

BC SCHOOL SPORTS

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018



PC-Vancouver Sports Photography



MISSION:

To foster the development of good character
through positive & equitable
school-based sport experiences.

2003A-3713 KENSINGTON AVENUE
BURNABY, BC V5B 0A7
(604) 477-1488
INFO@BCSCHOOLSPO RTS.CA
BCSCHOOLSPO RTS.CA



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRESIDENT’S GREETING	4
HISTORY OF BCSS	5
BOARD OF DIRECTORS	6
SPORT COMMISSIONS	7
FINANCIAL REPORT	8
STRATEGIC PLAN	10
A YEAR IN SPORT	12
MILES OF SMILES	14
THOMAS BOX	16
BCSS IN NUMBERS	18
SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS	20
CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS	22

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



“Continuing to build the strength of BCSS with the collaboration of all our stakeholders and partners.”

The 2017-2018 year was full of accomplishments and successes. We celebrated all our BCSS championships in great style with a very high standard of athletic prowess. Congratulations and thanks to all our student-athletes, teachers, administrators, coaches and officials for a job well done. You are an inspiration to us all.

This year a great deal of work was done by the BCSS staff and membership with respect to re-zoning the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley to ensure that we address the issues surrounding how fast various districts are growing and how this impacts zone berthing to BCSS Provincial Championships.

BCSS is a self-governing and membership-driven organization. Most of our member schools participated throughout the eighteen month process. Many teachers and district coordinators participated in putting the final touches on the version that was brought forward to the membership at the 2018 AGM. The work we did this year was outstanding and BCSS will continue to work with greater transparency, purpose and collaboration.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the BCSS Board of Directors, committee members and office staff for their leadership, dedication, commitment and positive energy.

As I enter my second term as President, I am looking forward to continuing to build the strength of BCSS with the collaboration of all our stakeholders and partners. We have now established and accepted a Strategic Plan that will give BCSS direction for the next four to five years. We will be starting committee work in September and will continue to work hard to meet our objectives of implementing the various aspects of the Strategic plan for this coming school year.

- MIKE ALLINA

THE ORGANIZATION

OUR HISTORY

BC School Sports was originally organized in 1965 as the British Columbia Federation of School Athletic Associations (BCFSAA) by a group of interested teachers and administrators. A constitution was adopted in 1966. Operational support was received from the provincial government and the association opened an office in January, 1970. The name was changed to BC School Sports in 1980-81.

Public and non-public secondary schools from across the province are member schools of BC School Sports. The association is self-governed with member schools approving the operating competitive policies by which school sport is governed. BC School Sports also liaises with and welcomes input from school districts, the Ministry of Education, the BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA), the BC School Superintendents Association (BCSSA), the BC Principals & Vice Principals Association (BCPVPA) and the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC)

BC School Sports has on average about 450 member schools each year throughout the province, with more than 90, 000 student-athletes participating in 67 provincial championships organized by 19 active sport commissions.



OUR MISSION

To foster the development of good character through positive & equitable school-based sport experiences.

OUR MEMBERS

Membership in BC School Sports is open to any public or independent school with grades 8-12 from across the province of BC. The membership makes decisions regarding the competitive rules and regulations and operating policies and procedures each year at the Annual General Meeting. Every member school is encouraged to participate and have a voice in the decision making process.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS & OFFICE STAFF

2017-2018

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Mike Allina
PRESIDENT



Brent Sweeney
DIRECTOR



Rick Thiessen
DIRECTOR



Sean Juteau
DIRECTOR



Gerry Karvelis
DIRECTOR



Rick Lopez
DIRECTOR

OFFICE STAFF



Jordan Abney
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR



Shannon Key
MANAGER OF
SPORT



Bob Jackson
ELIGIBILITY
OFFICER



Lawrence Vea
ELIGIBILITY
OFFICER



Merrilla Thorp
FINANCIAL
OFFICER



Karen Hum
MEMBERSHIP
SERVICES
COORDINATOR

SPORT COMMISSIONERS

2017-2018

FALL SEASON OF PLAY	AQUATICS	Michelle Rapier
	CROSS COUNTRY	Colin Dignum
	FIELD HOCKEY	Alanna Martin
	FOOTBALL	Brien Gemmell
	SOCCER (BOYS)	Don Moslin
	VOLLEYBALL (GIRLS)	Joe Morerira
	VOLLEYBALL (BOYS)	Al Carmichael
WINTER SEASON OF PLAY	BASKETBALL (GIRLS)	Jennifer Farano
	BASKETBALL (BOYS)	Paul Eberhardt
	CURLING	Janet Dunkin
	GYMNASTICS	Adrian Wong
	SKIING	Hubert Wohlgemuth
	SNOWBOARDING	Hubert Wohlgemuth
	WRESTLING	Doug Corbett
SPRING SEASON OF PLAY	BADMINTON	Yvonne Chan
	GOLF	Mark Figueira
	MOUNTAIN BIKING	Jason Barr
	RUGBY	Walter van Halst
	SOCCER (GIRLS)	Don Moslin
	TENNIS	Marci McLean
	TRACK AND FIELD	Andrew Lenton

