**Coach’s Summary of Manitoba Provincial Team**

**Wheelchair Rugby**

**2012-2013**

**First off, it was my pleasure and privilege to coach a great group of athletes this season. During the summer of 2012, I was approached by members of Manitoba Wheelchair Rugby to be their coach. I accepted the position and began the process of learning the strategic gamesmanship of Wheelchair Rugby.**

**This season saw many ups and downs: from winning our first tournament in Saskatoon to losing two key players for personal reasons.**

**Team practices focused on the basics of wheelchair rugby and players were expected to arrive early for practice twice a week at the Duckworth Centre. As the season progressed the team added more advanced drills besides basic passing, catching, & wheeling. Scrimmage was a welcomed competitive challenge for all the players at every practice.**

**The goal of coaching was to keep players interested in improving and incorporate opportunities for fun & camaraderie. As coach I ensured that players were well informed of their obligations & commitments to the team – this was usually conveyed in text messages, emails, and pre & post workout meetings/huddles.**

**Players were tested on standardized performance measures every two months and the results of the testing were consistently reported to the Canadian Wheelchair Rugby Association. Overall improvement in player times was noted and shared with each player.**

**Most team members met as group at least once or twice throughout the season to participate in socialization away from the “Rugby Court”. At least one social event took place at David Tweed’s office – The Access Store. During the weekend of June 14,15,16 three players and the coaching staff came together to have a wind-up at Jared Funk’s cottage at Batula Lake (all team members invited). The social events were seen by most players as a great way to bond and just have a lot of fun.**

**In addition to Saskatoon Team Manitoba travelled by plane to Edmonton & Calgary, plus hosted the Murderball Classic in Winnipeg. The results of the team can best be described as very pleasing with room to grow and improve.**

**Recommendations:**

* Team Toba needs to have earlier practice times in the evening i.e. 7-9pm
* Team Toba should incorporate weight & other forms of cross training in addition to regular practices.
* Players need to be more consistent with attendance at practice ideally only missing between 1-3 practices in an entire season.
* Players need to consistently manage/maintain their individual & group off-season training.
* Players need to consider the costs associated with a all wheelchair rugby expenses & be prepared to put in the time & effort to ensure funding needs are met.
* Ongoing recruitment is need to build the roster of team Toba – this will involve mentoring “new injuries” & finding “older injuries” that may have never discovered the sport
* The coaching staff will engage in ongoing training & development