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Contemporary Policy Issues in High Performance Sport

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This chapter explores the contemporary high performance sport initiatives that are aimed at enhancing the performance of Canada's athletes at international competitions—increasing medals won and sustaining such performance levels in the future. In a paper commissioned by the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Sport, Recreation and Fitness in 1985, the delineation of roles and responsibilities of the two levels of government relative to high performance sport were outlined and agreed upon. It is in this document where a definition of high performance sport was provided and has since guided policy, funding and program initiatives:

High Performance Sport encompasses athletes who achieve, or, who aspire to achieve, or, who have been identified as having the potential *to achieve excellence* in World Class competition. The High Performance System is comprised of those activities, programs, agencies, institutions and personnel who have as one of their primary objectives the preparation of athletes who have achieved, or, who aspire to achieve, or who have been identified as having the potential *to achieve excellence* in World Class competition. (Federal-Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Sport, Recreation and Fitness, 1985, p. 3, *emphasis added*)

It is the understanding of *'to achieve excellence'* that, although debated, is defined as world championships and medals at international competitions, particularly at the Summer and Winter Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. Over two decades ago, Kidd (1988, p. 12) lamented this "philosophy of excellence—the view that top athletic performance, as measured by medals, rankings, and records set in international competition, should be the overriding goal for the Olympic Movement, and that all athletes, coaches and administrators should devote themselves to this goal," and that it has been used both to develop ranking thresholds that control who participates in efforts to improve chances for success and to justify how government and corporate financial investments are allocated. Justice Charles Dubin seemingly supported this critique when he stated, "the measure of success of government funding [should] be linked not to medal count, but to the degree to which it has met the social, educational, and national goals of government for sport" (Dubin, 1990, p. 531).

Nevertheless, the relevance of international sport to social, political and economic priorities on a global scale throughout the last two decades has meant that "the power struggle between nations to win medals in major international competitions has intensified. This has led to national sport organizations and governments throughout the world spending increasing sums of money on elite sport" (de Bosscher et al., 2008, p. 13). Oakley and Green coined the term 'global sporting arms race' to characterize the rapid increase in financial investment that governments have made in elite sport and in becoming the 'super power' of international sport. According to Donnelly (2010a, p. 44), "governments are apparently engaged in this 'race' in order to make symbolic statements about national identity, pride and virility." In Canada, such a rationale has historical roots in the early development of government intervention in sport under Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government of the 1970s when unity and identity defined a number of cultural policies including sport.

Fuelling Canada's place in this 'race' was the awarding of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games to Vancouver in 2003, where the goals became finishing first in the medal table for the Olympic Winter Games and in the top three in the gold medal count at the Paralympic Winter Games. These goals were supported by Own the Podium—a focused public and private investment in the development of high performance sport (discussed later in the chapter). The drive for medal success has continued with the goal

for future Olympic Winter Games as being in contention for number one, for top 10 in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio and top eight in 2020 and 2024. The medal goal for the London 2012 Paralympics was top eight based on gold medal count. Touted as a social investment in pride, inspiration and unity, international success as measured by medal tally has become the driving force of Canada's high performance system. Canada's total medal ranking in the Olympic and Paralympic Games (winter and summer) from 2000–2012 relative to the top three nation rankings is presented in Table 4.1.

De Bosscher et al. (2008, p. 122) stated that:

More nations are adopting strategic approaches towards the development of elite athletes and as a result an increasing number of nations have developed genuine medal winning capability. As the supply of success, that is, the number of events and medals that can be contested is relatively fixed, and demand for success is increasing, the "market" adjusts by raising the price of success. The price of success is the investment in revenue and capital required to produce success.

Although in contention for 'global dominance' in the Olympic Winter Games, Canada has struggled to sustain a place of international dominance as the size, scope and enhanced investment, on a global scale, in the sports and the athletes involved in summer games and in paralympic sports has continued to grow. However, the backdrop to medal tables and tallies needs to be explored—in particular the policies and programs that provide the context for understanding Canada's place in this 'global sporting arms race' and the questions and conversations it raises.

The policy developments and legislative changes made in 2002 and 2003 (see Chapter I) provided the foundation for the current high performance sport system's emphasis on championships, medals and rankings. In particular, "the vision of the 2002 [*Canadian Sport Policy*] reflected governments' desire for the increased effectiveness of the sport system and for Canadian athletes to move to the forefront of international sport" (Sport Canada, 2012, p. 2). This vision was agreed upon by federal, provincial and territorial governments with each level of government working with agencies within its jurisdiction to implement actions that, over the last 10 years, have moved the system towards this goal. In an effort to achieve success in international

Table 4.1 Canada's Paralympic and Olympic Medal Standings 2000–2012

Paralympic Games							Olympic Games						
2000: Sydney							2000: Sydney						
Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total		Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	
1	Australia	63	39	47	149		1	United States	36	24	31	91	
2	Great Britain	41	43	47	131		2	Russia	32	28	28	88	
3	Canada	38	33	25	96		3	China	28	16	15	59	
							18	Canada	3	3	8	14	
2004: Athens							2004: Athens						
1	China	63	46	32	141		1	United States	36	39	27	102	
2	Great Britain	35	30	29	94		2	Russia	27	27	38	92	
3	Canada	28	19	25	72		3	China	32	17	14	63	
							19	Canada	3	6	3	12	
2008: Beijing							2008: Beijing						
1	China	89	70	52	211		1	United States	36	38	36	110	
2	Great Britain	42	29	31	102		2	China	51	21	28	100	
3	United States	36	35	28	99		3	Russia	23	21	28	72	
7	Canada	19	10	21	50		14	Canada	3	9	6	18	

Table 4.1 (Continued)

2012: London						2012: London					
1	China	95	71	65	231	1	United States	46	29	29	104
2	Great Britain	34	43	43	120	2	China	38	27	23	88
3	Russia	36	38	28	102	3	Russia	24	26	32	82
13	Canada	7	15	9	31	13	Canada	1	5	12	18
Paralympic Winter Games						Olympic Winter Games					
2002: Salt Lake						2002: Salt Lake					
Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Germany	17	1	15	33	1	Germany	12	16	8	36
2	United States	10	22	11	43	2	United States	10	13	11	34
3	Norway	10	3	6	19	3	Norway	12	5	7	25
6	Canada	6	4	5	15	4	Canada	7	3	7	17
2006: Turin						2006: Turin					
1	Russia	13	13	7	33	1	Germany	11	12	6	29
2	Germany	8	5	5	18	2	United States	9	9	7	25
3	Ukraine	7	9	9	25	3	Canada	7	10	7	24
6	Canada	5	3	5	13						
2010: Vancouver						2010: Vancouver					
1	Germany	13	5	6	24	1	United States	9	15	13	37
2	Russia	12	16	10	38	2	Germany	10	13	7	30
3	Canada	10	5	4	19	3	Canada	14	7	5	26

sport, two critical challenges were identified: developing “a systematic, analytical and collaborative approach to the development of high performance athletes” (Sport Canada, 2002a, p. 9); and improving international performances through systematic investment in sport and coaching science as well as “the collaborative setting of performance targets to guide the design, monitoring and evaluation of an effective athlete development system” (Sport Canada, 2002a, p. 10).

In 2005, Sport Canada confirmed its interest in high performance sport releasing their “Sport Excellence Strategy” where high performance sport success is linked to three specific activities: 1) collaborative leadership and establishing partnerships with agencies such as national/provincial/territorial sport organizations, Canadian sport institutes (CSIs) and Canadian sport centres (CSCs) to ensure a system of support for high performance athletes; 2) ensuring sustainable funding for high performance sport by monitoring existing funding requirements, co-ordinating funding decisions of funding partners to ensure efficient and effective allocation and exploring new funding opportunities; and 3) sport system performance, which is defined as support for the Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model, coaching development, Own the Podium (OTP) strategy, and providing more international opportunities for competition in Canada by supporting the *Federal Policy for Hosting International Sport Events*. An important aspect of the strategy is the idea of accountability through performance objectives, both for athletes at the Olympic and Paralympic Games and other major international events but also for monitoring and evaluating collaborative leadership, sustainable funding and sport system performance objectives (Canadian Heritage, 2005).

It is this understanding of ‘excellence’ that will be used as the basis for framing a discussion of the current context of the high performance sport system in Canada. In particular, there are activities, programs, agencies, institutions and personnel that make up this system; this chapter will explore some of the current funding, training and development initiatives as well as the key stakeholders that have shaped and continue to shape current high performance sport in Canada. In the following section, the role of the Long-Term Athlete Development Model¹ and Own the Podium are discussed in relation to high performance sport. However, it is important to note that the renewal of the CSP in 2012 has confirmed and solidified high performance sport as a key policy priority for governments,

stating that a desired outcome is that “Canadians are systematically achieving world-class results at the highest levels of international competition through fair and ethical means” (Sport Canada, 2012, p. 3). This policy priority has an important history and provides the backdrop for understanding the role that the policy priorities have played in providing opportunities for Canadian athletes to excel at international sport competitions.

In principle, the 2012 *Canadian Sport Policy* (Sport Canada, 2012) builds on its predecessor, the 2002 CSP (Sport Canada, 2002a), by continuing to promote a balanced approach between high performance sport and sport participation as policy goals; however, when the allocation of federal funding for specific programs is considered along with the manner in which various high performance sport initiatives have been supported, it is clear that although high performance sport and the production of medal performances have faced a number of crises, they are clearly entrenched as policy priorities.

