



2018-2019
ANNUAL REPORT



Board Overview

Thank you to all the members of Ontario Speed Skating, whether as a skater, parent that ferries a child or family to the rink, committee member, a volunteer or official or a member of a club board. It is undoubtedly the strength of this support that continues to foster the upward trend and growth in the sport of speed skating in the province.

The Ontario Speed Skating Board restructured two years ago. This change directed the board towards functioning as a strategic board rather than an operational board. We have been fortunate enough to have two Board members that have considerable knowledge in fields that are specific to an advisory position - a Treasurer with a CPA background and an MD that helps advise on health and safety in our sport. The specific knowledge of speed skating has been served by the other Board members rounding out a balanced approach to decision making.

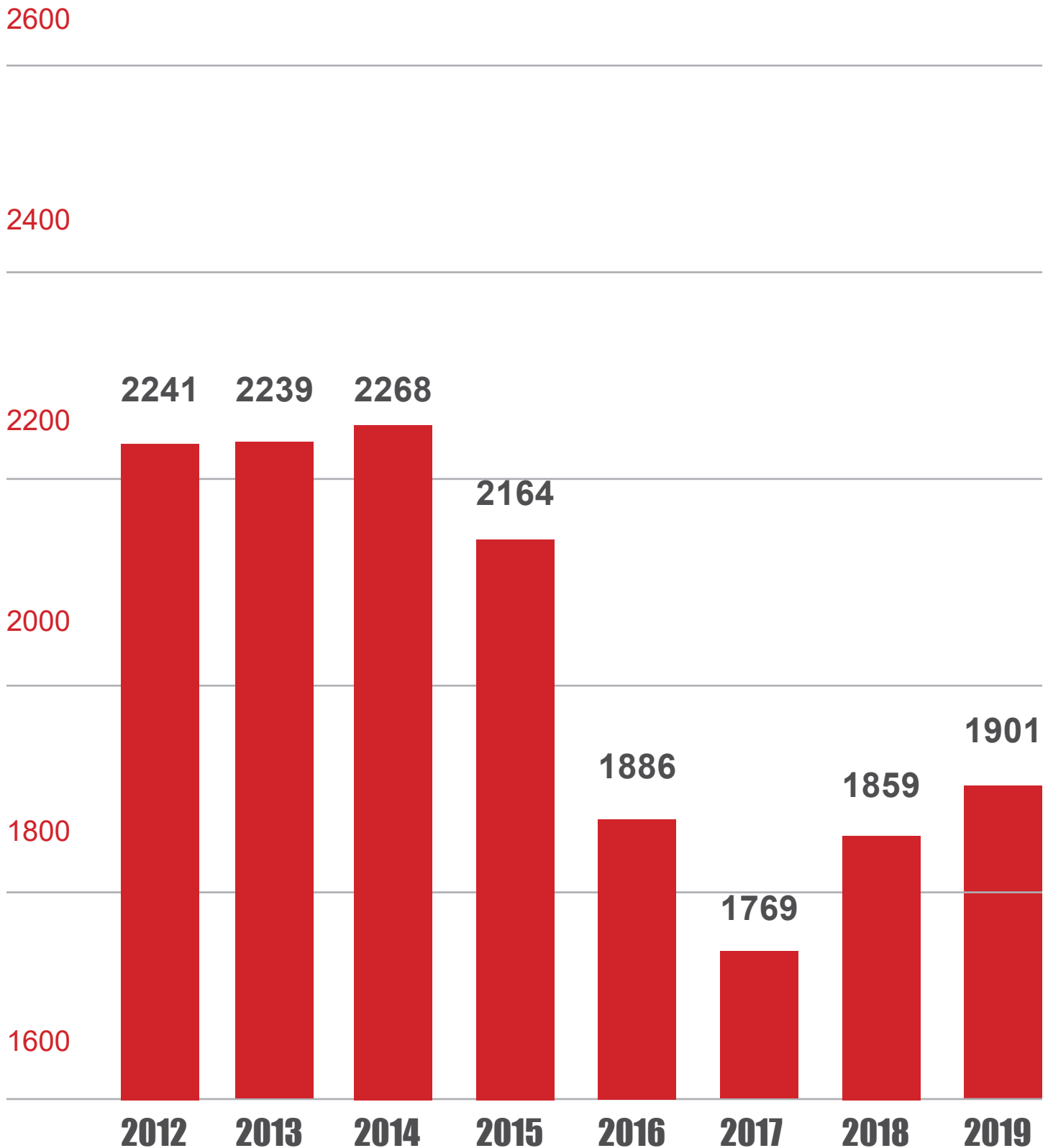
The new structure has also allowed the Executive Director to start creating clear operational plans. These changes over the past two years have of course been hiring a High Performance Director and Sport Manager, and the continued focus on club development, high performance, financial stability and coach and official development.

The committees of the Board provide the greatest volunteer resource of our organization, and they are either ad hoc committees required during a specific need i.e. Women/Girls in Sport with a mandate to study that specific area, or standing committees such as the Technical Committee and Finance Committee that report to the Board. This year the Technical Committee lead significant changes to our provincial competitions, and the Officials Development Committee implemented its plan to develop officials.

This year the Board approved the Concussion Policy and Safe Sport Policy. As we continue to review our policies and procedures, resources will be available for use by the clubs.

Total Membership Numbers

Total Members



Sport Development

We are seeing growth in the sport, however there is still much work to be done. We hope the changes to the competition schedule and the inclusion of half day meets into next years schedule will focus the attention to younger athletes and the joy of racing rather than being solely focused on obtaining times. The focus needs to be on training and excelling in technique. This is clearly observed when we visit other provinces and witness the technical aspects of their racing. The grassroots is aimed at those young skaters that enter in the sport, and look to have a fun racing experience – this is something that the new pathway for LTAD will focus on as it is brought forward by SSC.