FINANCIAL REPORT

*UNAUDITED

Year ended June 30th, 2018

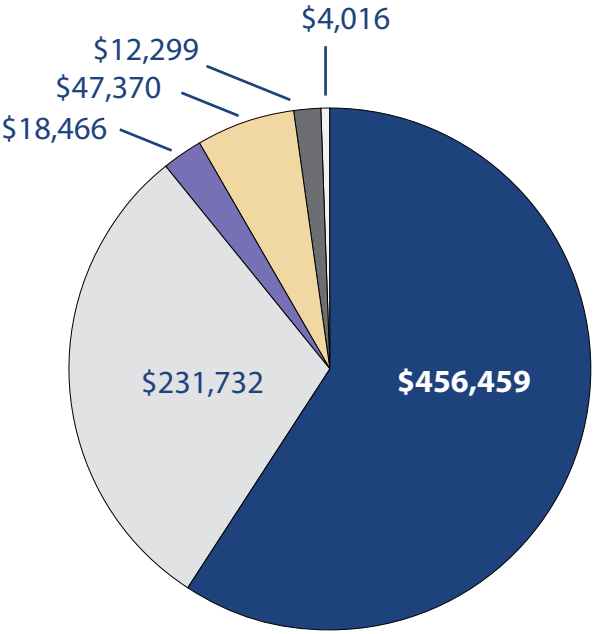
OPERATIONS

INCOME		
Member Fees, Fines & Legal Levy		\$456,459
Grants & Donations		\$231,732
Program Revenue		\$18,466
Advertising & Sponsorship		\$47,370
Merchandising & Sales		\$12,299
Other Income		<u>\$4,016</u>
Total Income		<u>\$770,342</u>
EXPENSE		
Membership Services		\$238,189
Championships & Zones		\$357,417
Recognition		\$63,054
Coaching		<u>\$39,063</u>
Total Expense		<u>\$697,723</u>
INTERNAL TRANSFERS: UNRESTRICTED TO RESTRICTED		
Transfer to Restricted: Scholarships Reserve		\$22,625
Transfer to Legal Levy		\$13,770
Transfer to Restricted: Special Projects Reserve		\$10,000
Transfer to Restricted: Summer Operational Reserve		<u>\$8,000</u>
Total Internal Transfers		<u>\$54,395</u>
NET UNRESTRICTED PROFIT/(LOSS)		<u><u>\$18,224</u></u>

CASH BALANCES

CASH BALANCES AT JUNE 30, 2018		
Unrestricted: Cash		\$105,232
Unrestricted: Accounts Receivable		\$25,902
Unrestricted: Accounts Payable		-\$34,650
Unrestricted: Prepaid Expenses & Medals		\$7,255
Restricted: Gaming		\$38
Restricted: Legal Reserve		\$44,660
Restricted: Summer Reserve		\$80,274
Restricted: Special Projects		\$30,000
Restricted: Scholarships - BCSS		\$75,088
Restricted: Scholarships - External		<u>\$16,215</u>
TOTAL CASH		<u><u>\$350,013</u></u>

*Does not include the Bookkeeping Services for 9 commissions at an estimated expense of \$20,000

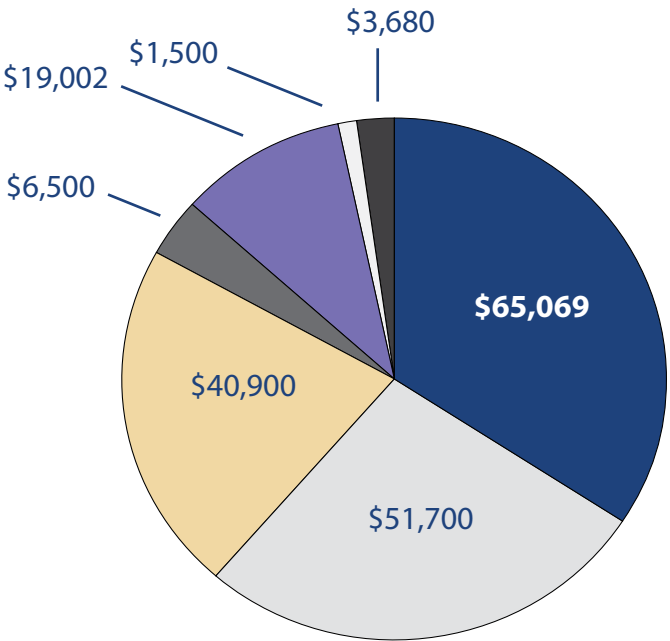
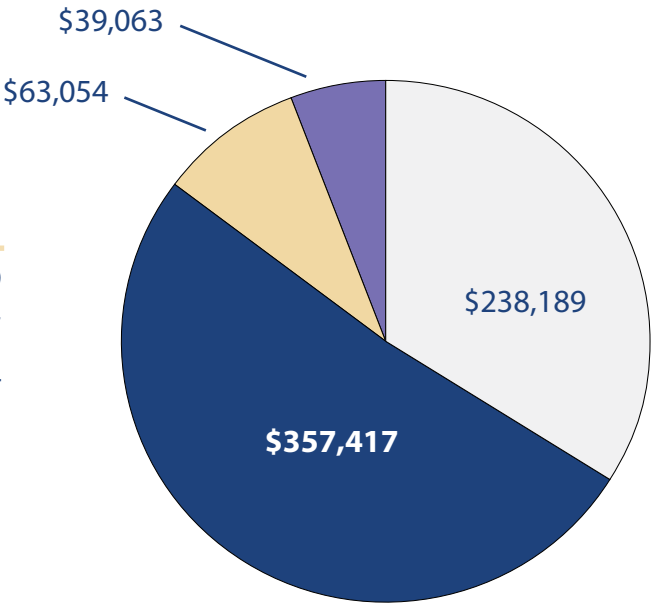


INCOME

Members Fees, Fines & Legal Levy	\$456,459
Grants & Donations	\$231,732
Program Revenue	\$18,466
Advertising & Sponsorship	\$47,370
Merchandising & Sales	\$12,299
Other Income	<u>\$4,016</u>
	<u>\$770,342</u>

EXPENSES

Membership Services	\$238,189
Championships & Zones	\$357,417
Recognition	\$63,054
Coaching	<u>\$39,063</u>
	<u>\$697,723</u>



FUNDS TO SUPPORT ZONE & PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

BCSS Gaming Grants	\$65,069
BCSS Grants	\$51,700
Commission Insurance	\$40,900
Athletic Association Insurance	\$6,500
Championship Banners	\$19,002
Webcasting Grants	\$1,500
Medical Grants	<u>\$3,680</u>
	<u>\$188,351</u>



BCSS STRATEGIC PLAN

PROCESS

After years without a strategic plan, it was clear to the Board a critical piece in moving BCSS forward was the development of a plan and an RFP was used to select a consultant to provide expertise through its development. The process included six steps, which included two membership surveys (with 589 responses received, from 51 school districts), one-on-one interviews and focus groups. The outcome of this work are the Pillars and Key Initiatives. The plan also featured the updating of the Mission Statement and BCSS Organizational values, which together with the key initiatives, provide a road map for BCSS for the next five years.

