



SEPAK TAKRAW ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

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2006 UPDATE

STAC HAS A NEW OFFICE!

At the end of 2005, the Sepak Takraw Association of Canada moved, along with ASEC International, to a new office location. The office is now situated on the campus of Western Christian College, where there is actually two different high schools as well as a Bible College that all share a nice sized gym. The gymnasium has a rubberized floor which is great for playing Sepak Takraw on, and Rick has already introduced and taught the sport to the students there. It is wonderful to have a good sized office with windows and an attached storage area. The new location, which is also in a high traffic area and gives us better visibility, is ideal!



SEPAK TAKRAW ACTIVITY & GROWTH IN EASTERN CANADA

Rick Engel, President of STAC, embarked on a strategic eastern Canada tour at the end of May to promote and grow Sepak Takraw in Eastern Canada. A tremendous thank you goes out to the enthusiasts and physical education leaders and teachers in Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto who have worked with STAC to help set up meetings, clinics, workshops and tournaments.



L to R: Rick, Shawn, Rizan and Noy

Loisirs du Parc College to talk about the possibility of implementing Sepak Takraw programs at those particular institutions. Reception to the idea was very positive; McGill even thought it would be great to look at Sepak Takraw as one of the sport activities that could be introduced during their summer camp to about 1500 kids. One of the enthusiastic comments that each of the directors seemed to have was, "this sounds like such a fun sport, and we are always on the lookout for something new". It was very encouraging indeed. A warm thank you goes out to Rizan, who, made the initial contacts and organized the meetings. We should be seeing some exciting developments in Sepak Takraw in Montreal in the near future. The aim of the Sepak Takraw Association of Canada is to develop recreational Sepak Takraw programs and clubs that would be easily accessible to the general public. The steps taken in Montreal hope to be duplicated in other cities across the country as well.

MONTREAL, QC:

The first stop was Montreal, where Rick met with local enthusiasts Shawn Daniels (STAC board of director, Quebec), Noy Somphong and Rizan Ahamat to discuss what approach should be taken in Montreal to increase the awareness and growth of Sepak Takraw. It was agreed that it is time to focus on giving the general public opportunities to play this sport. Both Noy and Rizan agreed to help teach and facilitate start up programs that would be targeted to commence in the summer/fall of 2006, with Shawn lending what support he could as well. Then on Tuesday, May 29, Rick and Rizan had several meetings with Recreation Directors at McGill University, Concordia, a YMCA and



McGill Athletics, Kevin MacSween (L) and Rick Engel (R)

OTTAWA, ON:

Rick's next stop was Ottawa, where Bob Thomas, a distinguished leader in Physical Education with the Ottawa-Carlton Catholic School District, organized three days of Sepak Takraw Clinics with about 150 students, instructional workshops with close to 50 P.E. teachers, and a modified Footbag Net tournament (with a free style event) combined with Sepak Takraw introduction and games just for fun for representatives from eight different schools. Most of the grade 7 – 9 students who had the chance to participate, loved the game. All the teachers involved equally loved the game and seemed to immediately see the benefits of introducing Sepak Takraw in all of their schools. Most of the students at the Footbag Net Tournament caught on to Sepak Takraw right away, loved it, said it was much easier than footbag net (there was no need to modify the game at all) and were asking their teachers if they could include Sepak Takraw in the tournament for next year! Even one of the local teachers of the school that hosted the event was so impressed with the Sepak Takraw when she was on the playground with her students at recess, that she purchased a couple of Takraw balls for he grade 5/6 class. Yes, Sepak Takraw has certainly now created a buzz in Ottawa. Bob is already considering how they would run a Sepak Takraw tournament for the Ottawa Catholic schools for next year. Hats off to Bob, who did an outstanding job at coming up with creative ways to get Sepak Takraw introduced and going in the nation's capital city!



Holy Trinity High School Students learn Sepak Takraw



Ottawa JHS students learn Sepak Takraw at Footbag Event



Great rallies were frequent – no need to modify game!



Bob Thomas (R), awards trophy to top Footbag team

TORONTO, ON:

JHS Girl's Tournament:

Last stop on Rick's eastern tour was Toronto, where the York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB) has already created an ideal model of how to run a short league for the sport, winding up with hosting a Sepak Takraw tournament. This year's JHS tournament also included two schools from the York Region District School Board (YRDSB) as well, and for the girls it took place on May 29 at Sacred Heart High School in Newmarket, ON

and included a record 12 regus (teams) from 10 schools. They were: St. Mary, Glen Cedar, Richmond Rose, St. Catherine of Siena, Notre Dame A & B, St. Clare, St. Elizabeth Seton, St. Padre Pio A & B, Good Shepherd and Our Lady of the Lake. The 12 regus played each other in a 3-pool, round robin format with the top regu of each pool advancing to the finals. Coaches of regus that were not playing officiated each of the round robin matches, while Rick officiated the finals – being an internationally certified referee, this was a good opportunity for the coaches and players to see how matches are refereed at an official international level, with the hope of them implementing the same protocol into their own programs. In the end it was St. Clare and Notre Dame A who played for the JHS Girl’s District Pennant in a well-played match with some great rallies going back and forth that even included a few sunback style of kicks. The Notre Dame regu came out on top though, winning the match in two straight sets, 21-17 and 21-14.