The development of the high performance sport system over the past decade and in particular the development and implementation of more recent initiatives such as the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework, Own the Podium, and the Long-Term Athlete Development model point to an effort to strengthen in quality and quantity the key stakeholders that play an important role in the governance of high performance sport programs and policy and ensure their co-ordination with government policy priority. Table 4.2 provides a brief description of the key stakeholders discussed in this chapter and the role they play in the provision of high performance sport. Working collaboratively on a number of initiatives and also working independently on their various missions and programs, these organizations each play a significant role in providing services and funding for high performance sport in Canada. These initiatives are the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

The Sport Funding and Accountability Framework: Performance-Based Funding for Sport Organizations

Although the *Canadian Sport Policy* 2012 identifies a vision for sport that is broader than one focused exclusively on sport excellence, when we explore and expose current funding programs, which are important tools for achieving government goals, it is clear that federal government priorities favour the enhancement of sport excellence.

Table 4.2 Stakeholders and Descriptions

Stakeholder	Description
Canadian Olympic Committee (COC)	A national non-profit organization responsible for Canada's participation in the Olympic Games and the Pan American Games as well as for other initiatives that support the Olympic Movement and promote Olympic values at the community level. The COC's mission is "To lead the achievement of podium success at Olympic Games and to advance the Olympic Movement in Canada" (Canadian Olympic Committee, 2011, Mission, paragraph 9).
Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC)	A non-profit organization that governs and supports high performance sport for Canadian Paralympic athletes. The CPC develops and provides programs to support the Paralympic Movement and Paralympic Games in Canada (this association is explored more fully in Chapter X) for athletes with physical disabilities. CPC's Mission is "to lead the development of a sustainable Paralympic sport system in Canada to enable athletes to reach the podium at the Paralympic Games (Canadian Paralympic Committee, 2011, About Us, paragraph 4).
Canadian Sport Centres/ (CSCs) Canadian Sport Institutes (CSIs)	Created through a partnership of Sport Canada, the COC, the CAC, and provincial level partners (e.g., government and non-profit organizations). Centres/institutes provide athletes and coaches with necessary support services such as athletic therapy, nutrition and access to advances in sport science. Currently, there is a network of seven centres/ institutes across the country (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada).
Coaching Association of Canada (CAC)	A multi-sport/service organization that oversees the training and certification of coaches in Canada through the National Coaching Certification Program. The CAC has also taken a leadership role in the development and implementation of the Long-Term Athlete Development initiative supported by Sport Canada.
Own the Podium (OTP)	A multi-service not-for-profit organization governed by an advisory board and administered by a management team and support staff who provide services and advice to athletes and national sport organizations (NSOs).

Table 4.2 (Continued)

Stakeholder	Description
Sport Canada	A branch in the Department of Canadian Heritage, it is the agency through which the Government of Canada is involved in high performance sport. Sport Canada is mandated to create policy, award grants, administer program initiatives and to support sport's contribution to Canadian identity and culture and advance the goals in the <i>Canadian Sport Policy</i> .
WinSport Canada	A non-profit organization that has developed from Canada's first high performance sport centre to become Canada's first comprehensive training institute providing facilities, technical and scientific expertise, educational support for athletes and administrative support and space for sport organizations.

In an effort to assist the government in achieving its policy objectives for sport excellence, Sport Canada has established several funding programs:

- Athlete Assistance Program (AAP)—which provides funding directly to athletes;
- Hosting Program—which supports national sport organizations and multi-sport/service organizations in their desire to host international multi-sport games (e.g., Pan Am Games, Olympic and Paralympic Games, North American Indigenous Games) or international single sport events (e.g., 2010 International Association of Athletics Federations World Junior Championships in Athletics; 2010 Union cycliste internationale Mountain Bike and Trials World Championships; 2010 World Wheelchair Rugby Championships);
- Sport Support Program (SSP)—which provides funding to national sport organizations, and multi-sport/service organizations;
- Project Stream—which provides funding to special initiatives to aid Sport Canada's strategic objectives in either sport excellence or sport participation by focusing on one or more the policy principles, namely, strengthening quality and capacity, promoting access and equity, promoting awareness and enhancing sport knowledge.

The focus of this section will be on the SSP, which is administered through the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (SFAF), a multi-year federal government funding application for national sport and multi-sport/service organizations that is used to determine which organizations are eligible for federal funding. Following the application of an objective scoring of organizational programs and performances of eligible organizations, rankings are established that guide the level of funding for each funding cycle. In addition, each funded organization has an accountability agreement whereby standards must be achieved in certain federal policy objectives. The next section places the development of the SFAF in the broader policy context. This is followed by a section that explores the SFAF and its implications for high performance sport.

Policy Context

Social, economic and political forces converged in the late 1980s and early 1990s to interrupt and refocus Canada's approach to the funding of high performance sport, which was often characterized as the 'Eastern bloc' of the West—an implication that high performance sport was a state-controlled and directed machine. Ironically, the aftermath of Ben Johnson's positive doping test at the Summer Olympic Games in Seoul, Korea, in 1988 and the subsequent federal government *Commission of Inquiry into the Use of Drugs and Banned Practices Intended to Increase Athletic Performances* (i.e., Dubin inquiry) represent a critical moment in Canadian high performance sport, when the foundation upon which the high performance sport system was built in the 1970s and 1980s came 'crashing down' amid the testimony of athletes, coaches, and administrators at the Dubin inquiry. The inquiry subsequently exposed the practice of doping and the wilful blindness of both technical and administrative staff within the Canadian sport system, upsetting the preconceptions of the place of high performance sport and its importance to Canada (see also Chapter VII). This 'existential crisis' led not only to the adoption of a new anti-doping policy but also to a litany of policy discussions that focused on questions about the values that underpin high performance sport policy, what the role of government in high performance sport should be, and whether the government should support a narrower spectrum of core sports to allow sport organizations and the government to get a better return on its investment (Best, 1994;

Blackhurst, Schneider, & Strachan, 1991; Green & Houlihan, 2005; Minister's Task Force, 1992).

It is important to recognize that this crisis was occurring at a time of significant economic restraint where reducing the financial deficit became the primary political objective of the Progressive Conservative federal government of the day. As such, rolling back federal government spending became the deficit reduction strategy, and the recommendation for identifying 'core sports' aligned neatly with the federal government's interest in reducing public spending. The Core Sport Commission, established in June 1993 by the Progressive Conservative government, was mandated to provide recommendations to the federal government on the 'core sport concept' and on the identification of criteria for funding eligibility and accountability that would reduce the number of sport organizations receiving federal funding and instead focus resources on those sports determined to have the greatest value and significance to Canadians (Best, 1994). The Commission released the *Report of the Core Sport Commissioner* (known as the *Best Report*) in 1994, establishing a Sport Funding and Eligibility Framework that required organizations meet certain criteria, such as "value to Canadian society," to be eligible for funding. The 'core sport' approach was a fundamental shift from the way funding had been provided to national sport and multi-sport/service organizations, wherein there was little transparency to the rationale for funding and funding levels. During the development of the core sport concept, a federal election took place in November 1993, and the Progressive Conservative Party, in power since 1984, was defeated by the Liberal Party. The new Liberal Government did not accept the recommendations regarding the core sports identified by the Core Sport Commission and charged Sport Canada's civil servants (the same civil servants involved in contributing to the 'shelved' *Best Report*) with the task of revisiting how best to manage funding contributions to sport. Although the political party in power changed in November 1993, concerns over the fiscal deficit did not.

With its commitment to a balanced budget, the Liberal Government embarked on a program review exercise requiring all departments to assess their programs to identify whether federal government involvement was essential to their implementation or could other levels of government or non-government organizations take over the delivery of the program (Savoie, 2000). For Sport Canada, programs that were to continue to receive funding, even at a reduced

level, had to fit with their ‘core business’ objective, which was sport at the international, national and inter-provincial levels as well as the fulfilment of the government’s social agenda policy priorities (Federal-Provincial Ministers Responsible for Sport, Recreation and Fitness, 1985). As such, in the reassessment of a funding strategy for national sport and multi-sport/service organizations, the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (SFAF) was established in 1995 and fully implemented in 1996. For the first time, national sport and multi-sport/service organizations had to indicate their achievements and specific program objectives as well as how these aligned with larger social policy objectives established by government with respect to improving access and opportunity for underserved groups, an athlete-centred focus, harassment and abuse, athlete appeals, bilingual policies and anti-doping policies.

The SFAF was the Liberal Government’s approach to the ‘core sport’ concept—maintaining the idea of establishing criteria for the objective evaluation and ranking of national sport and multi-sport/service organizations, while emphasizing the ‘accountability’ of organizations for achieving performance objectives—which involved altering the evaluation from ‘are you eligible?’ to ‘are you accountable?’² While the Liberal government may have backtracked on supporting the *Best Report* submitted under the Progressive Conservative Government, the SFAF may in fact represent ‘old wine in an old bottle’ with a ‘new label.’ The SFAF, at least for the first cycle (1996–2001), achieved the same objective as the *Best Report*—reducing the number of organizations that received federal government funding and thus achieving the broader objective of developing a strategic approach to deficit reduction facing all governments at the time. Moreover, as a budget reduction exercise, the SFAF was successful; as demonstrated in Table 4.3 the introduction of the SFAF in 1995–1996 saw a dramatic decline in funding provided to NSOs and multi-sport/service organizations (MSOs). The SFAF is considered by government to be a comprehensive and objective policy tool designed to ensure

Table 4.3 Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (CA\$)

	1994–1995 (pre-SFAF)	1995–1996 (SFAF Pilot)	1996–1997 (SFAF I)
NSO funding	\$26,620,593	\$21,343,218	\$20,814,831
MSO funding	\$16,539,852	\$13,019,873	\$ 7,204,968

that federal government funding is allocated to organizations that have demonstrated through specific program objectives that they are contributing to the federal government's policy priorities.