MISSION STATEMENT

To foster the development of good character through positive & equitable school-based sport experiences.

A mission speaks to the ultimate purpose of the organization, or its core reason for existing. The goal was to create a higher level mission statement that aligned BCSS with the traditional educational goals of school-based sport and with the Ministry of Education. Our mission purposefully avoided placing focus on participation or competition, as while both can be a focus or in some cases a positive outcome of school sport, neither should be construed as the core reason for our organization's existence.

PILLARS & KEY INITIATIVES

PILLARS 3-5 YEAR PRIORITIES	KEY INITIATIVES	PHASE 1 YRS 1 & 2	PHASE 2 YRS 3 & 4	PHASE 3 YRS 5+
1. GOVERNANCE	1.1 Update Governance Structure	✓		
	1.2 Complete a Comprehensive Review of the Role of Commissions & their relationship within BCSS	✓		
	1.3 Include Sport Specific Rules under BCSS Mandate & Publish on BCSS Website/Handbook	✓		
	1.4 Investigate Universal Tiering			✓
2. PROGRAMS & SERVICES	2.1 BCSS Athletic Director Development	✓		
	2.2 Coach Development		✓	
	2.3 Standardization & Oversight of all Provincial Championships & Zone Championships		✓	
	2.4 Middle School Specific Programming & Policy			✓
	2.5 Explore Development of a Unified Sports Program			✓
3. COMMUNICATION & IMAGE	3.1 Develop & Implement Comprehensive Communication & Image Strategy	✓	✓	
	3.2 Explore Options to Enhance Eligibility Transparency		✓	
	3.3 Update BCSS Sponsorship Program		✓	
	3.4 Enhance Volunteer Recognition via Awards & Hall of Fame Programs		✓	✓

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

FULFILLMENT	GROWTH	COLLABORATION	SERVICE
Positive experiences through school sport	Always learning, always improving	Striving together	Contributing to the greater good
OWNERSHIP	SPORTSMANSHIP	EQUITY	SAFETY
Taking responsibility & being accountable	Acting with integrity & respect	Acting with fairness & promoting inclusiveness	Safe experiences in school sport
Note: All values are of equal importance, the order in which they are presented should not be perceived as an indication of their relative importance			

Values serve as a cornerstone for decision making and, when properly articulated, should guide the behaviour of all involved with the organization. The values are designed to be appealed at all levels of the organization:

- **BCSS, the organization** - Board, Staff, Committees
- **School leadership** - Principals, Athletic Directors, Coaches
- **Student-athletes** - students participating in BCSS activities

A YEAR IN SPORTS

BCSS REZONING

On December 12th, 2017, BCSS held an extraordinary meeting and passed a motion to move from the current 7 BCSS zones to 9 BCSS Zones. The make-up of the new zones was not decided at the extraordinary meeting.

A committee was formed to determine the make-up of the new BCSS zones. Each of the effected school districts from the Fraser Valley and Lower Mainland had the opportunity to appoint one representative to the committee. The committee met three times and came to a decision that was brought forward to the Board of Directors for review, then was put forward to the Membership at the AGM to be voted on. The membership approved the new make-up of the zones at the AGM and will be implemented in the 2019-2020 school year.

SOCIAL MEDIA

BC School Sports' activity on social media has been an ever increasing way to raise awareness around the organization and the championships we support. The 2017-2018 school year was extremely successful in that regard. BC School Sports is mainly active on three social media platforms: Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. During the school year BCSS' Twitter handle (@BCSchoolSports) had a 32% increase in followers and our Instagram account (@bcschoolsports) had a 251% increase in followers!

DECREASE IN FINES

Changes proposed by staff and approved by the membership in 2017 had the desired effect and while all zone and provincial championship rosters were verified, the total fines issued this year dropped by nearly 30%.

ADOPTION OF ULTIMATE

Ultimate was adopted as an official BC School Sport at the 2018 AGM for implementation in the 2018-2019 school year.

This year Ultimate was run as a demonstration sport to help introduce it to schools as well as grow awareness around the sport. There was a total of 106 Senior Teams registered this year, 30 of which participated at Provincial Championships.

Our inaugural AA Provincial Championship winner was RC Palmer Secondary School from Richmond and the AAA Champion was Eric Hamber Secondary School from Vancouver.

We look forward to seeing the growth in Ultimate moving forward.

LEARNING ASSISTANCE LIFE SKILLS ATHLETICS LEAGUE

In a beautiful display of diversity and inclusion, in the spirit of sport and competition, we are proud to say that the first year of the LALS Athletics League has been an overwhelming success.

This past March, teams from Van Tech, John Oliver, Magee, Point Grey, and Eric Hamber played a round-robin handball tournament with the championship going to the school with the best record. It was a massive success. Students relished in being athletes representing their school, and staff were overjoyed watching their students play in fun and respectful competition. VSSAA were able to give medals to the winning school (John Oliver), and everyone went home happy and looking forward to the next event, which took place on June 7th at Van Tech, and this time included all eight LALS Programs in the District that included Lord Byng, Killarney, and Gladstone Secondary Schools. In the tournament final, John Oliver defeated Lord Byng, winning their second tournament championship this season. Like it was in the handball tournament, all the students (and staff) thoroughly enjoyed themselves and were proud to represent their schools.

We appreciate all the support we have received from the VSSAA, BC School Sports, as well as the staff at our respective schools for helping prepare and coach our kids and donating the use of gyms and sports equipment for our events. Our goal is to continue moving forward with this league, making it better and even more inclusive, and maintaining its success.

