

Western Canada Summer Games

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the athletes, coaches and mission staff who represented Team Northwest Territories at the 2019 Western Canada Summer Games, held in Swift Current, Saskatchewan from August 9 to 18.

This year, Team NT fielded 167 participants in seven different sports including soccer, swimming, athletics, tennis, volleyball and wrestling.

I am happy to report that this year's results at the games ended with more medals than the Northwest Territories has seen in 20 years. As Members may recall, during the first half of competition Team NT had some great results, particularly in swimming where Leo Konge (Kong-gaa) won a gold and two bronze medals. Our basketball and soccer teams also had great performances standing up well against the larger Provinces and our friends from Yukon.

In the second half, athletes from volleyball, wrestling, and athletics accomplished some great results, including three bronze medals:

1. In Tennis - women's doubles
 - Ofira Duru (pronounced Oo-fear-ah Doo-roo) and
 - Monika Kunderlik (pronounce Monica Coon-der-lick)
2. In athletics for our male medley relay team
 - Struden Hult-Griffin (pronounced Stri-den Hult-griffen)
 - Bryce Smith
 - Zackary Horton
 - Nicolas Bennett
3. And in wrestling for Cameron Courtorellie (pronounced Cam-er-on Coo-tray)

There were other noteworthy results and achievements in the second half:

1. Katie Hart broke 3 Northwest Territories records to finish 5th overall in Javelin; and
2. Nick Rivet of Yellowknife was also the first ever on-field official from the Northwest Territories to adjudicate soccer matches at this level.

Mr. Speaker, I am also proud to recognize Team NT for their efforts to make all sport more inclusive. On August 15, the Team launched its “You Can Play” program promoting inclusivity and respect in Sport.

The Western Canada Summer Games included teams from Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nunavut, Yukon and the Northwest Territories. There were nearly 1700 athletes, coaches, managers and staff and approximately 2000 volunteers engaged in the 2019 Western Canada Summer Games. The Western Canada Summer Games are an incredible event because not only do they combine athletic competition, they also provide an opportunity for building lifetime friendships with fellow Canadian athletes.

The Government of the Northwest Territories was extremely proud to promote our team at the Western Canada Summer Games through direct financial support and indirectly through a range of other programs that encourage the development of athletes, coaches and officials’ at the local, regional, territorial and national levels.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Rita Mercredi, Chef de Mission for Team NT; Damon Crossman, Assistant Chef de Mission for Team NT; and all of their mission staff. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the many volunteers who were responsible for supporting Team NT, including the Sport North Federation and all of the territorial sport organizations who were responsible for selecting and managing the team. Their contributions play an important role in helping create a healthier Northwest Territories.

I would like to make special mention of all the parents and care-givers who supported children and youth in their athletic pursuits. Their dedication to the development of all our youth is evident through the number of parents, and care-givers who attended these Games in person, and it is appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, we have much to be proud of in our sport and recreation system, and these Western Canada Summer Games were a great example of the good that can come from supporting these endeavors. I am sure all Members of this House will join me in thanking all our volunteers at the 2019 Western Canada Summer Games and congratulations to all who participated.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.