Through the SFAF, the federal government is able to determine which national sport and multi-sport/service organizations are eligible for funding, which areas are funded, and what level of funding each organization is to receive. It is through this policy tool that the federal government is able to steer these organizations towards achieving policy priorities. It remains to be seen whether the latest economic crisis and the current Conservative government's focus on deficit reduction for the next few years will result in similar budget reductions for national sport and multi-sport/service organizations. Moreover, despite promises to maintain funding commitments to Own the Podium (discussed later), there has been no such indication of support for the organizations responsible for the governance of their sport or for the co-ordination and development of sport services to support elite athletes.

SFAF and High Performance Sport

The SFAF has evolved since it was first introduced in 1995 in terms of eligibility criteria, area of funding, and how organizations are assessed to determine level of funding. However the fundamental process has remained the same. There are four stages to the SFAF process. The first stage, eligibility, requires organizations to apply to be recognized as eligible for federal government funding. The criteria at this stage require organizations to demonstrate sound governance practices and the proposed means of fulfilling federal sport and social policy objectives. In addition, NSOs must also meet criteria that indicate either an international scope (e.g., are affiliated with an international federation that complies with the World Anti-Doping Code, and have top-16 finishes in international events in the last decade) or a national scope (e.g., have a large membership base, have a national championship, and have the involvement of a minimum of eight provinces or territorial organizations). The eligibility criteria also require organizations to demonstrate a sound organizational structure—something that the federal government had prioritized in earlier funding programs in the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, the criteria require NSOs to implement specific federal government policies—ensuring government priorities for sport are

implemented through NSOs, which fits with the broader government reforms identified in the Program Review.

Organizations that are assessed as eligible for funding move through to the assessment stage where evidence-based evaluations and performance indicators are used to assess performance in the areas of high performance and sport participation. Multi-sport/service organizations are assessed with regard to performance in the areas of excellence, sport participation, and development. Table 4.4 shows the evaluation criteria for SFAF IV³ for summer sports. With excellence weighted at 60%, this supports the federal government's policy interest on podium performances at the international level. As such, it is clear that the SFAF requires sport organizations to focus resources on achieving success at international events. However, the recent integration of the Long-Term Athlete Development model as part of eligibility requirements (i.e., investing in the development of future athletes) has become increasingly important in shaping the strategic deployment of NSO resources. It is important to note, however, that a focus on 'sport participation and development' weighted at 40% does not have a significant emphasis on enhancing sport participation through focusing on skill development and enhancing sport awareness and interest—rather the focus is on developing and sustaining a competitive sport structure through membership, championships, club development, coaching and official development. In essence, sport participation and development is being defined for national-level organizations as one that aims to develop sport participation initiatives that provide a broader and deeper pool of potential high performance athletes. The current SFAF ranking lists of summer and winter sports are shown in Tables 4.5 and 4.6.

Once organizations are ranked, the third phase requires the submission of a funding application following contribution guidelines identified by Sport Canada; funding is then allocated based on ranking and details provided in the funding application. In determining level of funding, Sport Canada considers not only ranking but also the unique aspects of the sport, for example, team sport versus individual sport and the global nature of the sport. In the first implementation of the SFAF in 1996–2001, only 53 NSOs met the eligibility criteria—and of those 53, only 38 qualified for funding. With significant budget reductions during this time, Sport Canada was able to use the SFAF to prioritize

Table 4.4 Sport Funding and Accountability Framework IV Summer NSO Assessment Weighting Grid

Area	Section	Component	Mainstream %	Athletes with a Disability %
EXCELLENCE (60%)	Athlete Results	Beijing Games	12	12
		Athens Games	6	6
		Sydney Games	2	2
		World Championships <i>Note: Results from World Championships for the years 2000–2007 are evaluated with a consistently increasing value, which is dependent on the actual number of World Championships for each NSO</i>	20	20
SPORT PARTICIPATION AND DEVELOPMENT (40%)	High Performance System	High Performance Management System	4	4
		National Team Coaches	8	8
		Athlete Annual Training and Competition Plans	3	3
		National Team Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation	3	3
		Integrated Support Teams	2	2
		Membership	10	7
		National Championships	5	7
		Provincial/Territorial Championships	5	6
		Coaching Certification—NCCP Registrants	5	n/a
		Skill Development and Awareness/First Contact	5	5
SPORT PARTICIPATION	Sport Development	NCCP Transition and Non NCCP Coach Development	5	7
		Officials Development	4	7
		Club/League Development	1	1

**Table 4.5 Sport Funding and Accountability Framework
Ranking and Sport Canada Funding for Summer Sport NSOs**

Summer NSOs— Mainstream	Excellence Rank	Participation and Development Rank	2009–2010 Sport Canada Funding* CA\$
Rowing	1	33	4,448,140
Swimming	2	6	5,008,000
Canoeing	3	12	3,561,152
Diving	4	24	2,501,540
Gymnastics	5	2	2,581,000
Synchro Swim	6	29	1,204,500
Athletics	7	11	4,177,100
Water Polo	8	34	1,522,750
Baseball	9	9	944,000
Softball	10	3	1,014,500
Cycling	11	14	2,598,010
Soccer	12	4	1,830,000
Wrestling	13	18	1,541,500
Triathlon	14	27	848,000
Judo	15	22	1,057,000
Basketball	16	10	2,625,750
Volleyball	17	7	1,080,500
Rugby	18	13	603,500
Taekwondo	19	26	659,000
Fencing	20	32	1,164,250
Sailing	21	8	1,330,250
Golf	22	1	715,000
Field Hockey	23	25	754,000
Water Ski	24	20	561,000
Equestrian	25	17	1,268,750
Racquetball	26	37	380,000
Boxing	27	38	405,500
Tennis	28	5	987,250
Squash	29	21	391,000
Table Tennis	30	23	540,900
Shooting	31	30	194,775
Karate	32	31	126,500

Table 4.5 (Continued)

Summer NSOs— Mainstream	Excellence Rank	Participation and Development Rank	2009–2010 Sport Canada Funding* CA\$
Archery	33	36	236,200
Weightlifting	34	40	82,500
Badminton	35	28	357,500
Cricket	36	39	128,500
Lawn Bowls	37	35	168,000
Bowling	38	15	325,000
Sport Parachuting	39	41	98,500

*Sport Canada Funding—includes SFAF (evaluation of excellence and participation, in addition to any special project funding)

**Table 4.6 Sport Funding and Accountability Framework
Ranking and Sport Canada Funding for Winter Sport NSOs**

Winter NSOs— Mainstream	2007 Excellence Rank	2007 Participation and Development Rank	2007–2008 Sport Canada Funding* CA\$
Speedskating	1	7	3,706,428
Hockey	2	1	3,675,406
Bobsleigh, Luge and Skeleton	3	12	2,913,353
Freestyle Ski	4	11	2,875,794
Alpine Ski	5	6	4,481,521
Curling	6	3	2,055,438
Figure Skating	7	2	1,682,000
Cross Country Ski	8	5	2,702,525
Snowboard	9	10	1,920,391
Biathlon	10	9	602,500

*Sport Canada Funding—includes SFAF (evaluation of excellence and participation; in addition to any special project funding)

funding to organizations that met SFAF criteria. This contrasts with the current scenario, which is reflective of the pre-SFAF funding era in Canadian sport during which time over 60 NSOs received funding.

The final stage of the SFAF involves accountability agreements with each funded organizations. These agreements are tied to the social goals of the federal government identified earlier and are also linked to the goals of the Canadian Sport Policy. However, in their assessment of the SFAF over the 1995–2004 period, Havaris and Danylchuk (2007) found that there were no consequences for not meeting accountability standards for social policy objectives, suggesting “the SFAF has generated a tendency toward accountancy rather than accountability” (p. 49), which meant that organizations could satisfy the reporting requirements in terms of accountability agreements, but there were no consequences or penalties for non-compliance. As well, they found that, if standards were not met, Sport Canada would provide additional funding to assist them in achieving their goal.

With the SFAF solidly in place since 1996, it represents the shift in government to tie funding to specific public policy objectives enabling government to achieve these objectives through the work of external organizations (i.e., stakeholders). Such an approach makes it possible for government to adopt a co-ordinating or ‘steering’ role, shaping the direction of organizations that receive funds from this program. The SFAF serves as an economic policy tool as well, insofar as it achieves the broader public policy objectives of accountability and transparency. In addition, it serves specific sport objectives of the government and sport organizations. In its present form, achieving international success and programs aimed at supporting excellence are the clear funding priorities. The SFAF is really less about a division between excellence and participation than it is about national athlete/team performance and the development of national athletes/teams.

Own the Podium and the Pursuit of International Sport Success

Following the awarding of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games to Vancouver in July 2003, an immediate concern for much of the sport community was that Canada had the dubious distinction of being the only nation, as host of the Olympic Games (summer in

Montreal in 1976 and winter in Calgary in 1988), not to win a gold medal. With the aim of ensuring effective games, there was a collective effort to develop a comprehensive approach to ensure medal success in 2010. Specifically, key stakeholders (i.e., VANOC 2010, Sport Canada, Canadian Paralympic Committee, Canadian Olympic Committee and winter NSOs) collaborated to develop a national strategy to finish first in the medal table at the Olympic Winter Games and third at the Paralympic Winter Games—in other words, to ‘own the podium.’