- Michael-Don Borason
Program Teacher, Learning Assistance/Life Skills

INCREASE IN SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

BC School Sports increased its scholarship funding to \$21,500, an increase in \$6,500 from 2016 - 2017. Scholarships are available to students in grade 12 across the province who have participated in a BCSS activity.

EDUCATION SERVICES SCHOOL BASKETBALL TEAM

The inaugural year of the Education Services School (ESS) boys basketball season was a huge success. The partnership between Surrey School District's Education Services School, Safe Schools, and Guildford Learning Centre allowed students to participate who may not otherwise had a chance to compete in high school sport. Not only was there an internal collaboration between the Surrey School District to help make the boys basketball program a success, but a thank you goes out to the City of Surrey for their collaboration efforts in allowing us to hold practices in their facility. The key to the success of these students was their ability to come together as teammates from various schools and understand that this team was bigger than themselves. The boys battled continuously throughout the season showing their true spirit, perseverance, and character. By not having a home gym, our players were consistently entering hostile territory for league games and were continually demonstrating high levels of citizenship and sportsmanship. Even with all of their games being played away, our boys were able to attract a huge amount of support from parents, staff and community partners. As the season progressed, so did their ability and skill along with the spirit of friendship and community within the group. The team was able to compete with provincially ranked teams in our division. The ESS Phoenix Boys Basketball Team produced its first ever all-star during the Khalsa School Invitational classic in January, which included top ranked single A teams. We were able to wrap up our exciting season with a trip to Langley Events Centre to watch the Quad A Senior Boys Basketball Championship Game. Our boys are motivated and inspired to return to the hardwood next season. We are all looking forward to seeing our student-athletes grow and have another successful season next year. We are so proud of each and every one of them. GO Phoenix!

- Tajinder Rai
Athletic Director, Education Services Schools

CIAAA CONFERENCE

BCSS board member, Rick Thiessen, attended the recent CIAAA conference held in Regina from April 19-21. The three day event included a variety of mini Leadership Training courses including Principles, Strategies and Methods of running a school athletics program, workshops like Working with Parents of Athletes, Running Effective Tournaments, Coaching for Life Skills & Character, and Developing Coaches Evaluations and Improvement Plans. The conference also gave Rick an opportunity to connect with fellow ADs from across the country who are facing very similar issues in their schools. Finally, each attendee received a link to all of the presentation materials plus an 800 page resource that was full of documents, templates and ideas gathered by the CIAAA. The experience was invaluable.

MILES OF SMILES!

On her way to Villanova, Lake Country's Taryn O'Neill sets a new standard for B.C. girls middle distance running
By Howard Tsumura



If you are a high school track fan with any degree of long-standing membership here in the province of B.C., you may have taken, over the course of the weekend past, a few moments to determine in your own mind just how significant the accomplishment's of Taryn O'Neill really are in the grand scheme of our sport here in B.C. In case you hadn't heard, in a span of just under 24 hours beginning mid-afternoon Friday, the 17-year-old senior from Lake Country's George Elliott Secondary School not only won the senior girls 1,500m race one day and followed it by winning the 3,000m race the next, she set new provincial championship meet records in both as Langley hosted the B.C. High School Track and Field Championships at McLeod Athletic Park. And perhaps most impressively, she didn't just squeak out new standards. She established what can best be described as healthy new standards. *In the 1,500 metres, a race won in past years by a number of soon-to-be Canadian Olympians, a standard of 4:26.44, set in the heats by Burnaby Central's De Geest, had stood unconquered since 1995. O'Neill, without a real push from the rest of the field, topped it easily in 4:23.02. *In the 3,000 metre race, Vernon's Hannah Bennison had put forth a landmark performance in 2015, her 9:33.44 looking like a generational record in terms of its staying power, especially after it's former record-holder, Mt. Boucherie's Brenda Shackleton, had seen more than a generation of runners fail to break the 9:37.20 she set back in 1984. Yet just three years after the new record was set, and a day after she set the 1,500m record, O'Neill again established her own pace, finishing almost nine seconds faster in a head-spinning time of 9:24.82. In B.C. girls high school middle distance running, all of these past names and more have come to represent the cream of the canon, each with their own unique place as part of a pack that has produced generations of collegiate and national team stars. Yet in a span of 24 hours, a humble, 5-foot-3, 17-year-old high school senior who has faced all level of adversity the past few seasons, twice answers the starter's pistol and in the process sets a new bar for all in B.C. to follow.

TWO RECORDS...AND A NEW NATIONAL STANDARD

The first thing I say to Malindi Elmore is that Taryn O'Neill's performance over the weekend at Langley's McLeod Athletic Park might be the single most impressive feat in B.C. girls high school championship meet middle distance history, especially considering the margins by which she set her records.

"I don't even know if there has ever been a high school girl to do that ever in Canada," responds Elmore, the 1998 Kelowna Secondary grad who starred at Stanford and ran the 1,500m for Canada at the 2004 Athens Olympics. What she means is that O'Neill's 9:24.82 in the 3,000m was more than a B.C. meet best. It was, in fact, the new Canadian high school record. That is, it's the fastest a female has ever run the distance in a Canadian high school meet. "And to do that on the back of a 4:23 (in the 1,500m) the day before?" adds Elmore, who along with her deeply credentialed resume, also doubles as O'Neill's coach with Okanagan Athletics. "They were solo efforts, too, so that is pretty incredible." The performances that bring up the best comparison? In 1990, Handsworth's Lori Durward set the new record in the 800m at 2:08.61, a record that 28 years later still stands. That year she also clocked a 4:26.79 in the 1,500m final, winning the gold medal in what was a new meet record time. It would stand until 1993 when Claremont's Shannon Bowles would lower it to 4:26.48. Two years later, Burnaby Central's Heather de Geest would shave fractions off the time as the record would begin to gather dust. As well, in 1976, Claremont's Debbie Scott set the 1,500m meet record at 4:34.76 and also won the 3,000m (9:55.62) which was being introduced for the first time at the provincial meet that season. All of this, when placed against the ebbs and flows of McNeill's, say, past four seasons, paints the picture of a determined athlete who has always seemed to know that if she could ever find a sweet spot of time in which she could parlay her training and the coaching expertise she was receiving, that great things would be possible. No surprise then, that as O'Neill — named the meet's Top Female Athlete — begins to talk about her weekend past, the first thing she states is the mantra that both she and Elmore decided to place front-and-centre in their efforts this season. "There is nothing better than consistency," she begins. "It doesn't even need to be special. Just as long as it's consistent." Hear those kinds of words and you know there has been more than a little adversity along her path.

