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Takraw Canada

Sepak Takraw Events & News Bulletin

SEPAK TAKRAW SURVAY AT THE COC CONGRESS

Edmonton, April 19 - 21, 2002

Rick Engel, STAC's president attended the Canadian Olympic Committee Congress meeting in Edmonton, AB, not too far from him from Regina. This year he wanted to talk to COC members and informally survey them about a unique idea he has regarding the introduction of Sepak Takraw into the Olympic Games.

Here is his rational and what he would propose:

"There are so many events in the Summer Olympic Games that a new sport can not become a medal event unless a current sport is booted out. That swelling number of events also makes for astronomical hosting costs, mainly because of the number of athletes that attend and need to be taken care of. As well, it is a challenge for all of the events to be covered by media broadcasters the way they would like to.

In comparison, the Winter Olympic Games have half the number of athletes involved (limited to countries that have winter), cost much less to host, and there really is not enough events for the media to fill all the time allotted so they end up re-running at the end of the day what was already broadcast earlier in the day – which gets really boring for viewers.

My solution to the above dilemmas would be to move some of the indoor, stadium type of events from the Summer Olympics over to the Winter Olympics. Why does it have to be 'Ice and Snow only' events? Any city that is hosting Winter Olympics will be well-equipped with large gymnasiums and stadiums, so why not have Volleyball, Basketball, Table

Tennis, and Badminton, for example, as Winter Olympics 'Indoor Stadium Events'? After all, most of these sports just mentioned are played indoors in the winter season. Besides addressing the issues raised above, most importantly, moving events over from Summer to Winter Olympics would allow other countries that do not have ice or snow to compete, which would make the Winter Olympics much more inclusive!

Now, Sepak Takraw is also played indoors in the winter season, and all world championship events occur in indoor stadiums. So to try out the whole idea of having Indoor Stadium Events (that do not involve ice or snow) during the Winter Olympics, it may be smoothest to try it out with a totally new sport, like Sepak Takraw ... to see how it goes over with the general public and broadcasters before looking at a potentially tenuous process of which indoor sports should be moved over from the Summer Olympics.

Over 70% of all members, including some of our top executives, surveyed about this idea were very much in favor of the concept!"

Why not email us at STAC and tell us what you think of the idea of introducing Sepak Takraw into the Winter Olympic Games as the first Indoor Stadium Event? Our email is stac@takrawcanada.com



Sepak Takraw at SPEA and HPEC-CAHPERD Conf.

Saskatoon, May 1 & 2, 2002
Banff, May 10 & 11, 2002

Presenting Sepak Takraw as a viable sport/recreational activity to introduce into one's school/community has become an annual, very popular, part of the SPEA Conference in Saskatoon, SK, and the HPEC Conference in AB (which was combined with CAHPERD as the national conference), both usually occurring at the beginning of May.



Teachers starting out with a modified ball at the SPEA Conference

Rick Engel was a busy guy, displaying and presenting Sepak Takraw sessions at both conferences, then also staying in Calgary for a week of School Sepak Takraw Clinics. What is always rewarding to see is how all the participants surprise themselves with how well they are able to control the Takraw without the use of their hands or arms. Modifying the game at the beginning and emphasizing some key points are the keys to success. Participants are also usually surprised with how much fun they have, even though it is the first time they have ever tried the game. Ah, that's what it's all about though, isn't it?



June Kicks off Regina's Outdoor Takraw Program

Mosaic, June 6 - 8

Every year surrounding the first weekend in June, Regina showcases it's multicultural heritages with food, song and dance for three days in venues all over the city. Once again Asian Sport, Education & Culture (ASEC) International displayed and demonstrated Sepak Takraw, in the Philippine Pavilion. With the Philippine Pavilion being one of the highest attended ones of Mosaic, exposure for the sport was fabulous, literally hundreds of people were able to try it and receive information about the Outdoor Program that was just starting!

National Aboriginal Day, June 21

Thousands of Regina & out of town residents, and hundreds students from schools on field trips, converged on Wascana Park to take in entertainment and activities planned for National Aboriginal Day. Among the activities was Sepak Takraw demonstration and participation events. This was extremely popular with mostly the younger crowd of course, as 4 Takraw courts were kept busy with participants trying the game all day long from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Canada Day, July 1, 2002

Canada Day continues to be a great day in Regina to promote and demonstrate Sepak Takraw in Wascana Park. The better the weather, the more the participants! Let the summer begin!



Saturdays at Candy Cane Park on proved to be a favourite location for the Summer Takraw Program

'02 Hmong Festival Takraw Tournament

This year 5 players from Canada were able to attend the Hmong Festival Takraw Tournament, Rick Engel drove to Winnipeg then joined Bounthene Hounmany and his three sons, Sila, Pani and Sati. The boys made up a youth team and played on the B side (not quite so competitive), while Rick and Bounthene were joined by Sila (the eldest son) to form a team to play on the A side.



Houngmany brothers in action

On the A side, it was the team from Fresno, CA that came out on top ... the first time they were able to do so after competing in the event for many years, so it was a very exciting moment for the Fresno guys!



Minnesota's Lui turns up the heat

The Winnipeg boys were quite overwhelmed by the level of skill and play they found themselves competing in, but came away truly inspired ... not only by the Takraw, but also the crowd of people and all the great food!

The drive got a little tense on the way back when fierce rain storm, headed by a "Plow Wind", almost blew the van off the road. Rick was driving at the time, and had to pull over and stop since it was impossible to see anything.