Own the Podium (OTP) is a strategic approach aimed at winning medals at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The origins of this approach can be traced to the *Canadian Sport Policy* (2002) and the Work Group on Excellence that was established to explore how the priority for enhanced athlete and sport system performance identified in the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Plan for Collaborative Action 2002–2005 might be achieved (Sport Canada, 2002b). Key actions identified were to establish targets to assess athlete and sport system performance, enhance the use of sport science and establish the role of national sport centres. The work group submitted a report to the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council in January 2004 that recommended the adoption of specific performance targets for athletic performance:

- For Olympic winter sports, Canada consistently places in the top three nations in the medal count, with the goal being to finish first in the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Winter Games;
- For Olympic summer sports, Canada consistently places in the top eight nations in the medal count by 2012;
- For Paralympic winter sports, Canada consistently places in the top three nations in the gold medal count by 2010;
- For Paralympic summer sports, Canada consistently places in the top three nations in the gold medal count by 2012. (Brisson, 2004, p. v)

The report suggested performance targets would facilitate collaboration and greater co-ordination between key stakeholders in the sport system providing a unified focus for programs and funding. This suggested that funding would need to be focused on sports, athletes and teams with medal potential to ensure the most efficient approach to achieve desired performance targets.

In February 2004, winter NSOs, the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC), the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC), Sport Canada, the Calgary Olympic Development Association (CODA) (now WinSport Canada) and VANOC 2010 met to discuss the strategy for achieving the rank of first in the medal table at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games and top three at the 2010 Paralympic Winter Games. The COC formed a Task Force to develop the “*Own the Podium—2010*” plan and contracted Cathy Priestner Allinger⁴ to co-ordinate a team of experts charged with reviewing winter sports and predicting the number of medals Canada should win at the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. They were also to provide direction on how to achieve the performance goal, determine funding priority for sports and establish a strategy for implementing OTP. The OTP Task Force released their report entitled *Own the Podium 2010* in September 2004, which set a goal of 35 medals in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games (Priestner Allinger & Allinger, 2004).

The report also recommended sports be tiered to identify level of funding. Tiers were determined based on assessments of each sport’s importance to Canadian culture (i.e., sports that were considered popular and important to Canadians were assessed according to levels of pride and participation numbers), past Olympic success and medal potential. The recommended budget to “increase the number of potential medalists and the success rate of athletes in 2010” (Priestner Allinger & Allinger, 2004, p. 28) was estimated at CA\$ 110M over five years. In February 2005, VANOC committed 50% of the budget through corporate-sector sponsorship, while the provincial and federal government budgets allocated CA\$ 11M per year to winter sports and CA\$ 12M per year to summer sports, covering the remaining 50%.

At the time of the review, Paralympic Alpine was the only sport involved in *Own the Podium* consultations (Priestner Allinger & Allinger, 2004). The report indicated that Paralympic sports did not have the capacity to identify performance targets:

The priority for Paralympic Sport in Canada must be evaluated. It is the opinion of the review team that the CPC is under-resourced to truly provide technical support to their sports and therefore, the *Own the Podium* review was compromised. Paralympic winter sport is primarily organized by volunteers, coached by volunteers, and is successful primarily because of

the commitment these individuals have made to their respective sports. Canada must decide if Paralympic sport is important, and if so, what this means in terms of resources and attention. Canada, as a nation, does have the potential to be extremely successful internationally. Currently, it is disappointing to observe the lack of priority and resources provided to these sports if there is an expectation to be a leading nation in Paralympic sport. This, in addition to the challenge of full integration into able-bodied sport, has created the problematic situation that will impact Canada's potential to "*Own the Podium*" in 2010. (Priestner Allinger & Allinger, 2004, p. vi)

An important aspect of OTP was the strategy recommended for achieving the proposed OTP performance goals. In particular, the report recommended a consolidated approach to funding whereby a "Winter High Performance Sport Commission" would be charged with allocating funding. Centralizing OTP funding in this way was recommended to ensure an efficient, co-ordinated system of funding allocation and monitoring. In addition, the Task Force recommended that significant resources be allocated to research and development and sport sciences. The Top Secret program was created to concentrate research on developing training techniques, technology and equipment that would give Canadian athletes a performance edge. 'Dream team' groups of sport science researchers were recruited and funded to explore advances in the physiological, psychological, biomechanical and nutritional aspects of performance to give Canadian athletes an edge when competing at the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

As OTP began to take shape, the 28 Olympic and Paralympic summer sport organizations, the COC, CPC and Sport Canada led by Dr. Roger Jackson (a former Canadian Olympic rower), CEO of Own the Podium, developed a business plan to guide athlete performance excellence for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and the 2012 Olympic Games in London. *The Road to Excellence Business Plan for the Summer Olympic and Paralympic Sports* (RTE) was developed in April 2006. Alex Baumann, former double gold medalist in swimming at the 1984 Olympic Games was recruited from his leadership position with the Australian Institute of Sport to take the helm of RTE. Similar to the performance goals established for winter sports, the RTE established the following performance goals: Canada was

expected to place among the top 16 nations in the total medal count (with 18 to 20 medals) by the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games (Canada finished in a tie for thirteenth place), and between top 10 and top 12 (with 24 to 30 medals) at the 2012 Olympic Games in London. In the 2008 and 2012 Paralympic Games, Canada was to place in the top five in the gold medal count (with 25 gold medals).

In November 2006 Roger Jackson was announced as CEO of a new organization, Podium Canada, a partnership between Sport Canada, VANOC 2010, the COC and the CPC. Podium Canada was established as a means of bringing OTP and RTE under one organization. A number of administrative and technical staff was hired to facilitate the implementation of OTP and RTE. Podium Canada's role was that of advising and making funding recommendations for the CA\$ 110M in funding from government and commercial partners. OTP funding went directly to sport organizations for coaching, sport science and athlete training. In addition to corporate and public funding, 'grass roots' fundraising for OTP was initiated by the Canadian Olympic Foundation (COF), the fundraising arm of the COC. Communities and citizens were invited to join the fundraising challenge called the "OTP 2010 Municipalities Challenge." The Municipalities challenge was an initiative in which communities across Canada 'competed' to raise the most funds per capita for OTP to show their support and profile their community.

Following the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, the name "Podium Canada" was dropped in favour of Own the Podium. Both winter and summer Olympic and Paralympic sports operate under Own the Podium—a partnership of NSOs, federal and provincial governments, Canadian sport centres, the COC and corporate sponsors.

The development of OTP and the federal government's support of the initiative are in alignment with the CSP priority to "enhance athlete and sport system performance" (Sport Canada, 2007, p. 10). More specifically, the identification of performance targets was agreed upon as an important means of ensuring that this priority would be addressed. The development of OTP also builds on the historical precedent of policy and funding initiatives that have targeted athlete preparation for Olympic performances, that is, the Best Ever and Quadrennial Program Planning funding programs of the 1980s and the more recent Podium 2002 introduced in July 2001 to assist athletes in their preparation for the 2002 Salt Lake Olympic Winter Games. A public-private partnership between Sport Canada,

Petro-Canada, the COC and the Calgary Olympic Development Association, Podium 2002 provided approximately CA\$ 1M to athletes with medal potential. Although OTP was developed outside of government and initiated by stakeholders in the sport community that were concerned about the status of high performance sport and the declining international performances, it fits neatly with broader public policy objectives.

Own the Podium—Beyond 2010

Although Canada did not attain the target of 35 medals or ‘own the podium’ at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, the 14 gold medals (more than any other host-nation in Olympic Winter Games’ history and four gold medals more than any other nation that participated in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games and the Canadian Paralympic Team’s goal of top three in the gold medal standing, with 10 gold, was achieved, placing Canada third in the total medal standing behind Germany and Russia (see Table 4.1). The success at the 2010 Games assisted the lobbying efforts to secure ongoing federal government funding for OTP for future Olympic Games and Olympic Winter Games preparations. While the early days of the 2010 Games were rife with concern and mocking about failing to achieve the lofty goals, in the last week of the games the medal total climbed, and more Canadian athletes than ever before stood atop of the podium to hear their national anthem.

As the 2010 Games came to a close and lobby groups began trying to persuade the government to continue funding to OTP, politicians visible at the Games—Prime Minister Harper and Gary Lunn, Minister of State for Sport at the time—gave no indication that the government would continue its funding. As OTP and COC began to shore up support for the future, the COC argued that, following the Games, OTP should be brought under the COC. However, the CEO of OTP at that time, Roger Jackson, voiced a concern over the change in governance, claiming that the fact that the COC is a membership organization—its members being the Olympic sport federations that approve funding decisions—would make it difficult to ensure that funding be allocated based on objective criteria. Regardless of this internal strife and jockeying for control, there was a collective sigh from the high performance sport community a few days after the closing ceremonies of the

2010 Olympic Winter Games when the federal government released its budget and announced continued financial support for OTP. In the March 2010 federal budget, CA\$ 44M were provided to support Canada's elite athletes—CA\$ 10M over two years to renew funding for the identification and development of elite athletes and CA\$ 34M over two years to renew and enhance programs that support training and preparation for competition for winter and summer elite athletes. In addition, the federal government provided CA\$ 6M per year specifically for team sports and an effort to support the unique training and qualifying needs of Olympic program team sports.

In addition, CA\$ 10M was provided to the CPC for the preparation of Paralympians. However, Priestner Allinger and Allinger's (2004) concern about the lack of priority, resources and attention given to Paralympic sport still holds true even after the successes of 2010 and the continued financial support. The OTP website, where news and information is provided and accessed, gives little attention to Paralympians beyond indications of the funding awarded. Unlike the celebratory stories presented about the success of Olympians at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, the inclusion of similar stories about Paralympians and their successes at the 2010 Paralympic Winter Games is absent. Without this support and recognition one might question the commitment of OTP in sustaining long-term support for Canada's paralympic athletes.