Racing

This season, the OSSA Short Track Technical Bulletin was revised to reintroduce mixed gender racing in the Ontario Provincial Circuit and racing on the 111m track for skaters aged 13 years and above in the both the Ontario Elite and Provincial Circuits. Both of these changes have resulted in more competitive and meaningful races for our short track skaters. OSSA continues to offer racing events for Masters, Cradles and Special Olympics skaters across the province. This season there were 12 Provincial Circuit meets, 4 Elite Circuit meets and 3 Championships.

It is becoming more evident that the Provincial Championships need to find a home with the official governing body, and funding needs to help develop this. Meets should truly be a partnership between clubs and Ontario Speed Skating – and this means understanding the true costs of a single or two day meet, the volunteer base, cost of officials etc. We should never be in a position where clubs are running these and finding they are absorbing greater costs year over year, it has been determined we need a deeper study into the cost of meets.

We have seen the advantage of moving our Province into a format that aligns our racing system with National meets, and racing distances. We should expect further tweaks over the next couple of years to further test these scenarios. Racing should always be the test of what athletes have learned during the gap between competitions, and should not necessarily focus on time standards – the only point this is a priority should be for athletes wishing to attend National Meets and requiring time standards. The distances have therefore been altered to suit the National program, and each age group is assigned specific distances that should be aligned with their abilities – there will always be outliers within each group and we are still monitoring this.

Despite mild weather, the Ontario Provincial Long Track Championships were hosted for the second year in a row in Ottawa at the end of January. OSSA sent a team of 14 athletes to the Canadian Youth Long Track Championships in Red Deer at the former venue of the 2019 Canada Winter Games. Team Ontario brought home 10 medals from Red Deer this year!

OSSA has also been working closely with the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries to prepare for the 2020 Ontario Winter Games in Orillia. After receiving feedback that our participants would like to better experience the Multi-Sport aspect of the Games, speed skating will take place this year more centrally in Barrie. Speed skating will share the venue with Judo and Weightlifting. Local high school students are expected to attend the events so we are hopeful to showcase our sport to many spectators! The Games will also feature Mixed Gender relays, which will be a new event at the 2022 Olympic Games.



Congratulations to our OSSA speed skaters who competed at the Canada Winter Games in Red Deer, Alberta from February 14-23, 2019. OSSA finished the Games with 5 medals, many Personal Bests and invaluable national racing experience!

OSSA has sent a number of athletes to domestic SSC sanctioned events, including Short Track and Long Track Canada Cups and the Short Track International Invitational. Our OSSA skaters representing SSC abroad have also seen great success. We have had OSSA skaters attend all of the Long Track World Cups, the new Four Continents Speed Skating Championships in Milwaukee and the World Single Distance Championships in Salt Lake City. We have also had OSSA representation at Short Track World Cups in Germany and World Junior Short Track Championships in Italy.

Sport Development

The OSSA NextGEN has been shifting over the past year, and we are continuing to make changes to the program to ensure we are providing the training our athletes need to pursue their goals. OSSA piloted a weekly training in Ottawa from April to July. We look forward to evaluating the results of the ongoing training and developing more opportunities for athletes to continue to train during the off-season.

Additional camps hosted this year included a Nagano Skate Camp and a Girls Camp hosted in June 2019.

Coaching

In the spring and summer of 2019, OSSA offered 5 coaching courses which were attended by 32 participants. 20 participants attended the OSSA Coaches Conference in September. Our skaters are now benefiting from the expertise of 10 newly certified coaches in Ontario.

Volunteers/Officials

Since September, OSSA has hosted three Level 1 Officials' Clinics as well as a Level 2 Clinic with a practical component at Ontario Elite Circuit #4 in Kingston. OSSA is sending a contingent of 36 Officials to Ontario Winter Games in Barrie and 11 Officials to the Special Olympics Canada Winter Games in Thunder Bay, which will both take place at the end of February.

The development of officials remains a significant challenge for the organization. We are not the only sport or province facing this challenge. OSSA is deeply grateful for our volunteers and officials, without them, we would not have competition. We will continue to plan for succession and lean on our qualified senior level officials to assist in guiding our new volunteers for the next season.

Social Media/Marketing

Website

This is coming and has been severely held back by the other immediate priorities. The new website will be finalized as soon as possible in order to launch much-needed ventures into marketing where we can secure sponsorship for the different levels of racing – Elite/Provincial/Half-day Meet and Long Track. We need to strengthen our perception of the sport through this medium and we believe we will see immediate results once this is launched.

Twitter/Instagram/Facebook

We continue to share as much information on these platforms as possible. We also try not to create information overload by doubling up result feeds that have already been shared via clubs or the national organization. This has reduced the amount of time people view or share information – and we are still trying to get clubs and athletes to share this directly with us before they share to other sources. Facebook and Instagram will always be the main source – that will link directly back to the website that will offer an enhanced news feed.

2018-19

Financial Highlights

Revenue

33.84%

Government Grant

18.62%

Membership Fees

11.34%

NextGEN Program

10.37%

Short Track Camps

5.35%

Sanction & Check-In Fees

4.19%

Long Track Camps

3.27%

Coaching & Officials Development

2.16%

Merchandise Sale

9.41%

Allocation to Speed Skate Canada

Expenses

33.42%

Salaries & Benefits

12.85%

NextGEN Program

10.00%

Short Track Camps

5.97

Professional Fees

4.59%

Team Ontario Coaching

4.09%

Long Track Camps

3.99%

Canada Winter Games

2.71%

Cost of Merchandise Sold

9.98%

Allocation to Speed Skate Canada