Round robin match, Good Shepherd serving



Round robin, St. Elizabeth Seton heads ball into net



Notre Dame JHS Girl’s Champions with coaches

JHS Boy’s Tournament:

The York Catholic District JHS Boy’s Tournament took place on May 31 and included 12 regus (teams) from 11 different schools within the district, including: St. Mary, Glen Cedar, Richmond Rose, St. Catherine of Siena, Notre Dame A & B, St. Clare, St. Elizabeth Seton, St. Padre Pio, Good Shepherd, Our Lady of the Lake and St. Angela Merici. Again it was a record number of schools and regus involved, with two schools in the tournament being from the public system, those being Glen Cedar and Richmond Rose ... and congratulations to Glen Cedar, a 1st year regu, who went right to the semi-finals! The boys action was much more aggressive than the girls was, just two nights earlier. Spectators seemed to be very delighted with numerous long rallies back and forth by many of the schools that competed against each other. Something else that was very exciting for all to see was a short little exhibition match between a hand-picked group of boys against Rick and Johnson Chan, an experienced Toronto area player who is very interested in helping grow the sport among the general public. Rick and Johnson drew a lot of “oohs” and “ahs” as the pair continually set each other up for some major spiking. It was important for all the young players to witness first hand the importance of relaxing while playing, controlling the ball with the basic kicks, popping the ball up and using all three hits allowed to set up the plays for spikes, just like in volleyball ... opposed to playing a ping pong style of head bashing the ball back and forth on the first hit. Then back to the boy’s tournament, it all came down to a final match for the pennant between St. Catherine of Siena and Notre Dame. Nerves were a little on edge as they faced off and the points went back and forth quite closely, but it was St. Catherine of Siena who won it all in two straight sets, 21-15, 21-15. Enthusiasm for Sepak Takraw, and sending a junior regu to the nationals in Regina, is certainly building with this well organized tournament in Ontario.



St. Catherine in action serving



St. Angela Merici trying to dig up a corner shot



Champions, St. Catherine

Also, for the first time, high schools were now also involved with a tournament of their own – just 3 schools, which is all that is needed and is the number of schools that the elementary division first started with. Now the winning regus from the JHS tournament will be playing the winning regus from the High School tournament to decide who will represent Ontario in the nationals this August in Regina. The P.E. teacher who spearheaded all this organization and growth was David Carnaffan (STAC board of director, ON) and his colleagues. Very well done!

SEPAK TAKRAW STRATEGY MEETING FOR THE GTA:



L to R, David, Rick & Johnson planned the Sepak Takraw program growth strategy for the Toronto area, that would allow for all year round play.

After the tournaments in Newmarket came to a close, Rick met with David Carnaffan and Johnson Chan to discuss a long-range strategy for the development of new Sepak Takraw programs that would be accessible to the general public, while at the same time offer these youth an opportunity to play the sport all year round rather than for one month once a year. Rick had already had a conversation with the Recreation Director of the Toronto area YMCA's, who was familiar with the sport and quite interested in looking at a possible new program. Since Markham just opened a brand new YMCA and that is in the same area as all the schools

in the York region schools, the trio decided that Markham YMCA would be the best one to target a Sepak Takraw program that could run once or twice a week, to be facilitated by both Dave and Johnson. It is hoped that ideally such a program will start up this summer, but if that is too soon to get it into the YMCA's programming, then for sure they would look at starting up in the fall.

SEPAK TAKRAW ACTIVITY AND GROWTH IN WESTERN CANADA

EDMONTON, AB:

Also on the May long weekend a Laotian-Canadian Sepak Takraw club in Edmonton hosted a tournament at which other players from the Lao communities in Red Deer, Calgary and Saskatoon attended. Unfortunately we have received very little information and no pictures, but we can tell you that a regu from Calgary won 1st place.

REGINA, SK:

MOSAIC:

Asian Sport, Education & Culture (ASEC) International kicked off their Summer Outdoor Sepak Takraw Program in Regina by conducting demonstrations and displaying in the Philippine Pavilion at MOSAIC, Regina's annual cultural festival, June 1 – 3. Rick got off the plane, returning from eastern Canada to immediately help ASEC's summer student coordinator, Janine Alspach, set up for the Regina event. Literally thousands of people came through the pavilion over the 3-day event and hundreds took the opportunity to try it out for themselves in the small court area that was set up down to the side of the stage. Along with demonstrating kicking a Takraw, players also demonstrated kicking a "SEPA" Birdy (a kind of shuttlecock) ... SEPA SEPA is a variation of Sepak Takraw which is the national sport in the Philippines.



Philippine's national dance with Bamboo Poles Kicking Shuttlecock (Sepa) Kids trying Sepak Takraw over net

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY:

The next major event was National Aboriginal Day, June 21, where ASEC International set up 4 outdoor courts in Regina's Wascana Park for students to try the game out. The way the Sepak Takraw players learn to spike with a hanging ball is similar to a northern Aboriginal game called "High Kick", that is a medal event in the Arctic Winter Games. Students converged into the park by the bus loads. An estimated 500 students were engaged in playing Sepak Takraw at this 1-day event, and in spite of the somewhat gloomy weather, Rick says that they could have probably put up 10 courts and still had them all full with kids playing all day long!