In July 2009, the then Minister of State for Sport, Gary Lunn, announced the creation of a post-2010 review panel on high performance sport. The "2010 and Beyond" panel submitted their final report in December 2009; however the report was held back until after the 2010 Olympic Winter Games were completed at the end of February 2010 (Zussman, 2009). The panel scrutinized Own the Podium and the high performance sport system in general. A significant recommendation in the report was that a federally incorporated non-profit organization be created to take over the responsibility of high performance sport in Canada. This supports the recommendation for an independent entity made originally in the Brisson Report (2004). In April 2012, OTP moved from program status to legal entity by obtaining non-profit status as a multi-service sport organization. To what extent this new status ensures independence from its funding contributors, the federal government, the COC, the Canadian Paralympic Committee, the

Canadian Olympic Foundation and corporate Canada, remains to be seen.

New expertise was recruited to join OTP and consolidate it as the foundation to Canada's current high performance sport development—in May 2010 Alex Baumann became the new CEO of OTP. Starkman (2010a) reported that, under Baumann, the goals of OTP would become more long-term, as opposed to focused only on the most immediate Olympic Games and the pursuit of high performance sport institutes. With the next Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Sochi in 2014, the focus has shifted to development and sustainability. As reported in *The Toronto Star*, Baumann's agenda is the pursuit of developing high performance sport institutes—with his experience based in Australia's Sport Institutes—to “raise the bar and also help get more full-time coaches into the system” (Starkman, 2010a, paragraph 16). In addition, OTP hired Ken Read to direct the winter sports for OTP and Anne Merklinger as director of summer sports. With all three of these leaders having been high performance athletes in swimming, downhill skiing and curling respectively as well having experience in the sport setting—Read with Alpine Canada and Merklinger with CanoeKayak Canada—there was a clear signal that the leadership gap lamented in previous reviews of high performance sport was being addressed.

In addition, the federal government created the OTP board of directors. This advisory board is chaired by former VANOC 2010 CEO John Furlong. The 10-member advisory board is responsible for raising money and providing advice on the allocation of funds to support medal hopefuls and the preparation for Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Baumann's tenure at the helm of OTP, however, was short-lived—in September 2011 he resigned deciding that a move to New Zealand to take up a similar position was best for his family. In January 2012, Anne Merklinger, director of summer sports was promoted to CEO—the third leadership change in OTP's short history.

The organizational structure of OTP has developed to include full-time staff and sport advisors focused on technical and sport sciences in addition to administrative and strategic planning services. With the organizational structure of OTP in place, the evolution of OTP continued through 2011 and 2012 when a closer working relationship with the COC was forged through “a memorandum of understanding [which] represents a significant step to strengthen,

co-ordinate and harmonize the high performance sport system focused on leading the creation and delivery of programs and services to increase podium results” (Canadian Newswire, 2011, paragraph 3). With the agreement to collaborate with technical expertise and sport science innovations that support “medal potential” athletes, sport teams and their coaches, the COC contributed CA\$ 5M to OTP. The agreement also realigns the COC alongside Sport Canada as not only one of the founding partners of OTP but now a significant financial contributor. Bal Gosal, the Sport Minister stated, “The Government of Canada is proud to support Canadian athletes. We are very pleased to see the alignment of these two great organizations in supporting our athletes and coaches to continue Canada’s great Olympic Games legacy” (Canadian Newswire, 2011, paragraph 11).

Own the Podium—Critique, Evaluation and Considerations

With the unveiling of OTP and the public announcement of a target of 35 medals and a first-place finish in the medal table at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, the concern over an underfunded and unfocused approach to sport excellence was addressed; however, this new ‘brash’ and ‘bold’ approach did not go uncriticized. Professor Bruce Kidd, former Olympian and Canadian middle-distance record holder, educator and sport activist suggested in an interview with *The Globe and Mail* that OTP represents a reorientation in sport today—where the process of becoming and the experience of being an athlete are not the justifications for investment in high performance athletes, but rather the justification is medal results. Although Kidd, as a former elite athlete himself, recognized and supported the desire of athletes to be the best—like many who have lamented the ‘un-Canadian’ principles that underpinned the Own the Podium slogan—he stated quite emphatically, “I’m embarrassed by Own the Podium to this extent: we’re saying ‘World, come to Canada so we can beat the shit out of you.’ ... Own the Podium would have made a great slogan for London 2012. But not when we’re hosting the Games” (Brown, 2010, p. F6). Donnelly (2010b) goes further, suggesting a name change for any future funding related to the investment in Olympic medals:

The name Own the Podium made many uncomfortable from the start. Eventually it came to be used against the Canadian team (German sports officials used it to motivate their athletes to beat Canadians), and during the first week of the Olympics it became a joke. (p. 85)

Criticism notwithstanding, the OTP board of directors has declared that the name “Own the Podium” will remain. The key players are unapologetic for any offence it may have elicited and hold steadfast to their views that the name represents the aspiration of wanting to be the best and compete in the ‘global sporting arms race.’ In his recent book entitled *Becoming Canada*, Ken Dryden states:

During the Olympics, the phrase “Own the Podium” had been a source of national debate and division. Since the Olympics, it has become part of our daily language. “Own the Podium” is now part of how we think and part of who we are. Sometimes you have to believe to see. (2010, p. 238)

The critique, however, was not restricted to the slogan and definition of success. One of the outcomes of the ‘top secret program’ was that training partnerships between Canadian athletes and athletes from other nations were terminated; in addition, the funding approach meant that OTP created a tiered system where athletes with “medal potential” were deemed worthy enough to access special services and funding to assist their chances of podium success, thus leaving out other national athletes and creating what Donnelly (2010b) called “two classes of athletes.” More importantly Donnelly pointed out that the strategy of OTP dismissed the lesson learned from Torino 2006 where there were many “unexpectedly won medals” (85) suggesting a bigger pool of athletes should be supported through OTP.

This approach was in place for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, where Road to Excellence funding was provided to selected athletes. This was clearly the problem experienced by David Ford, a kayaker who had his OTP funding cut off because of his age, poor results and the fact that the sport was not identified as a sport with potential medal status for the 2008 Olympic Games. Similarly, Canadian national team boxer, Adam Trupish who, after being eliminated in the first round at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, stated that a lack

of funding, going into debt and having to work when he should have been training prevented him from accessing the best resources possible. Trupish, not funded through OTP, stated “we’re saying ‘give us funding and we can produce’ and the government is saying ‘produce and we’ll give you funding’” (Christie, 2008, paragraph 8).

Investing ‘with the odds’ and singling out athletes has meant a shift in the cry heard from athletes when they failed to medal. At the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, the unified cry reported in the media from athletes in response to questions about their poor performance was the lack of funding support and the need for public and private investment in high performance sport. In 2008, at the Beijing Olympic Games and at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver, athletes who did not achieve their medal potential voiced various emotions that were linked to their understanding of OTP and what ‘success’ means. There were tearful apologies to the nation, for example, after failing to achieve desired results in Beijing in 2008, Canadian female fencer Sherraine Schalm, ranked fifth in the world, stated:

I know no Canadian taxpayer wants to hear that I really did try my best and I really did give everything I have . . . But I swear to all of you that I really did and I’m very sorry that I didn’t bring home a medal, but you train and you take your chances . . . Nobody made me sign a contract that I would guarantee to win, I just signed a contract that I would do my best and train my best and give it everything I can, but I’m sorry unfortunately it wasn’t enough today. (Ewing, 2008, paragraphs 18–19)

Similarly, at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver, Melissa Hollingsworth stated, “I feel like I let my entire country down” after bumping the track and finishing fifth in the women’s skeleton event and failing to succeed in her quest for a medal—a medal that was anticipated in OTP calculations. And although medaling on the first evening of competition, after her silver medal performance Jennifer Heil, the defending Olympic champion in the women’s freestyle moguls event, and identified to repeat this feat in 2010, stated, “I won silver, I didn’t lose gold . . . I know we’re going for excellence, but I’m so proud to be Canadian” (Olsen, 2010, paragraph 3). These apologies to the nation were perhaps in recognition that the public was well aware of the heavy investment, declarations of medal performances and pressure to win gold on Canadian soil.

At the same Games, there was also anger and frustration voiced by Denny Morrison after finishing ninth in the men's 1,500 metre speed skating race and thirteenth in the men's 1,000 metre race. He claimed the OTP 'top secret' initiative prevented him from training with his friend, USA speed skater Shani Davis. Although this statement was later retracted as 'heat of the moment' frustrations, it does raise the question of whether the best interests of athletes were always considered in the implementation of the OTP initiative and to what extent athletes were involved in making decisions about their training.

More recent commentary about OTP has been positive, emphasizing gratitude for the much needed support that OTP has provided for training preparation including funding for sport science, medicine and nutrition. David Calder, coxless pairs rower, silver medalist in Beijing 2008 and sixth place finish in London 2012 stated:

Own The Podium has been unbelievable for us . . . It makes sure we have the cutting-edge science and the access to top sports physiologists across the country . . . This sort of regimented, studied structure [of how to prepare and recover] didn't exist 1 four years ago. (Mirtle, 2012, paragraphs 13–14) 1

However there is the recognition that how funding is allocated may need to change to ensure sustained success—critical examination of supporting developing athletes, not only 'medal hopefuls.' It remains to be seen then how or if OTP will be able to balance the focus on medals with the need to ensure investment in developmental athletes—something that has plagued other high performance funding programs.