FINDING HER PLACE IN OLYMPIC COMPANY

Last season, in finishing second in the 1,500m at provincials to Cowichan's Grade 12 Desirae Ridenour, O'Neill posted a time of 4:30.09. In many years it would have been swift enough for gold, yet in so many ways that time would wind up being an outlier amidst a number of blue-chip outings to follow, all of which seemed to strongly hint that O'Neill had the meet record in her sights. First was the 4:22 she ran at the Harry Jerome just weeks after the high school provincials. And then this season, at the Portland Twilight meet on May 12, she turned in a personal-best 4:17.93. Quite incredibly, O'Neill is fortunate to have a former Olympic 1,500m runner as her coach and mentor. And Elmore, for one, has first-hand knowledge of just how tough a task it is to break De Geest's 4:26.44 from 1995. "I tried to go after that 1,500m record in 1998," chuckles Elmore,



that year an Owls' senior who quite impressively won the race for a third straight year, in a time of 4:34 flat. "That was 20 years ago. I remember toeing the line and coming up short, and it's so cool to see Taryn get it because of how hard that is. And she gets it by three seconds." Consider this race's incredible heritage. West Vancouver's Brit Townsend, the SFU coach, won the race in 1975 on her way to the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. Elmore followed in 1998 on her way to the 2004 Athens Games. And Argyle's Jessica Smith won in both 2006 and 2007, later qualifying for the 2012 London Olympics

in the 800m. And Claremont's Scott would represent Canada at the Los Angeles, Seoul and Barcelona Games, highlighted by Seoul where she made 1,500m and 3,000m finals. Soak in all of that along with her work ethic, and it's fair to include O'Neill, the events record holder, in any conversation of B.C. athletes with the potential to follow in those footsteps. The 3,000m? Nine times over its history, which began in 1976, the title has been won either two or three times by the same racer, suggesting the potential record-setter would be someone defending her title. Yet as far as setting its record, that hasn't been the case. For starters, there is no telling how fast Bennison would have been at the meet as a senior. After setting the record as a Grade 10, she missed in Grade 11 due to injury, and last season, the Providence College-bound senior elected to pass on the meet to take part in her school's grad festivities. O'Neill placed second in the 3,000m last season as well, again behind Ridenour, but like her 1,500m time in the same meet, the 9:44.55 she clocked that day was not representative of where she was headed. In fact, coming off a slight tweak in her back, O'Neill was off of her top form 12 months ago. Yet on the quick mend, she basically ran what amounted to a solo time trial at a Langley meet two weeks after the 2017 provincials, clocking a 9:28 which qualified her for last summer's Pan Am U-20 Games. There, she finished second at 9:22.05. Quite suddenly, the compact 5-foot-3 dynamo from Winfield was popping up on the radars of major NCAA Div. 1 programs all over the U.S., eventually choosing Villanova University, where the Wildcats have a renowned cross-country and middle-distance history.

REASON TO SMILE

As I crouched at the finish line of the senior girls 1,500m final last Friday at the B.C. high school championships, I captured the cover photo of O'Neill that accompanies this story.

When we chatted Tuesday, it's the first thing I said to her: "Taryn, you just set a record in the 1,500m, and you don't even look tired."

The arms are raised, and the smile is unmistakable.

Seems she's got a lot to be thankful for. "Well, a few years ago, I was close to quitting track and to come this far in this short of space of time is kind of unthinkable," she says, making a solid case for that smile.

Ninth grade brought an achingly slow-healing stress fracture in her femur, and she couldn't get her body feeling the way she wanted to find that all important stretch of consistent training. "I was not getting close to the times I wanted," she says. "I really felt like I was stuck in a rut." Eventually she got her stride back, but then the cycle hit again this past fall following her Pan Am success. An extended illness was followed by a broken arm courtesy of a mountain biking accident. O'Neill was forced to miss the cross-country season because of it, and she barely ran from September through January. "I'm so glad I stuck it out," she says. "I've managed to get my feet back under me." Which brings us back to that smile. "She is just so in control," says Elmore. "It is amazing that you can run that fast and still feel good enough (at the finish line) to celebrate. Most, by that point, are just gutted. But Taryn approaches training and racing with a lot of joy. She doesn't feel the burden of pressure. To her it's a challenge." And beginning this fall, on those Villanova cross-country trails just outside Philadelphia, Taryn O'Neill will begin to map out the next part of her running journey. When she gets asked about that smile, it seems certain that her response will mirror the one she had after setting that new 1,500m record last Friday. "That was a really good race and it deserved a smile," O'Neill said. "I wish they would all end like that."

*Reprinted with the permission of Howard Tsumura
Originally published on www.varsityathletics.ca on June 5th, 2018

THOMAS BOX

Horrors of war haunt him, but Lord Tweedy’s unflappable receiver still leads with a smile

By Howard Tsumura



Look at the picture above as you read the first few paragraphs of this story.