2002 Canadian Open Sepak Takraw Championships



Some of the teams pose with sponsor banner



BC Junior team take on Saskatoon



Final: Saskatoon vs. Edmonton Exile



Spectators packed around the courts to watch

Though the weather was cold and rainy for most of the weekend, thousands of people still packed around the courts to get a glimpse of the exciting sport of Sepak Takraw ... most of them seeing it for the very first time.

Edmonton, AB, August 3 – 5, 2002

Altogether, 9 teams of 30 athletes from White Rock, Calgary, Red Deer, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Regina braved the unusually cold and somewhat damp weather to compete in this event. In spite of less than ideal weather, there were still an estimated 8,800 spectators over the three days who came out to get a glimpse of, OR TRY, this unique sport. In fact, 2 courts were set up for the general public this year, and they seemed to be continuously busy from morning till night. It was really nice to see so many people trying takraw for the first time and enjoying it so much.

Notably absent from the event this year was the presence of any international teams. Teams from USA and Japan were confirmed to come but had to change their plans at the last minute for varying reasons. This meant that there was an all-Canadian line up in the "Men's" division only.

In the end it was the Red Deer Team that took the Bronze, while Saskatoon Lightning and Edmonton Exile battled it out in the final ... and what a final it was. Hundreds of spectators lined the fences around the court as well as sat on the hill on the close end to get a good view of the action. Spectators were not disappointed, as they watched a lot of very good long rallies, partial Roll Spikes, Ninja Kicks, Sunbacks, blocks, and it all went to the tie break set to boot ... very exciting! Finally, Saskatoon once again had to settle for Silver as Edmonton Exile overtook them to win Gold - great work by a team of former Footbag Net players that started playing Takraw about 2 years ago!

The 2002 Canadian Open Sepak Takraw Championships could not have taken place without the support of the **Edmonton Heritage Festival Association** itself, which provided the **Sepak Takraw Association of Canada (STAC)** with not only a great event at which to showcase Sepak Takraw, but also provided most of what was needed on site for a successful tournament. A host of thanks goes out to 7 sponsors who contributed greatly and need to be recognized for what they provided: **Concept Media** from Regina, for designing the event poster; **K J Millar Productions** for printing the posters; all four **Edmonton Mail Boxes Etc.** locations, for printing the event programs as well as miscellaneous photocopying and computer use; **Subway** for providing food for 2 days for the athletes and volunteers; **Quizno's Subs** (Scone Market & South Park), for providing food and drink for one day for the athletes and volunteers; **Lacopa Sports**, in the West Edmonton Mall, for providing clothing prize items from the World Cup (Soccer) for the top three teams; and **ASEC International**, for providing the **NETPRO®** Takraw equipment for the tournament. Thanks also to the volunteers who contributed their time and effort.



OPHEA Conference, ON

Orillia, ON, October 25, 2002

Rick Engel flew to Toronto and together with Dave Carnaffan, they facilitated some drop-in Takraw Activity sessions at the YMCA site outside Orillia. It was an extremely cool day, but a lot of teachers enjoyed warming up as they gave Takraw a try on the outdoor court. The formal Takraw Session was attended by about 30 plus participants that included city recreation directors, school P.E. consultants, and P.E. teachers. There certainly was a lot of excitement created about this “brand new sport”.



Teachers getting their kicks at the Takraw Session

York Catholic District JHS Sepak Takraw Tournament

Newmarket, ON, October 28 & 29, 2002

Notre Dame Catholic Elementary School was full of excited players, family members, teachers and spectators on October 28th. Grade 7 & 8 girls from 6 different schools in the York Catholic District School Board competed for Sepak Takraw supremacy. After many very close matches in round robin play that went to the tiebreak set, in the end it was Our Lady of Fatima's A Regu who came out on top. They did it by coming back from a terrible first set loss of 5-21 to Notre Dame's A team in the final, regained their confidence and composure to win the second set 21-14, then winning the tie break set 15-9. Notre Dame A had to settle for 2nd, and Notre Dame B took 3rd with a win over Our Lady of the Lake in two straight sets, 21-11 and 21-16.



Girl's action, here a 'Head Spike' has just been delivered

Family and other spectators watching were very impressed with the girl's ability to play the ball back and forth over a net on a badminton court without using their hands. One parent said with enthusiasm, "Wow, such close matches, that's the way it should be!" Said another, "What a great game, I can see why it's really starting to catch on!"

On the very next night, October 29th, the grade 7 & 8 boys from the same 6 schools competed in their tournament, and were just as exciting to watch as the girls. Notre Dame got their revenge too, as it was their boys who took first place in a nail biter final match against Our Lady of Fatima! As an added attraction, experienced players from the greater Toronto Laotian Community also delighted spectators with a game demonstration that certainly gave the students something to work towards in terms of their playing skills.

Rick Engel, President of STAC who has been player/coach of the men's national team, was also present to help promote Takraw, provided technical expertise and also refereed the final matches.



Boy's action, here just serving the ball over the net

Takraw Growth in Canadian Schools in 2002/2003

It is estimated that there are now around 250 - 300 experienced Takraw players in various associations, clubs and leagues in 6 provinces across Canada, namely, from west to east, BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, and QC.

In addition, to date about 550 schools have introduced Sepak Takraw to their students, most of them with the help of the Canadian-produced Promotional Instructional Video called **SEPAK TAKRAW - Just For Kicks**, and Instructional Materials being developed by ASEC International. Schools love the video and highly recommend it as a great teaching tool, as most teachers have to learn the game themselves before they can teach it. With an average of 50 students per school being the ones exposed to the sport, roughly 27,500 students from across Canada are now playing Sepaktakraw at one level or another!