Although the women's team pursuit won a bronze medal in London 2012, Gillian Carlton, a member of the squad reportedly went into debt to fund her training. Her observations are that "I think if we want to see more results like we are seeing at this Olympics from athletes, more gold medal performances, Canada needs to put more money into their athletes, for sure" (Parry, 2012, paragraph 25). In reflecting on Great Britain's success at the London 2012 Olympic Games, Sebastian Coe identified "high and predictable funding . . . You know, you do not get excellence on the cheap nor do you get all the other virtuous outcomes that come from that without long-term and predictable levels of funding, and that's what we've witnessed" (Cole, 2012, paragraphs 32–33).

Although the medal tally for London 2012 was seen to meet the goal of a top 12 placement, there was concern about the ‘conversion rate’ of world championships to Olympic Championships. Mark Tewksbury, Canadian chef de mission for London 2012 stated, “It is important that we have good conversion rates [of world rankings into Olympic medals], for sure, and we know that ... some of the more successful countries at these Olympics had high conversion rates. And that’s a question that obviously is going to come under review” (Cole, 2012, paragraph 15). Whether in recognizing the absurdity of predicting the unpredictable or attempting to soften the critique on the OTP funded athletes that did not medal, he went on to explain:

Of course we would have liked more gold medals, and no one wants a gold medal more than every athlete out there competing ... But every athlete at this Games has a story, and every medal has a story, and collectively that’s what makes the narrative of this Canadian Olympic team—our athletes showed what excellence means to us. (Cole, 2012, paragraph 19)

These comments support Donnelly’s (2010b, p. 44) critique that to date “Own the Podium [funding allocations] represents a particularly narrow strategy based on an extraordinarily narrow definition of success.”

These critiques and comments align with an OTP evaluation conducted by the Sport Law and Strategy Group for OTP in 2011. This report presented the comments from individuals and organizations with respect to all aspects of OTP. There was overwhelming support for the focus and commitment towards medals however there was some concern about the sole focus on medal potential athletes and neglect of those athletes that require years of investment before potential is achieved, hindering long-term development and to creating a system of “have” and “have not” athletes (Lawrie & Corbett, 2011).

Although OTP ensured that athletes with medal potential had all the technical and scientific support they required in preparation for the 2008 and 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games respectively, it could not guarantee the desired outcome—it is sport, the outcome is uncertain. This understanding often gets lost in the medal predictions.

Despite the critiques of OTP in terms of the 'arrogance' of its slogan, the investment of resources in only select athletes, and the 'top secret' science and technology, this 'made in Canada' strategy for high performance sport has been adapted by other nations. For example, UK Sport has set medal targets for London 2012 and has adopted a 'no compromise' philosophy targeting sports and athletes with the best chance of medal success. In addition, key players in the development of OTP, such as Cathy Priestner Allinger and her husband Todd Allinger, who led the review of Canada's high performance system and authored the OTP report, have been hired by the Russian Olympic Committee to facilitate the development of a similar program for Russia in preparation for the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi (Starkman, 2010b, pp. A1–A2). Lawrie and Corbett (2011) also reported that OTP directors have been invited to present to International Olympic Committees. Indeed the globalization of high performance sport and the transfer of ideas and expertise (as well as athletes) to compete in the 'medals arms race' have clearly come of age.

Although Lawrie and Corbett (2011) highlight some concern from participants in their evaluation research suggesting that roles need to be clarified between Sport Canada, CSCs, the COC and OTP to avoid overlap and turf wars, OTP is unquestionably established as the 'agency' responsible for providing athletes, teams and national sport organizations with the assistance they need to achieve their medal performance objectives. Moreover, OTP has provided Canadian high performance sport with some stability, and while it may depend on government and corporate sponsors for the financial stability, OTP has demonstrated a commitment to providing athletes with the support they need to compete at the international level. OTP has developed the plans, monitoring devices, funding support and research and development expertise and has recruited top sport leaders to manage it. But as much as the success of OTP has been recognized both domestically, through continued support, and internationally, as witnessed by other nations mimicking or tapping into the resources that led the Canadian initiative—the Brisson Report (2004) called for an independent High Performance Sport Commission—its vision may be unattainable given that the backdrop to the 'co-operative' understanding between the COC and OTP is a competition for corporate sponsorship for funding elite athletes. And although athletes are probably less concerned about

how they receive the money and who antes up, the duplication of roles regarding funding programs and initiatives is counter to an agreement that aims to “increase efficiency and . . . streamline the efficiency and expertise of each of the COC and OTP” (Canadian Newswire, 2011, paragraph 6).

Sustaining Podium Success—Long-Term Athlete Development Model

Although podium success is the focus of much of the high performance sport, the centrality of national team athletes has been accompanied by the adoption of a strategic approach to sustaining high performance sport through the Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model (Canadian Heritage, 2005). LTAD is a development pathway within the broader Canadian Sport for Life movement. Specifically, LTAD refers to a seven-stage “made in Canada”⁵ model that focuses on individual growth and development. The physiological needs of the athlete are aligned with each stage: “LTAD focuses on the general framework of athlete development with special reference to growth, maturation and development, trainability and sport system alignment and integration” (Canadian Sport Centres, 2005, p. 13). Although only three stages of the LTAD model focus on sport excellence (i.e., high performance sport), for Sport Canada, NSOs and MSOs it is those stages that have taken root and have been nurtured through various policy and funding initiatives that support investment in high performance sport and international success.

Although LTAD is framed as a Sport Canada initiative and fits with the broader public policy interests in social investment, it is an innovation developed outside of government. In particular, LTAD was developed in the mid-1990s by Dr. Istvan Balyi, with the National Coaching Institute in Victoria, British Columbia. Balyi presented the LTAD model as a systematic approach to support the successful development of high performance athletes based on scientific principles of growth and development (Balyi, 2001; Robertson & Way, 2005). “The need for the LTAD [arose] in part from the declining international performances of Canadian athletes in some sports and the difficulty other sports [were] having in identifying and developing the next generation of internationally successful athletes” (Canadian Sport Centres, 2005, p. 14). The idea is that the application of growth and development principles to fundamental

sport and movement skills in early life stages and throughout training and competitive programs at appropriate developmental ages will result in a more effective athlete development system—where athletes are prepared for international competition and where there is a systematic approach to development ensuring the sustainability of national-level teams—a feeder system based on scientific principles of growth, training and competitive preparation.

For many within the sport system, the policy problem facing high performance sport was a stagnating and underdeveloped athlete development approach. The federal government's financial cuts to the sport system in the 1990s, coupled with policy and program priorities that adopted a short-sighted focus on national team needs and international performances, meant there was the lack of a comprehensive and integrated approach to athlete training and development to ensure athletes were prepared to compete at the international level and to ensure a "pipeline" of athletes to support a "playground to podium" movement (Canadian Sport Centres, 2005; Robertson & Way, 2005).

The CSP has enabled the federal government to focus and co-ordinate stakeholders such as the provinces and territories through the federal-provincial/territorial priorities, and multi-sport/service organizations such as the Coaching Association of Canada and Canada Games and all national sport organizations, on matters of athlete development. Supported by Sport Canada, an expert group developed a resource guide entitled *Canada Sport for Life: Long-Term Athlete Development Resource Paper* and subsequently developed a resource paper with adaptations for athletes with a disability in *No Accidental Champions*. In 2005, the LTAD initiative was supported at the Federal Provincial/Territorial Meeting of Ministers in Regina where ministers agreed to implement it as their athlete-development model. Facilitating a system-wide approach, LTAD was integrated into the *Canadian Sport Policy* through the renewed Federal-Provincial/Territorial Priorities for Collaborative Action 2007–2012 (Sport Canada, 2007). LTAD was seen as:

the potentially most significant advances in Canadian sport since the adoption of the *Canadian Sport Policy* [and its] implementation . . . fundamental to the realization of the Vision and Goals of the *Canadian Sport Policy*. LTAD is the framework from which several priorities and actions will be developed and monitored over the next several years. (Sport Canada, 2007, p. 3)

To ensure NSOs and MSOs adopt LTAD as part of their athlete development strategy, in 2005 Sport Canada's LTAD initiative included its integration into their funding program (SFAF) as part of the funding eligibility requirements and has also established a part of the funding block of SFAF for the development of LTAD initiatives within these organizations. Funding may be allocated to develop sport-specific LTAD plans, collaborative projects with other organizations, or research on LTAD. In addition, Sport Canada has provided support directly to an LTAD expert group to assist with the development of communication and education tools to ensure system-wide adoption and integration of LTAD. Resources are made available for parents, schools, community recreation, coaches and athletes through the Canadian Sport for Life website (<http://www.canadiansportforlife.ca>) co-ordinated by the Canadian Sport Centres in collaboration with the Coaching Association of Canada. As such, an important aspect to the implementation of LTAD and its adoption across the sport system has less to do with the logic of the sport science of growth and development—the principles are well established in the coaching profession—and more to do with the development of a strategy for communicating these principles of training and coaching to levels of sport provision below the national team level, across the nation, and across all sports and agencies engaged in the delivery of sport.

Recognizing the diversity and lack of integration of sport delivery of the Canadian sport system and that there are many stakeholders involved in this system (Thibault & Harvey, 1997), LTAD has proposed a pathway for athlete development that is accessible and understandable to each stakeholder so they are able to understand where their organization and the role it plays fit into the development of Canada's future national athletes. The aim is to harmonize the Canadian sport system's approach to sport delivery at levels below the national level to ensure each individual (parent, coach, educator) and each association (community sport, school sport, province or territory) understands their role in the development of athletes and adopts the principles of training and coaching advocated in the teaching and coaching materials developed for LTAD (Norris, 2010).

Such a modernization agenda to make the 'science' of coaching and training more accessible throughout the sport system was based in part on a more strategic approach to talent identification and is intended to ensure the breadth and depth of the talent pool

of potential future national team athletes. With its major focus on the sustainability of sport excellence at the international level, LTAD has been identified as the mechanism by which the sustainability of sport excellence at the international level can be achieved.