Train your eyes on the kid wearing No. 7, the kid chosen to carry the flag and lead his Lord Tweedsmuir Panthers football team onto the field last Friday in front of what was the largest home crowd in school history, a 54-0 win over Mission. By anyone’s standards, Thomas Box has grown into the all-Canadian kid: Starting wide receiver on one of B.C.’s top high school football teams who harbours the hope that one day his love of physics and calculus ultimately helps shape his professional career. Listen to his back story, however, and quite suddenly, the picture gains the power of perspective. What if you knew that in order for him flee the African nation of South Sudan in 2005, just as a 20-year civil war was ending, that he and his younger sister Kristina, now a 10th grader at Tweedsmuir, would have to leave more than half of their brothers and sisters behind on the other side of the world? And what if you knew that these days, with his father back in Africa tending to family, and his mother a shut-in at their Cloverdale home due to a horrific war-related injury, that the 17-year-old high school senior does everything he can to help supplement the family’s welfare cheque? Since coming to Canada, Thomas Box learned a new language and later enlightened those who once bullied him. And when you look him straight in the eye, you see first the fire and then a smile. “You figure it out pretty quick when you when you talk to him,” says Lord Tweedsmuir co-head coach Kurt Thornton. “He’s a 17-year-old, but you can tell that he’s had some life-experience under his belt. He’s just got a spark to him, a positive energy.” Says Box: “It’s always better to be living a happy life than a sad life.” Take that simple axiom to heart, think about his journey, then take another look at the picture.

All you can say is ‘Wow.’

PANTHERS TO THE RESCUE

It can’t be repeated enough just how pivotal a role high school sports and its accompanying mentors can play in the life of an at-risk student. Thomas Box fit that category to a tee on a day back in the spring of 2013, when as a rising Grade 8 high school freshman, he attended Lord Twedsmuir’s elementary school football camp. That was the first day Thornton saw the special energy and the ominpresent smile. It was also the first day he learned that inside of Box, just below the surface, some darkness lay simmering. “I can remember the skinny kid with the big energy,” Thornton says of Box. “You could tell he was a kid who appreciated getting a lunch and a free t-shirt. “But after the camp, we were cleaning up and we’re in the cafeteria and he was going through the lost-and-found looking for clothes. It was an image that stuck with me. So I went over and talked to him about it. He asked me if he could have some of the clothes. School was out for the summer, so it was all going to be moved out anyways so I said ‘Of course.’” I asked Box if he was OK with me mentioning the moment, and he nodded his approval. In the grand scheme of things, that nod told an even bigger story because at no time has he tried to hide the hard-scrabble moments which have shaped him. These days, Box has gotten a job at a nearby pub/eatery called The Henry where he is mostly involved in putting meals together — “I cook back there, but when it gets slow, they put in me dishwashing. I don’t like it when it gets slow.” And so between school, football, homework and helping younger siblings Samwel, Benjamin and Wilson, he crams in shifts at The Henry. “I work a lot to get money for myself and my little brothers when my mom can’t pay for them,” explains Box. “We mostly get money from welfare, but I still try my best to help by getting shifts.” He even saved up enough to buy the family a car, a 1999 Honda Civic. “It’s a manual (transmission) and it cost a grand,” he says. “The first day I got it, I didn’t even know how to drive it. I just sat in the car trying to figure everything out.”

GROWING UP FAST

Thomas Box was about three, back in South Sudan, when he found out one day how close the horrors of war could hit home. “Before we came to Canada, my mom (Elisabeth) stepped on a land mine and her leg pretty much got blown off,” says Box. “She still has the leg. I don’t know how.” Just a few years after the accident, the two youngest children, accompanied by their parents, an uncle and an aunt, made the trip to Canada. “I have 14 brothers and sisters in total,” says Box. “But only a few of us were able to come to Canada. We didn’t have enough money to being everyone.” Box had played some soccer back in South Sudan, but once he landed in Cloverdale, he quickly developed a love for North American sports. In fact he is now a true three-season, three-sport athlete at Lord Tweedsmuir, playing football, basketball and rugby from September through June. In the classroom, he admits he is not to the standard of younger sister Kristina, a straight-A student. “But I love math. Numbers. I just find it easy to



calculate. It comes to me quickly and I like that.” Bullied by a few fellow eighth graders in his first year at Tweedsmuir, he experienced some harrowing emotional moments, but in the end, told those who bullied him his life story. Quite suddenly, they discovered compassion, and as they end their high school careers, some are involved in leadership initiatives around the school.

TOUCHDOWNS, ON AND OFF THE FIELD

Thomas Box started off on special teams as a Grade 8, and he worked his way up through the ranks. Yet it wasn’t until this season that he finally earned a starting role on offence. And then, in the team’s Eastern Conference opener on Sept. 22 in Kelowna, he had his biggest moment yet. “It was dog-boot-left and it was my first-ever touchdown,” Box says of opening the scoring in his team’s 48-0 win over host Mt. Boucherie by catching an 11-yard strike from quarterback Walter Dingwall. The challenges just keep on coming. On Friday at Burnaby Lakes (7:30 p.m.), the Panthers (4-1) get their toughest league test of the season thus far when they play the No. 5 St. Thomas More Knights (5-0), featuring the same group of athletes that beat Box and Tweedsmuir in the 2013 Grade 8 final. No matter, when you have started a new life on the other side of the world, and through the sheer force of your will, you have helped make a better life for you and your family, you can’t help but smile. Ask Box about it. Ask him what his mother’s daily struggle means to him when viewed through the largest prism of all. “It represents to me, faith,” he says. “Every time I see her, it just reminds me that I have to work harder and to make sure that I am doing things for the right cause. After high school and after university, I have to make sure that my mom and my family are happy.” None of that is lost in translation to Thornton, a counsellor at Lord Tweedsmuir. He knows that the young boy he saw all those years ago rummaging through the lost-and-found has discovered what matters most in life. “To me, his story encapsulates what public school should be about,” says Thornton. “It doesn’t matter where you come from, how much money you have or who your parents are. This is supposed to be the great equalizer, right? A kid should be able to come into this building and end up right where they need to be. Thomas is such a good example of that.” And after what to him, at age 17 is a lifetime, Thomas Box will fly to South Sudan over spring break to visit the family he has missed for over a decade. “It’s been 12 years since I left,” he says. “They can’t speak English and I can barely speak the language I knew back home. But I want to see them. They are my brothers and sisters and I miss them. I want to see their personalities.” They will certainly see his. And maybe over the course of the discussion, Thomas Box will show them the picture, the one of him holding the flag and running to daylight. It’s been such an incredible journey that at times even he might wonder if it was all just a crazy dream.

