

Multiculturalism *matters*

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Diversity as an Economic Engine

by Dr. Jay Kalra, President, Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan



As we welcome in the new year, Saskatchewan is also welcoming many new immigrants to the province. Our provincial motto: From Many People's Strength speaks to the greatness that we can achieve when we work together. With that in mind, I wish you season's greetings and look forward to working with you and with our new provincial government in the new year.

MCoS invited its member organizations to submit news and information about their activities of 2007 and plans for 2008 to this issue of Multiculturalism Matters. We are thrilled with the response. Thank you to all the organizations that contributed success stories to this publication. As well our appreciation to all our members, partners and supporters for the valuable work they are doing towards building the cultural community. We know that there are many excellent projects taking place in your communities and that they cannot all be featured within the pages of this publication, but we are getting the word out through e-mail, our website and facebook that multiculturalism does matter to all of you.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY: The Emcy Awards will be presented April 16 in Regina for excellence in multiculturalism. Please submit your nominations to highlight achievements of your heroes. There are nine nomination categories. See Page 4 for more information.

We thank our supporters, Saskatchewan Lotteries and SaskCulture, and the many volunteers and staff members who have shared a commitment to advancing our DIVERSE goals: to Dignify, Inspire, Value, Educate, Represent, Support and Encourage.

In 2007, the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan awarded program delivery contracts to nine member organizations for anti racism and cross cultural development projects. We also awarded grants to more than 20 school based education initiatives. We are hopeful that we will be able to obtain increased funding in the future to enhance this support and we also look to new initiatives, like the Emcy Awards for raising the profile of multiculturalism. We are also trying to update our constitution to attract new members and grow the diversity of our organization.

In this issue of Multiculturalism Matters, there is more information about the Emcy Awards as well as about our constitutional review and other diverse initiatives.

On behalf of all the directors of the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan, I extend my best wishes for the future of multiculturalism in Saskatchewan.

emcy.
celebrating diversity!



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Malaysian Teams Sepak Takraw Demonstration Tour



The Malaysian team enjoyed a visit to Moose Jaw for an exhibition at Vanier Collegiate. As a result of this event a Sepak Takraw program was formed in Moose Jaw through the YMCA. In this photo, the six players, the secretary general of psm and the coach and Rick Engel. Two other officials were also involved - the president of psm and his assistant. The players range from 19-28 years old. They were amazed by the temperatures in Canada and impressed with the enthusiastic crowds at the schools.

By Rick Engel
Photos courtesy Sepak Takraw Association of Canada



This November, the Malaysian Sepaktakraw Association (PSM) and the Sepak Takraw Association of Canada (STAC), together with its partner organizations, cooperated to bring two regus (teams) and four officials from Malaysia to Canada to conduct 13 Exhibition Matches in schools and public events in five cities across the country in front of an accumulated 4,000 screaming spectators. Those lucky cities were Calgary, Regina, Moose Jaw, Winnipeg and Toronto.

The purpose of the Malaysian Sepak Takraw Exhibition Matches across Canada was to raise the awareness and growth of the sport in Canada. In the process of planning the Exhibition Events, STAC has been fortunate to be able to network and partner with numerous wonderful organizations and individuals that proved to be an invaluable help ... and are eager to continue to be of service with future Sepak Takraw projects and events in Canada. For this we are very grateful, as FOLLOWUP is definitely considered to be the most important aspect of the Exhibition Events. The goal is to add more Sepak Takraw programs to the **more than 1,000 schools that currently already have it.**

The Malaysian Delegation enjoyed a Welcome Dinner with speeches and gift exchanges in each city on the Demonstration Tour, organized by the local partnering organizations and planning committee members. In Toronto this even served to bring members of the Malaysian and Indonesian communities together for a mutual purpose for the first time in their history. The tour ended with the Malaysian Delegation enjoying a visit to Niagara Falls then having a couple days for sight-seeing in Vancouver before heading back to their own country again.

Canada kicked into action: after every exhibition match, spectators were invited to give Sepak Takraw try at an introductory instructional clinic. Everyone enjoyed this immensely.