The LTAD model and the concepts used in support of it have come to play a significant role in the ideas about how sport organizations should be developing athletes and have been incorporated as part of federal funding criteria. However, the breadth and depth of LTAD across the system has not gone unquestioned. There has been some concern over the focus on physiological development at the expense of a more holistic approach that would include the social and psychological aspects. In addition, there has been critique over the ‘universality’ of its adoption without substantial supporting empirical evidence, and as such, concern has been voiced about the lack of an evaluation of the model and its impact on NSOs, MSOs, coaches, parents and athletes (Brackenridge, 2006; Collins & Bailey, 2013; Ford et al., 2011; Holt, 2010). Brackenridge (2006) has cautioned that “particularization of the young athlete is a trap that many sport scientists and coaches fall into: it suits their professional purposes yet it works against the child’s development as a whole person” (p. 120). As a model that has a clear objective of ensuring sustained high performance sport success, the focus is on athlete development at the individual level—emphasizing the physiological and technical aspects of training and providing little discussion of a more holistic approach that places this training within a broader social and cultural context and recognizes the psychological and behavioural aspects to athlete development. The caution is in viewing development in narrowly prescribed stages.

LTAD is not presented as a panacea; however it is described as being helpful to package complex phases of development into a simple, but flexible model. The concern is whether these stages recognize the social and psychological complexity of development. Despite the athlete-centred principle of LTAD, the concern for some is that the stages objectify the athlete.⁶ Brackenridge goes further in stating that LTAD fails to consider how to engage the athlete in making decisions about their training and development. Norris (2010) suggests that the LTAD model has provided a “universal language” across agencies and associations when discussing athlete development, facilitating communication and understanding of roles and responsibilities. He further suggests the critical reviews of LTAD provide the opportunity

for constant improvement and continued research to facilitate athlete development. Collins and Bailey (2013) go further with their critique suggesting the widespread adoption of the LTAD model in the UK, Canada and other countries is a function of what they term “scienciness”—where the “. . . authority of science [has been attributed] . . . to methods and ideas [that] possess little or no underpinning evidence or theoretical base” (p. 184). The “pervasive and persuasive” (p. 186) LTAD model in a climate of evidence-based policy decisions, they suggest, is a result of so much investment that it becomes difficult to reverse or question the commitment. The concern here is twofold for both public policy and the sport system. First, the significant investment in policy tools that are not proven or evaluated; and second, if LTAD is part of the larger investment in high performance sport success—that is, the “sporting arms medal race”—“success is far more likely to follow science than non-science” (Collins & Bailey, 2013, p. 189). After all, the fear of the nuclear arms race is the fact that there is scientific evidence that success could be costly!

One aspect of the broader Canadian Sport for Life movement is the desire to have an integrated system, for high performance sport and for athlete development in particular, since connections with the educational system and the role of school sport is a new area of investment. In particular there has been recent support for “the establishment of sport academies and Sport-Étude programs...” (Canadian Sport Centres, 2005, p. 48). With provincial and territorial commitment to LTAD and with education being the responsibility of the provinces and territories, the development of sport academies in the school system will require inter-ministry as well as inter-governmental co-operation.

The report entitled, *Sport Schools in Canada: The Future is Here* published by the Canadian Sport Centre (Pacific), and written by LTAD experts, provides a comprehensive review of sport-specific academies and advocates for their role by providing recommendations for action. In particular the report states:

while much is being done to own the podium on the international stage . . . up and coming athletes have not reaped the benefits of this increased focus on high performance sport and many student athletes may be “falling through the cracks” or dropping out of sport because they cannot manage the time demands of both sport and their educational endeavours. With

the expanded infrastructure and flexibility in high school education at our disposal many provinces are ready to become leaders in the development of new Senior National team members for Canada. (Way, Repp, & Brennan, 2010, p. 9)

The recommendation of the LTAD experts suggests that a “Canadian Sport School model” would be co-ordinated through the Canadian Sport Centre and become an established brand and presumably the brand of choice to be licensed across the country (Way et al., 2010, p. 27). The development of sport academies has been limited to Quebec and British Columbia. In addition, the National Sport School in association with the Calgary Board of Education is in the process of establishing an on-site education location at WinSport Canada. Developments include, a review by the Toronto District School Board examining the potential for sport academies (Brown, 2009). The school board in Hamilton, Ontario has adopted ‘programs of choice’ in two schools allowing students to pursue their athletic interests in the sports of basketball or soccer. Houlihan’s (2000) investigation of the development of sport schools in the UK uncovered the complexity in such an approach and the competing interests that exist between sport organizations and schools that hinders the implementation of such innovations. In addition to co-ordination difficulties, an investment in building the capacity of technical expertise would be required by governments and other agencies. It remains to be seen whether the schools may better serve LTAD through a focus on the model’s early stages and the development of movement and sport skills rather than the development of sport excellence.

The importance given to LTAD is indicated by a commitment by Sport Canada to ensure compliance by requiring all NSOs to develop LTAD plans specific to their sport as a condition of funding where funding to NSOs is assessed in terms of sport initiation and development programs and not simply increasing and sustaining membership participation in the sport. To what extent this centrality given to LTAD was a result of advocates of the model lobbying for support or a result of governments viewing LTAD as an ideal policy tool to assist in ensuring greater accountability for funding remains to be debated. The outcome, however, has been that LTAD has come to represent a cornerstone in addressing the CSP goal of expanding “the pool of athletes” to ensure sustained “world-class results at the highest levels of international competition” (Sport Canada, 2002a, p. 4).

LTAD's adoption of an 'athlete development' orientation to sport for children and youth together with the desire to connect more strongly with the education sector fits with the social investment policy perspective that is shaping current public policy. According to Jenson and Saint-Martin (2006) and Saint-Martin (2007), a social investment approach to policy has a foundation on three principles: an interest in investing in knowledge and human capital, a focus on children and a future orientation, and an interest in return on investment implying that social spending be focused in areas where returns will be profitable. The LTAD model, an initiative developed by coaching and training experts and integrated into public policy, has resulted in a broadening of programs that support sport excellence through not only a consideration of podium performances but also the sustainability of high performance programs through the capacity-building of junior development programs based on LTAD principles. At the national level then, LTAD has been adopted to ensure a strategic approach to sustained podium success.

Conclusion: Issues and Challenges for High Performance Sport

With the federal budget announcement in February 2012 of continued government support for high performance sport coupled with a high performance sport system that has grown both in terms of the quantity of stakeholder organizations and stakeholder quality or capacity to lead and manage high performance sport, there is much promise for the continued development of high performance sport in Canada.

Since the implementation of the *Canadian Sport Policy* in 2002, significant progress has been made towards achieving the goal of enhanced excellence. Like previous investments in high performance sport, a substantial impetus to its development over the past decade occurred because of the awarding of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games to Vancouver by the International Olympic Committee in July 2003. Like the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal and the 1988 Olympic Winter Games in Calgary, the hosting status prompted public investments in high performance sport. However, unlike previous initiatives in the 1970s and 1980s, in the past decade we have witnessed a more comprehensive and more focused investment in ensuring medal results that has engaged both the private non-profit and commercial sectors as well as the public sector. Supporting athletes and ensuring best-ever performances

were not deemed sufficient goals; rather, medal targets were identified as the driving force for allocating resources. In addition, the development and implementation of LTAD is intended to address the issue of ensuring a sustained pool of athletes who will not be in need of remedial training and coaching, and Own the Podium has been identified as the foundation to ensuring Canadian athletes are capable of competing for podium finishes at international competitions. However, greater podium success has been seen only in winter sports to date.

In terms of the 2002 CSP goal of enhanced excellence, the Summative Evaluation of the *Canadian Sport Policy* reported that the commitment to performance targets has facilitated the achievement of podium performances in international competitions particularly in winter sports. In addition, policy consultations during the CSP renewal process in 2011 supported the direction that is being navigated by the various stakeholders—one where excellence as measured by medal success is emphasized—and fits with the federal government's interest in "steering" the system through financial contributions (Comeau, 2013). This is seen quite directly with the commitment to support Canadian Sport Centres/Institutes in British Columbia, Calgary, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic. The recent transition of some centres to institutes (i.e., British Columbia, Calgary, Ontario and Quebec) signals not only an investment in establishing training facilities but one that aligns Canada on the global stage where institutes are seen as a sign of leading sport nations. The development of Canadian Sport Institutes was also championed by Alex Baumann, former CEO of Own the Podium, who brought his experience from the Australian high performance sport system and their network of sport institutes.⁷ The challenge is ensuring the financial commitment to build and maintain expensive facilities. In September 2010, the federal government announced a financial contribution of CA\$ 650,000 to the development of a CSI in British Columbia. The province of British Columbia has matched this contribution in an effort to develop the facilities and expertise necessary to ensure sustained international sport success and announced the shift to institute status in December 2012. The institute in Toronto gained momentum through preparation for the Pan/Parapan American Games in 2015 hosted by Toronto. This is also supported by the University of Toronto's recent investment in the Centre for High Performance Sport at the new Varsity Centre in

downtown Toronto (Blackburn-Evans, 2007). The partnership with university facilities is an important element that has framed the successful relationship between the Canadian Sport Institute in Calgary and WinSport Canada.

Satisfied with the quality of the leadership and the direction of high performance sport, the system seems to be doing what the government (regardless of the party in power) in fact had intended or hoped—putting the required systems, structures and expertise in place to facilitate performance success and support public policy objectives.