*Reprinted with the permission of Howard Tsumura
Originally published on www.varsityathletics.ca on October 11th, 2018

BCSS BY THE NUMBERS



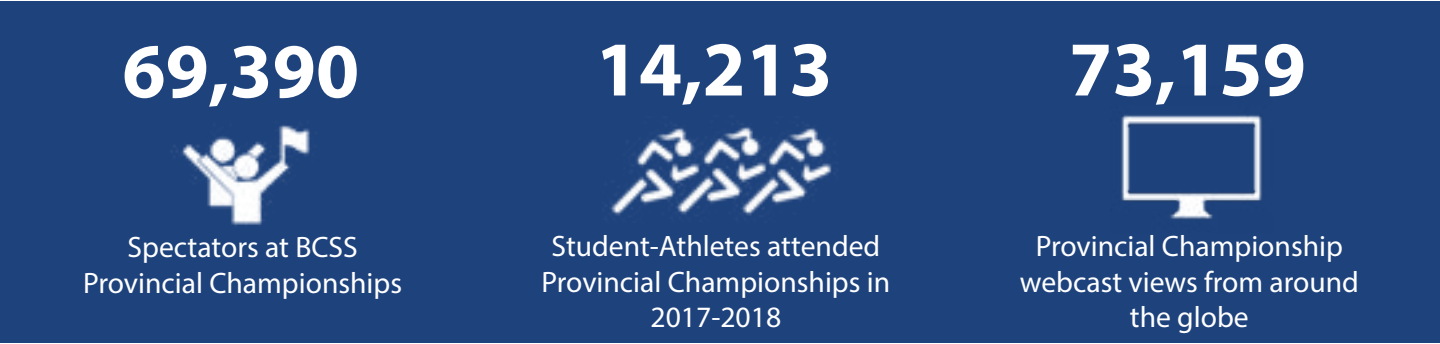
The 2017 - 2018 school year was outstanding! Here is a brief recap of our highlights throughout the year.

Athletic participation has seen an **4.6% increase** from last school year, we now have over 94, 000 student-athlete registrations in high school sports.

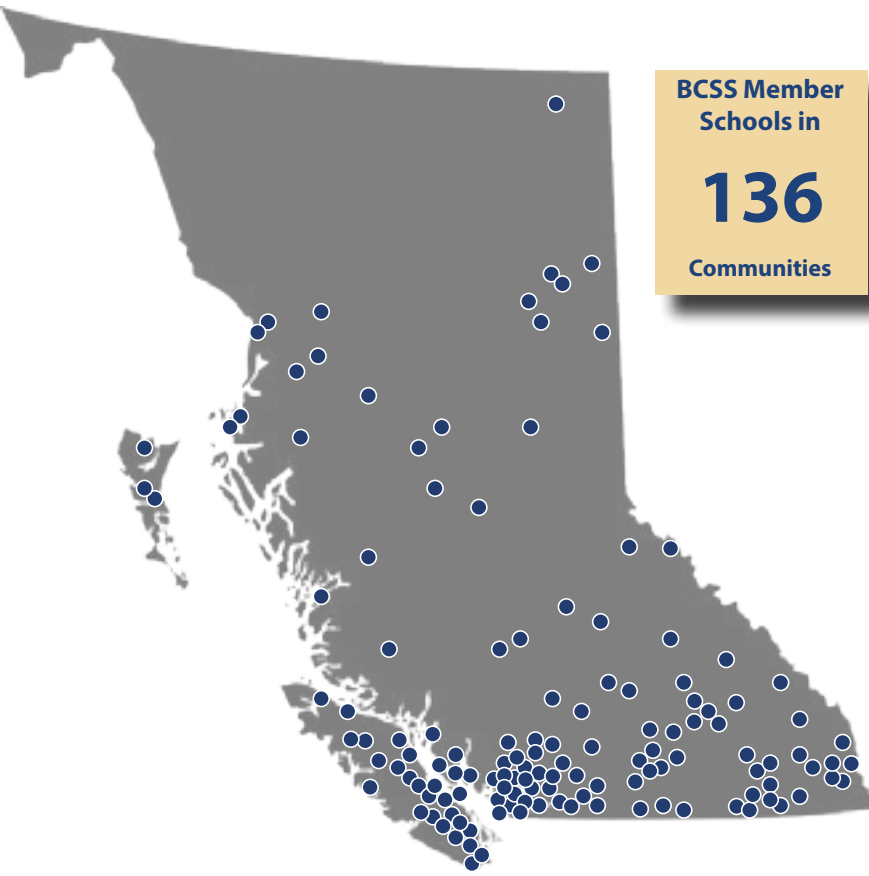
2017 - 2018 was the second year we tracked multi-sport student-athletes (students that participated in more than one BCSS activity) This year we saw a tremendous increase with over 21, 000 multi-sport student-athletes, a **7.4% increase**.

Many of our Provincial Championships are live streamed and can be seen across the globe. We had a tremendous **20% increase** in viewer-ship this year!

PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



2017 - 2018 SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH



SCHOLARSHIPS

CONGRATULATIONS

to all BCSS scholarship winners for the 2017-2018 year!

It brings us great pride to have the opportunity to support our student-athletes in their post-secondary endeavours. BCSS awarded **\$20,750** worth of scholarships in 2017-2018, in conjunction with administering the following scholarships on behalf of the sport commissions.

