MWSA 2014 AGM – Wheelchair Rugby Report

The rugby program started the year by hosting the first annual wheelchair rugby clinic (September 28 and 29/13) at sport for life center on Saturday and youth for Christ centre on Sunday for court time. Clinic covered topics such as sport nutrition, mental training, sport physio, strength & conditioning, skills & drills. Clinic attracted past and present wheelchair rugby athletes as well as more than 10 U of W students. The clinic was a great success, thank you Angela for all the hard work you put into organizing the clinic.

The team started practicing at the Duckworth Centre at the beginning of October on Tuesday nights from 8:30 - 10 and on Thursdays from 9:00 - 10:30.

The teams first tournament was in November at Saskatoon , the team played hard, learned lots. Had fun! After the round robin we played against Saskatchewan for third place and team Manitoba won.

The Winnipeg Wheelchair Rugby Club sold grey cup tickets and raised over $1600, thanks again for MWSA’s help and support.

The rugby team and MWSA hosted a bud, spud and steak night at the polo park Inn, had a great turn out, raised over $4000.00.

The team continued to practice till the end of November. In December the team did not practice. Sadly our Coach ( Clayton Carrier) had to step down as coach of the Manitoba Rugby Team, we would like to thank Clayton for all the time and hard work he did over the past year and a half, We had lots of fun, with you and we wish you all the best. We were lucky in finding a new coach Chris Mccluskey who came out to a practice one night and thought the it was a very interesting sport, he really enjoyed playing and wanted to learn more about it, we asked him to be our coach and he said yes. Thanks Chris.

The team started practices again in January, the team practice hard for two weeks and then headed out to a tournament in Edmonton. The team played well, but again after the round robin we played against Saskatchewan for third place and team Manitoba won.

The team practiced hard for the remainder of January and for the month of February. The rugby team in partnership with MWSA hosted the annual Murderball Classic in March, teams from Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatoon came to compete for the Murderball Cup, Manitoba played really hard in the round robin, winning over Calgary and Saskatoon, but losing to Edmonton, on Sunday Manitoba played in the gold medal match against Edmonton, it was a great game, but Edmonton won. It was a great tournament, the rugby team would like to thank Ryan Van Berkel and Angela Lloyd for all their hard work in organizing such a great tournament , Great Job!

The team continued to practice, until April, when team went to a tournament in Calgary, the team picked up some players from New Brunswick and Edmonton. After the round robin we played against Saskatoon for third place and this time Saskatoon won!

The team continued to practice up to Wheelchair Rugby Nationals in London ,Ontario. The team this year was looking forwards to nationals since last year we placed 2nd in division two. This year we had to pick up a player (Duncan Campbell) and with his experience we thought we would do well. At Nationals, Manitoba was in a good pool to place well. On Friday we played New Brunswick first game and won, the second game was against Alberta, the game was a close one, but Alberta won, after the round robin, we place2nd in our pool. The cross over game was against Saskatchewan, the game started out in Manitoba’s favor, but by half time we were losing by 5.The game was hard hitting and fast pace lots of turn overs, trading goal for goal, but Saskatchewan proved to be too strong and they won by 2. Sunday Manitoba played against New Brunswick for 5th place and we won. It was not the placing we were hoping for, but it was a great experience for the new players to see that calibre of rugby and for the new coach to see how competitive and fun the game can be.

This year was a long season with some up and downs, but all the players are looking forward to next season.

Additionally:

* The wheelchair rugby programmed gained 3 new athletes.
* Active wheelchair rugby officials – Bob Fisher, Jeff Hurtig.
* Equipment Managers – Leon Farthing-Nicol, Bill Funk.
* Wheelchair rugby athletes volunteer at MWSA bingos throughout the year.
* Winnipeg Wheelchair Rugby Club received a grant from the Canadian Wheelchair Sport Association (Podium Club) in the amount of $4500.00 for training, tournament hosting, tournament travel, facility costs.
* The wheelchair rugby program implemented a strength & conditioning component to their training program in 2013-2014. Bi-weekly at Sport For Life from Oct 2013-April 2014 and coached by a trainor.
* Wheelchair Rugby was featured at MWSA’s mini-paralympic camp program, and at the Rehab Hospital Have-A-Go Days.
* Recreation wheelchair rugby was offered at the U of W 6 Saturdays throughout the year.