recreation Association for the Blind invites you to come and learn about the sport of Goalball, an exciting, fast-paced team sport played by athletes who are visually impaired. The **2010 Canadian Goalball Championships** will feature Women's and Men's teams from coast to coast, with the competitors seeking the title of Canadian Champions! The three day tournament – March 26th/27th/28th will take place in Calgary at the *Calgary French and International School* and will provide a great opportunity to witness the Paralympic sport of Goalball being played at its highest level!

Tournament games will take place from 10AM to 6PM on Friday and 9AM to 6PM on Saturday and between 9AM and 4PM on Sunday. Playoff games take place on Sunday afternoon with the Women's gold medal match happening just before the Men's Gold medal match.

Medal and award ceremonies will take place in the gym immediately following the Men's Gold medal match and will feature the awarding of the Canadian Goalball Championship teams.

ASRAB wishes to acknowledge and thank the many volunteers who will be an integral part of staging this National Championships. Such volunteers are huge contributors to the overall success of the organization and to the programs and services that are offered to the participants!

For more information or to find out about ASRAB, our programs, or how you can help, please visit our website at www.asrab.ab.ca.



The 2009 Canadian Blind Sports National Champions, The Alberta Men's Team and the Ontario Women's team. They will be competing to hold their title at this year's Canadian Blind Sports National Goalball Championships in Calgary March 26-28, 2010.

Get to Know the ASRAB Athletes and Volunteers!

In each edition of the ASRAB: In Action Newsletter we will be featuring a Get to Know section with interesting facts on ASRAB athletes, volunteers, staff and Board Members.

Thank you to Brienne Biblow for writing this editions article.

Aron Ghebreyohannes is a 20 year-old Calgarian whose love for sport wasn't shaken when he lost his vision early in life. At a very young age, Aron was diagnosed with a brain tumor that was affecting his eyesight. He underwent an operation to remove it, but the surgery left him with total vision loss in his right eye and only partial vision in his left.

Already heavily into soccer, Aron now had to find another way to channel his passion for sports. This was when he discovered The Alberta Sports and Recreation Association for the Blind (ASRAB). ASRAB offered Aron a way to continue his sporting life by joining a local junior Goalball team. The sport allows him to build on characteristics like self-discipline, determination, leadership and self-motivation.

An incredibly driven athlete, Aron's goals are to reach the Canadian national Goalball team and to compete in the Paralympics. With his determination and incredible outlook on life you can be sure to see a Canadian National Goalball jersey with the last name Ghebreyohannes on it in the near future.



Fun for the Family!

ASRAB JOINS THE WORLD OF RUNNING!

Mark your calendars for a new and exciting ASRAB event! November 20, 2010 is **Sight Night** in Calgary – a fun walk and run after dark to raise funds and awareness for ASRAB.

Sponsored by the Running Room, Sight Night starts and finishes at Eau Claire Market, with an 8K run and 3K walk along the Bow River pathway. This is an event organized by ASRAB, and for our community of Alberta athletes who are visually impaired. We will share the path with sighted Albertans in the first of what is planned to be an annual event. No experience necessary and vision optional!

Mayor Dave Bronconnier and **Jose Neto** are honorary chairmen of the event. In addition to endorsing Sight Night, the Mayor will serve as Neto's guide runner.

Visual impairment should not be an obstacle to participation. Leading up to Sight Night ASRAB will run a training program with guide runners (more details in the weeks ahead). From an organizational perspective, you register for Sight Night online at www.events.runningroom.com. You can choose to challenge yourself to the 8K run, or make it an evening walk with the family. The steering committee urges you to also create a fundraising page and collect pledges on ASRAB's behalf. For its part, the committee is working on great prizes.

TIP: Create a corporate team to become a top fundraiser!

Sight Night was initiated by ASRAB Board Member Kevin Kaminski who heads up the steering committee. His motivation is to create more awareness for ASRAB and a sustainable source of funding that will help ASRAB to continue to provide sport programs and recreational opportunities. "It has been a privilege for me to be supported by ASRAB for 25 years and to have had amazing opportunities to compete, travel, and learn about myself. I want to make sure that those similar types of opportunities continue to exist for visually impaired Albertans in the future...and that can only happen if ASRAB has a strong financial foundation."

sight night

A fun run after dark.....vision optional

inaugural event

In support of the Alberta Sport and Recreation Association for the Blind

Honourary Co-Chairs

Mayor Dave Bronconnier
Mr. Jose Neto

ASRAB

share the path

Saturday, November 20, 2010
Eau Claire Market
6:00 p.m. – 8K run/5K walk

Registration

www.events.runningroom.com

Running Room

ASRAB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SUNDAY MAY 2, 2010

1:00 P.M.

All members and friends of ASRAB are invited to attend the 2010 ASRAB Annual General Meeting where you will be offered an opportunity to contribute your thoughts and ideas of how ASRAB can be improved. Everyone is welcome to attend and you simply need to become a member to participate in the meeting. Memberships are \$10.00/year and are free to volunteers of ASRAB. All those who support ASRAB, who participate in ASRAB sponsored activities, or who are interested in getting involved are strongly encouraged to mark May 2nd on the calendar. The AGM will be held in the TT Room on the main floor of the CNIB #15 Colonel Baker Place N.E, Calgary, AB, T2E 4Z3. Registration will start at 1:00PM and the meeting will be called to order at 1:30PM.

Please come out and contribute to your association!

Para-Nordic Update

We've had fantastic weather to cross country ski and our new and returning athletes are enjoying every minute! This season's para-nordic lessons have had our athletes learning to ski, perfecting technique and helping to train new coaches. We have a few new volunteers who are pretty keen to continue next year and our number of participants continues to grow. In addition to lessons at COP, we are working towards having coaches available for lessons in Cochrane, Canmore and Banff. We aim to get as many people out skiing as possible and we'd love to see the whole family come out!

Cross country skiing is a great way to get outside in the winter and enjoy the fresh air and some exercise. If you are interested in trying it out, please contact Melanie Ross at: Melanie@melanieross.ca or 403-971-3316. If winter is not your season, we are working on developing an adaptive rowing program with the Calgary Rowing Club. Watch for updates in the next ASRAB newsletter!

Thanks Melanie!