In Calgary it was the Malaysian, Singaporean, Bruneian Calgary Association (MSBCA) as well as the Calgary Lao Sepak Takraw Club that helped to organize the logistics of hosting 10 Malaysians. As president of STAC, I accompanied the delegation in the cross-country tour. Among many other things, I served as a live commentator at all of the Exhibition Matches, which helped to make them informative as well as even more exciting. Besides playing in front of hundreds of screaming students - 1600 spectators at Calgary's Bishop O'Byrne High School - the highlight for the Malaysian teams was going out to Banff for the day on Nov. 7 where they got to ride up the Banff Gondola and walk to the top of mountain where there was a lot of snow ... all of them seeing snow for the first time. They quickly learned how fun it was to make balls out of the snow and throw them at each other, ha, ha.

For Regina, the Lighthouse to all Nations Church, Asian Sport Education & Culture (ASEC) International, and the University of Regina Sepak Takraw Club were the ones that pitched in to help for the Regina and Moose Jaw events. A CUPE strike just before the Regina Events took place forced moving the venue for the Public Demonstration Event from the university to a high school, which unfortunately resulted in losing many would-be spectators ... this was very unfortunate. On the positive side though, I think **Central Collegiate in Moose Jaw wins the "Most Enthusiastic Spectators" award (if there was one, that is). Now there is a brand new Sepak Takraw program running at the Moose Jaw YMCA and the Regina program has turned into a 7-team league!**

Asian Heritage Manitoba and the Lao Catholic Sepak Takraw Club were wonderful hosts in Winnipeg, taking the group to The Forks then putting on a great dinner at Dr. Muni's house, president of Asian Heritage Manitoba. Her whole family was involved. Seven students from the University of Manitoba showed up at the Exhibition Match and are already taking steps to start a U of M Sepak Takraw Club!

Toronto wins the "Largest Network of Partners" award, with the STAC Committee there, Malaysian Association of Canada, Sri Lanka Malay Association of Toronto, Kampong Ku Radio and the UMNO Club of Canada all pitching in to help in the more complicated hosting logistics involved with such a big city. The St. Augustine High School Demonstration on Nov.12 drew the 2nd largest crowd of the tour and two new Sepak Takraw Programs will be scheduled to begin at two different recreation centers early in 2008! **Rogers Television also came and got footage of one of the matches and conducted interviews to make a program for their "Asian Inspirations" show.**

Besides all of the above named partnering groups and individuals within those groups, STAC would also like to recognize the support of: the Public & Catholic School Boards and host schools in each city; Chinese Cultural Center, Calgary; KICKS SPORTS, Calgary; City of Regina; 306 HIPHOP SK8, Regina; NETPRO Sports Inc., Regina; ALLIED PRINTERS, Regina; YMCA, Moose Jaw; RED CARD SOCCER, Winnipeg; MAGNA Centre, Newmarket; Parks Forestry & Recreation Centre, Toronto; JMT METROSPORT The Soccer Store, Greater Toronto Area; Toronto City Hall; Consulate of Malaysia Trade Office, Toronto; Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia, Toronto; Ministry of Sports, Malaysia; Malaysian Sepaktakraw Association; and GAJAH EMAS, Malaysia. The fact that Rick and Connie - his trusty volunteer assistant, who is also gratefully thanked here - had only a couple of months to work with all of the above groups to put this project together, speaks volumes as to the quality of the help received. This tour could not have been accomplished without this support! Thank you everyone!

For the new year, we will be developing the five programs that started as a result of this tour: two in Toronto, one in Winnipeg, one in Moose Jaw and one Calgary.

Anyone who would like information about Sepak Takraw or starting a program in their community is invited to call (306) 584-8778 or email stac@takrawcanada.com. The website is <http://www.takrawcanada.com/>



HIGH FLYING SPIKE - in this photo, player Number 4 is roll spiking the ball and the yellow player jumps up to block it. Sepak Takraw, sometimes referred to as kick volleyball, is Malaysia's National Sport. A pro ball is shown above.