Pao Wao style dancing in full costume, part of the day Mostly grade 5 – 7 students played Sepak Takraw all day

CANADA DAY:

On July 1st, warm, sunny weather greeted a park full of people that ventured out to celebrate Canada's birthday. As has been the case for the past numerous years now, ASEC International set up 4 outdoor Sepak Takraw courts for experienced players to demonstrate the game on two courts in a provincial tournament, while interested onlookers could also give it a try for themselves on the other two courts. Eight junior and senior teams participated in the tournament and put on a great show. In a park full of activity and choices of things to do, hundreds watched and tried Sepak Takraw. Though the courts were taken down at 5 p.m., people likely would have kept playing right till dusk if allowed to!

Players rested for about ½ hour or so while ASEC International hosted a Break Dance Competition right in between the two main courts and in front of the display area ... well it was supposed to be a competition, but unfortunately only one “B Boy” showed up out of the 5 or 6 that were confirmed to be coming, so it ended up being more of a 1-person demonstration. Darryl, AKA Lord Caesar, delighted the hundred or so spectators as he “bust his moves”. ASEC International likes to organize Break Dancing in conjunction with Sepak Takraw Events whenever possible because of the acrobatic nature of both activities and similarities in some of the moves. It also provides the “B Boys” an opportunity to “bust their moves” in front of audiences that would not otherwise likely see them and what they can do.



High School age students' tournament action



B-Boy Lord Caesar busting a move for delighted fans

REGINA SUMMER OUTDOOR SEPAK TAKRAW PROGRAM:

Thanks to ASEC International and funding from the City of Regina Sask Lotteries Community Grant Program, Community Initiatives Fund and Student Employment Experience, starting from the beginning of June, Regina is privileged to have **FREE Sepak Takraw** that anyone of any age can come out and get involved in. This program introduced at-risk and aboriginal youth, as well as soccer players, skate boarders and hacky sack players to Sepak Takraw (Kick Volleyball), and gave them opportunities to play this new sport/recreational activity on a regular basis. We also involved other interested youth and adults in the Regina area. By partnering with the Rainbow Youth Centre our goal was to reach the youth that participate in activities at the centre, giving them the opportunity to play takraw on a regular basis throughout the summer months. We ran a regular outdoor Sepak Takraw club in the summer, utilising Regina's beautiful Victoria Park, Candy Cane Park and the U of R Academic Green. Alternative playing locations for rainy days were at the YWCA and U of R Ad-Hum Pit. A regular indoor location was at the Rainbow Youth Centre. Special demonstration/participation events took place on National Aboriginal Day, Canada Day, and The Regina Dragon Boat Festival. During this Summer Program, we also helped Takraw Canada host 2006 Canadian Open Sepak Takraw Championships, which were a feature event of Buffalo Days. It included open participation events to let others learn some of the basics and try it for themselves too! Facilitators coached newcomers how to kick the ball and teach the basic rules, as well as organize pick-up games with all that come to try it out. It really is a whole lot of fun, good exercise and a perfect chance for the keeners to form teams and practice for competitions! The scheduled program days/times were:

- Mondays, Rainbow Youth Centre, 3:30 – 4:45 p.m.
- Tuesdays, U of R Academic Green, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Wednesdays, Western Christian College 4th Ave. Front Lawn, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Thursdays, Victoria Park, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Saturday, Candy Cane Park, 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.

SASKATOON, SK:

TOURNAMENT:

The Saskatoon Lightning Takraw Club hosted a tournament in its city on June 17, at which included two Saskatoon and two Regina regus competing. The club had invited other cities, but bad weather and other factors combined to make it a Saskatchewan tournament only. Saskatoon Legends took 1st place, Regina Riot 2nd and Saskatoon Lightning 3rd. Following the matches all enjoyed a traditional Lao barbeque and dance.

YMCA DEMONSTRATION & FUTURE SEPAK TAKRAW PROGRAM:

The Regina players had time to kill after Saskatoon's tournament before the social, so Rick thought they should check out the YMCA there and see if it would be conducive to having a Sepak Takraw program in the gym. Seeing that the facility was ideal and no one was using the gym, the two Regina regus offered to put on a game demonstration for Steve, one of the recreation coordinators there. It went very well, members passing by were immediately interested in playing the game themselves if a program were to start up there. The main program director is all for it, so look for **Sepak Takraw coming soon to the Saskatoon YMCA**.



Regina Riot (green) vs. Saskatoon Legends (blue)



Regina players pose with Steve (holding the Takraw ball) at the Saskatoon YMCA

REGINA, SK:



2006 CANADIAN OPEN: Buffalo Days Exhibition & Summer Fair, August 2 – 6, 2006



Six Junior Boy's Teams, Six Senior Teams, 5 days of some incredible Sepak Takraw action!