The events that took place during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Vancouver—the visibility of the Own the Podium funding program, the performances of Canadian athletes, and the discussion of patriotism and Canadian identity in association with the performance of Canada's athletes—have fuelled the debate about the contribution that high performance sport makes to Canadian society. With similar interests and trends being observed in other nations, as part of the ongoing discussions about the connections to the public value of sport, the opportunity to explore the current context and future challenges is timely.

The importance of hosting major games (see Chapter VIII) as part of this debate about investment in high performance sport should not be ignored, as witnessed by Great Britain's success at London 2012 and Canada's success at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games. Like many Canadians who have an interest in sport, I had an insatiable thirst for the 2010 Games and was an intense consumer of the media's portrayal and coverage. The Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games and the events that characterized the games, from the torch relay to the protests, to the public assemblies in various locations to observe the games, to the athletic events themselves ignited my emotional ties to high performance sport.

Experiencing the highs and lows of performance of Canadians and athletes from other nations—from the unnerving death of Georgian luger Nodar Kumaritashvili, the joyous celebrations of the first Olympic gold medal won by a Canadian on Canadian soil by Alexandre Bilodeau in freestyle skiing (moguls), to the admiration for fair play displayed by Clara Hughes, as she not only skated to her own bronze medal in the 5,000 metre speed skating event, but celebrated the medals of her teammates and displayed the humanity of giving and sharing her success with underserved Canadian

citizens⁸—I literally felt the stress hormones in my veins as I threw every rock with Cheryl Bernard in the tenth and extra end of the women's curling gold medal match, even though shamefully I had only ever thrown about 50 rocks in my entire life. I was equally motivated for my daily run after watching the exhaustion and exhilaration of Poland's Justyna Kawalczyk as she sprinted past Marit Bjørgen of Norway to win the women's 30K cross country ski race; and settled into reflective repose as the Canadian women's hockey team won gold again thinking of my own joyful childhood (too long ago in years, but like yesterday in my mind) on winter days and nights when I laced up my figure skates (with the toe pick filed down so I would not trip) and walked 500 metres to the outdoor rink at the local park to play pick up hockey, as the only girl amongst the neighbourhood children who owned a hockey stick and was ranked alongside the boys when teams were selected. To dream of being an Olympian hockey player was beyond my own imagination, not to mention my family's financial means, but today, young girls have their female hockey heroes who make those dreams possible and who symbolize achievements of excellence and actively support the growth of hockey for women and girls. The experience of all these events, and finally, jumping to high fives with family as Sidney Crosby's shot crossed the line to provide Canada with its final gold medal of the games and, if not *"the"* most important, the one that would have been lamented the most if not won. Was this the pride, unity, cohesion and participation intended as the outcome of investing in high performance sport?

Van Hilvoorde, Elling, and Stokvis (2010) argue that national pride is a stable characteristic and that sport-related national pride depends on an established sense of belonging. As such, we need to be cautious about the claims (largely reported in the media) that the euphoria that swept the nation during the 2010 Olympic Winter Games was experienced by all—even though such arguments are used to support increased investment in high performance sport.

Weaving through these emotions were threads of a more critical and perhaps sometimes cynical view of high performance sport policy and funding. Exploring high performance sport as part of this edited work on Canadian sport policy gave me an opportunity to reflect on these tensions that define and shape my view on sport policy in general and high performance sport policy in particular. I cringe when I hear the rationale for investing in high performance

sport is because it ‘trickles’ down to the masses and results in increased participation—yes, the visibility and success of Canadian athletes at the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, of athletes who came before them, and of those who will compete in the future may result in some heightened interest and registration of memberships at local clubs (if they have the capacity to respond to this demand)—but there is little evidence that investing in high performance sport to ensure podium finishes is the optimum strategy to sustain participation. We need to explore this critical issue about the value of supporting high performance sport and what shapes a successful high performance sport system—where the outcomes, as agreed upon by all those affected, are achieved and shared by all.

The review in this chapter has identified the policy and programming initiatives that have been aimed at helping athletes achieve their goals of medal performances and personal bests. But the caution here is that these policy choices reinforced by the stories of success and failure at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are the ‘tip of the iceberg’ or the ‘top of the sport pyramid.’ We need to establish a stronger policy link between this highly visible aspect of sport and what lies beneath. When asked about Canada’s ‘flag waving’ euphoria—Donald Sutherland⁹ quoted the Cherokee tale of the two wolves: An old Cherokee is teaching his grandson about life. “A fight is going on inside me,” he said to the boy. “It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil—he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego.” He continued, “The other is good—he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith. The same fight is going on inside you—and inside every other person, too.” The grandson then asked his grandfather, “Which wolf will win?” The grandfather replied “The one you feed.” Sutherland’s view of Canada is that as a nation we feed and therefore characterize the latter. I would add that when you have international competitions that pit nation against nation, and where national flags are symbolic of identity, claims of ‘we win’ or ‘we are better than you’ are inevitable but hopefully temporary. But the larger question is do medals matter; to whom do they matter; and in what way should they matter to contributing to a ‘better’ Canada. Still relevant today,

the questions raised by Justice Charles Dubin (1990) are worthy of consideration:

Have we, as Canadians, lost track of what athletic competition is all about? Is there too much emphasis by the public and by the media on the winning of a gold medal in Olympic Competition as the only achievement worthy of recognition? (p. 515)

Just as we know that sport is not a panacea for all the social ills in society and that sport participation or development initiatives do not eradicate HIV/AIDS, poverty, crime or childhood obesity, we also know that sport can make a positive contribution to the social, physical, and psychological health of individuals and communities. So, what contribution do we want high performance sport to make to Canada and Canadians? Which ‘wolf’ do we feed? The one that places medals above all else as the only performance indicator of success and where the accumulation of medals is seen as a symbolic representation of global superiority, or the one where success is translated into nation building and leveraging the achievements of excellence by all our national athletes so that the passion for excellence may be nurtured and celebrated in a way that contributes to strengthening the health and well-being of Canadian communities—the places, the spaces and the people. The public value, I would argue, is in the latter—a more tangible translation of nation building, unity, cohesion and sport participation for Canadians. Because like the nuclear arms race, where the stockpiling of nuclear weapons is deemed futile, so too I would argue is the stockpiling of international medals and championships. This is the challenge for future developments in high performance sport.

Notes

1. In Canada the Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model has been adopted by Sport Canada and leaders of the Canadian sport system as part of a larger initiative called Canadian Sport for Life. The *Canadian Sport for Life* resource paper details LTAD and its relevance for the Canadian sport system. A supplemental paper, *No Accidental Champions* was developed to apply LTAD for athletes with a disability. National sport organizations, Multi-sport and service organizations and the federal, provincial and territorial governments are supporting Canadian Sport

for Life/No Accidental Champions through the implementation of LTAD. It should be noted that in high performance sport circles the focus is on the LTAD model, not on 'Sport for Life.'

2. The *Best Report* (Best, 1994) identified objective performance criteria to evaluate national and multi-sport/service organizations based on what they do, who participates, and how they perform on the international stage to determine the 'eligibility' of sports and their recognition as core to Canadian society as the foundation for federal funding. By contrast, the SFAF, in maintaining these objective criteria, emphasized 'accountability,' perhaps a 'kinder and gentler' approach to achieving the same objective—reducing the number of organizations that would receive funds.
3. SFAF IV represents the fourth cycle of the framework and thus covers the period from April 2009 until March 2013.
4. Cathy Priestner Allinger was a participant in the 1972 Olympic Winter Games, a silver medalist in long track speed skating in the 1976 Olympic Winter Games and a recipient of the Olympic order. Her continued involvement in sport through coaching, volunteering, and administration included Managing Director of Sport for the Salt Lake City 2002 Olympic Winter Games, and Managing Director of Games Operations for the Turin 2006 Olympic Winter Games.
5. The stages of LTAD are: Active Start, Fundamentals, Learning to Train, Training to Train, Training to Compete, and Training to Win. It is the last three stages that are focused on the identification, training and development of high performance athletes. The ideas that provide the foundation of LTAD are not new nor did they originate in Canada. However, it is the development of a pathway that has been translated into communication, teaching and training tools for coaches, parents, administrators and athletes that defines the 'made in Canada' approach. In addition, the UK, Australia, New Zealand and the USA have all adopted the principles of LTAD.
6. Many of the issues discussed here were highlighted during the Panel Discussion entitled "LTAD: Issues, challenges, and successes" at the 2009 North American Society for the Sociology of Sport Conference held in Ottawa, ON. The panel was chaired by David McCrindle, Manager, Sport Participation Policy, Sport Canada. Panel members were Richard Way, LTAD Expert with the National Coaching Institute, Dr. Jim Denison, Associate Professor, University of Alberta, Dr. Jean Côté, Queen's University, and Alain Lefebvre, Technical Director of the Fédération de Natation du Québec [Quebec Swimming Federation]. In addition, the recent reviews by Ford et al., (2011) and Holt (2010), review some of the concerns about a lack of empirical evidence and a more comprehensive and holistic approach to athlete development.

7. For further detail on the Australian sport system see Stewart, Nicholson, Smith, and Westerbeek's book entitled, *Australian Sport: Better by Design? The evolution of Australian sport policy* published in 2004.
8. Clara Hughes donated her CA\$ 10,000 medal award bonus to the Take a Hike Foundation, an alternative education program that engages at-risk youth in Vancouver.
9. During the concluding day of the 2010 Games, Ben Mulroney, an entertainment TV broadcaster with the CTV network (the Canadian Olympic broadcaster for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games), interviewed Donald Sutherland (a Canadian actor and narrator of a CTV Olympic Winter Games advertisement) about his view on the Games.

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