

VELOCITY

Y É L O C I T É

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May 2007

Sport Commission Update

The 2007 FIL Expert Commissions were convened in Salzburg, Austria, April 28-29. Representing the Canadian Luge Association in the sport commission meetings were Tim Farstad, executive director and newly appointed athlete representative, Jeff Christie. Head coach, Walter Corey, took part in the technical commission portion of the event. For natural luge, Keith Simmons sat in on the sport commission meetings and Bryan Jones was part of the technical commission.

As the FIL statutes allow for rule changes every two years, the meetings focused on the analysis of the past winter and an exchange of ideas regarding the rules for future competitions.

The following is a brief summary of the artificial track sport commission. The CLA will continue to update you in future editions of Velocity on advancements made at sport commission meetings:

- Schedule was confirmed – Calgary World Cup is set for November 19–25, 2007 and there is the potential for a Junior World Cup January 21–27, 2008;
- World Championships for 2011 will be in Torino, Italy, and Junior World Championships in Oberhof, Germany;
- The Challenge Cup format will be changed this year in order to shorten the time of the race;
- Due to the success of the test races, the new relay race system will be used as the format for all team events;



- Due to an increase in doubles teams, the FIL has raised the number of teams from 16 to 18;
- Two new race formats were discussed; an Under-23 World Championships, and a one run "gate race". A final decision will not be made until next year.

"I was pleasantly surprised at how well the meetings went," said Jeff Christie. "I was able to get a few of my proposed ideas passed – the creation of an overall title for the Nations Cup, an athlete evaluation forum for each World Cup, and a new World Cup sprint event that will be tested in the upcoming season.

None of the ideas will be official until after the FIL Congress in June, but it was exciting to get the ball rolling," said Christie. "Overall it was a very positive experience and I can't wait for the upcoming season when we can discuss with all of the athletes throughout the season about where we think the FIL should be heading."

ROBERT FEGG – COACH, CANADIAN LUGE TEAM



DATE OF BIRTH:

October 26, 1978

PLACE OF BIRTH:

Berchtesgaden, Germany

RESIDENCE:

Calgary

YEARS WITH CANADIAN LUGE TEAM:

4

CAREER INFORMATION

Athletic History/Background:

1986-2002 Athlete with the German Luge Program

1993-1997 Member of the German Junior National Team

1997-2002 Member of the German National Team

Career Highlights:

1997 - Junior World Champion, men's singles and team

1998 - Junior World Champion, team

1998 - 2nd Junior World Championships, men's singles

1999 - 4th World Championships, men's singles

1999 - 2nd World Championships, team

2001 - 5th World Championships, men's singles

ON COACHING TECHNIQUE/STRATEGY:

My coaching technique is athlete-centered. I prefer direct communication, keeping things focused on each individual athlete, based on their specific needs. Not every athlete will respond to the same coaching approach, so it is important to get to know them individually. Most of my coaching strategies and techniques have been developed from my years of experience as an athlete. I know what worked well for me and try to incorporate that into my coaching.

On the best part of being a luge coach:

The best part of being a luge coach is the passion I feel for my job. Luge has been a huge part of my life for so many years and being able to share that passion with the athletes is very rewarding. It is extremely satisfying to take what I learned as an athlete and work with other coaches and athletes to make improvements, and apply that knowledge. I also truly enjoy seeing my athletes succeed and achieve the goals we have set together.

ON THE WORST PART OF BEING A LUGE COACH:

The hardest part is not being on the sled anymore. I love sliding and I do miss getting on the track. Another challenge is that we have a very small group of support staff, which means there can be some overlapping of jobs.



ALUMNI NEWS

Congratulations Amanda Byrne – 2007 Calgary Stampede Rodeo Princess (right)



cesses, are goodwill ambassadors and official representatives of the Calgary Stampede and the city of Calgary. The Stampede Queen and Princesses make over 400 appearances throughout the year of their reign.

So what does a luge athlete have in common with a rodeo princess? For starters, Amanda cites the competitive edge she learned from competing against the world's best luge athletes.

"This competition was so intense," said the 21-year-old. "I drew on the skills I learned from being a competitive athlete, and just like in luge, I had to be willing to do what the rest of the competition was not willing to do. I already had a lot of experience speaking

From the icy tracks to the barn, former Canadian Luge Team member, Amanda Byrne, is saddling up for her new role as Calgary Stampede Princess. After a grueling selection process filled with riding competitions, hidden judges, and public speaking challenges, Byrne was crowned during the final day of Rodeo Royal, April 22, 2007.

with reporters and a lot of life experience from traveling the world. I think it really helped to have great stories to tell about being a luge athlete. That was definitely something that no other girl had."

Amanda is currently working on her business degree at Mount Royal College, and is looking forward to the adventures she is bound to find during her run as Calgary Stampede Princess.

The Royal trio, consisting of one queen and two prin-



DID YOU KNOW?



Grant Albrecht and Eric Pothier

Over the past 10 years, the Canadian Luge Association has been busy developing and building sleds for Canadian athletes from all levels of development. In fact, a number of our sleds are 100 per cent Canadian made, from the

pod to the kuffens, to the bridges and handles.

During the summer months, the coaches and athletes are constantly in the workshop, trying out new ideas or tweaking old ones, always looking for that extra thousandth

of a second. Countless hours are spent customizing a sled to fit the athlete sliding on it.

Athletes also participate in wind tunnel testing to maximize aerodynamics. The slightest change in positioning or even cloth-

ing – such as speed suits or helmets – can affect the down time in a race that is separated by less than the blink of an eye. Wind tunnel testing allows the coaches and athletes to evaluate each aspect for optimal performance.