BCSS ZONE SCHOLARSHIP

SERENA WOLDRING	Notre Dame Regional	EMILY LIGHTBURN	Fernie Secondary
RYAN BAKER	Windsor Secondary	ANDREW CRAIG	The Fernie Academy
JENEVIEVE PATRY-SMITH	Ecole des Pionniers	ZOE BROWN	Kelowna Secondary
MICHAEL DOWHANIUK	Semiahmoo Secondary	CLARKE LARSEN	Okanagan Mission
ASHLEIGH REMPEL	Cedars Christian	CHANTAL GAMMIE	Smithers Secondary
AARON BADOVINAC	Alberni District Secondary	NATHAN STEENHOF	Bulkley Valley Christian
EMMA DEWIT	Cowichan Secondary		

AQUATICS COMMISSION SCHOLARSHIP

JOVAN SANTIAGO	Holy Cross Regional High School
MACKENZIE NIIRANEN	DW Poppy Secondary School
DAVID CANALES	Port Moody Secondary School
LUCY DAVIS	Heritage Woods Secondary School
HALEY BENNETT	SelfDesign Distributed Learning School

BERT AND GRETA QUARTERMAINE BADMINTON SCHOLARSHIP

ARSHI KHALI	North Delta Secondary School
CASSANDRA WONG	RA McMath Secondary School
MADELINE BUSS	Little Flower Academy
LEE DARYL YANG	Fraser Heights Secondary School
HEYDEN LAM	JN Burnett Secondary School
IAN CHEN	Fraser Heights Secondary School

DAVE GIFFORD SCHOLARSHIP (BCSS)

SAVANNAH PURDY	Belmont Secondary School
ADAM PAIGE	Semiahmoo Secondary School

BC DAIRY ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP

CAMILLA GOMEZ HERNANDEZ	Pinetree Secondary School
SAMUEL BOPART	St. Thomas Aquinas Secondary School

"As a dairy producer and chairman of BC Dairy Association, our mission is to provide safe nutritious food to consumers, to support our local community, and engage in a healthy lifestyle. We are proud of all student athletes who commit to making their community stronger by demonstrating these shared values. The dairy farmers of BC provide these scholarships as an opportunity to award like-minded students and to financially support their future academic success."

- DAVE TAYLOR
Chairman, BC Dairy Association

VOLLEYBALL BOYS - ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP

KRISTOFER ESPEZEL	Seaquam Secondary School
RYAN HUM	Burnaby North Secondary School
ZHEN YU YANG	Burnaby North Secondary School
MICHAEL DOWHANIUK	Semiahmoo Secondary School

RUGBY COMMISSION SCHOLARSHIP

PETER MITTERMAIER	Southridge School
MACKENZIE ALLINSON	Lord Tweedsmuir Secondary School
CONNOR BYRON	Yale Secondary School
THOMAS BLACKBURN	Elgin Park Secondary School

FIELD HOCKEY COMMISSION SCHOLARSHIP

BAILEY MITCHELL	South Delta Secondary School
NICOLE SHI	Little Flower Academy

CROSS COUNTRY COMMISSION SCHOLARSHIP

RHIAN PATERSON	Sentinel Secondary School
AIDAN DOHERTY	West Vancouver Secondary School

2017-2018 PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONS

AQUATICS	
Boys	St. George's School
Girls	Penticton Secondary School
Combined	Penticton Secondary School
BASKETBALL	
A Boys	Heritage Christian School
AA Boys	Brentwood College
AAA Boys	South Kamloops Secondary School
AAAA Boys	Burnaby South Secondary School
A Girls	Unity Christian School
AA Girls	South Kamloops Secondary School
AAA Girls	Kelowna Secondary School
CURLING	
Boys	Penticton Secondary School
Girls	Earl Marriott Secondary School
FOOTBALL	
AA	Windsor Secondary School
AAA	New Westminster Secondary
GYMNASTICS	
Combined	Windsor Secondary School
RUGBY	
AA	Collingwood School
AAA	South Delta Secondary School
AAAA	Oak Bay Secondary School
SOCCER	
A Boys	St. Andrew's School
AA Boys	Langley Fundamental Secondary
AAA Boys	Dr. Charles Best Secondary
A Girls	Glenlyon Norfolk Secondary
AA Girls	St. Michaels University School
AAA Girls	Centennial Secondary School
TRACK & FIELD	
A Boys	Nanaimo Christian School
AA Boys	Abbotsford Christian School
AAA Boys	RE Mountain Secondary School
A Girls	Aberdeen Hall Preparatory
AA Girls	Abbotsford Christian School
AAA Girls	Maple Ridge Secondary School
A Combined	Aberdeen Hall Preparatory
AA Combined	Abbotsford Christian School
AAA Combined	Maple Ridge Secondary School

BADMINTON	
Combined	Fraser Heights Secondary School
CROSS COUNTRY	
Boys	Oak Bay Secondary School
Girls	Oak Bay Secondary School
FIELD HOCKEY	
AA Girls	Collingwood School
AAA Girls	Handsworth Secondary School
GOLF	
A	Aberdeen Hall Preparatory School
AA	Collingwood School
AAA	Walnut Grove Secondary School
MOUNTAIN BIKING	
Combined	Salmon Arm Secondary School
SKIING	
Boys	St. George's School
Girls	York House School
Combined	Collingwood School
SNOWBOARDING	
Boys	Smithers Secondary School
Girls	Lakes District Secondary School
Combined	Lakes District Secondary School
TENNIS	
AA Co-ed	Collingwood School
AAA Co-ed	Heritage Woods Secondary School
ULTIMATE*	
AA Co-ed	RC Palmer Secondary School
AAA Co-ed	Eric Hamber Secondary School
VOLLEYBALL	
A Boys	Credo Christian School
AA Boys	Langley Christian School
AAA Boys	Semiahmoo Secondary School
A Girls	Unity Christian School
AA Girls	Langley Christian School
AAA Girls	Crofton House School
AAAA Girls	Belmont Secondary School
WRESTLING	
Boys	Alberni District Secondary School
Girls	Alberni District Secondary School
Combined	Alberni District Secondary School

* Demonstration Sport in 2017-2018

BCSSWOULDLIKETO THANK ALLOF OURPARTNERS
FOR THEIR GENEROUS FUNDING AND SUPPORT.



PLATINUM



GOLD



BRONZE



SUPPORTER





BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Supported by the Province of British Columbia

BC School Sports gratefully acknowledges
the financial support of the
Province of British Columbia

bcschoolsports.ca