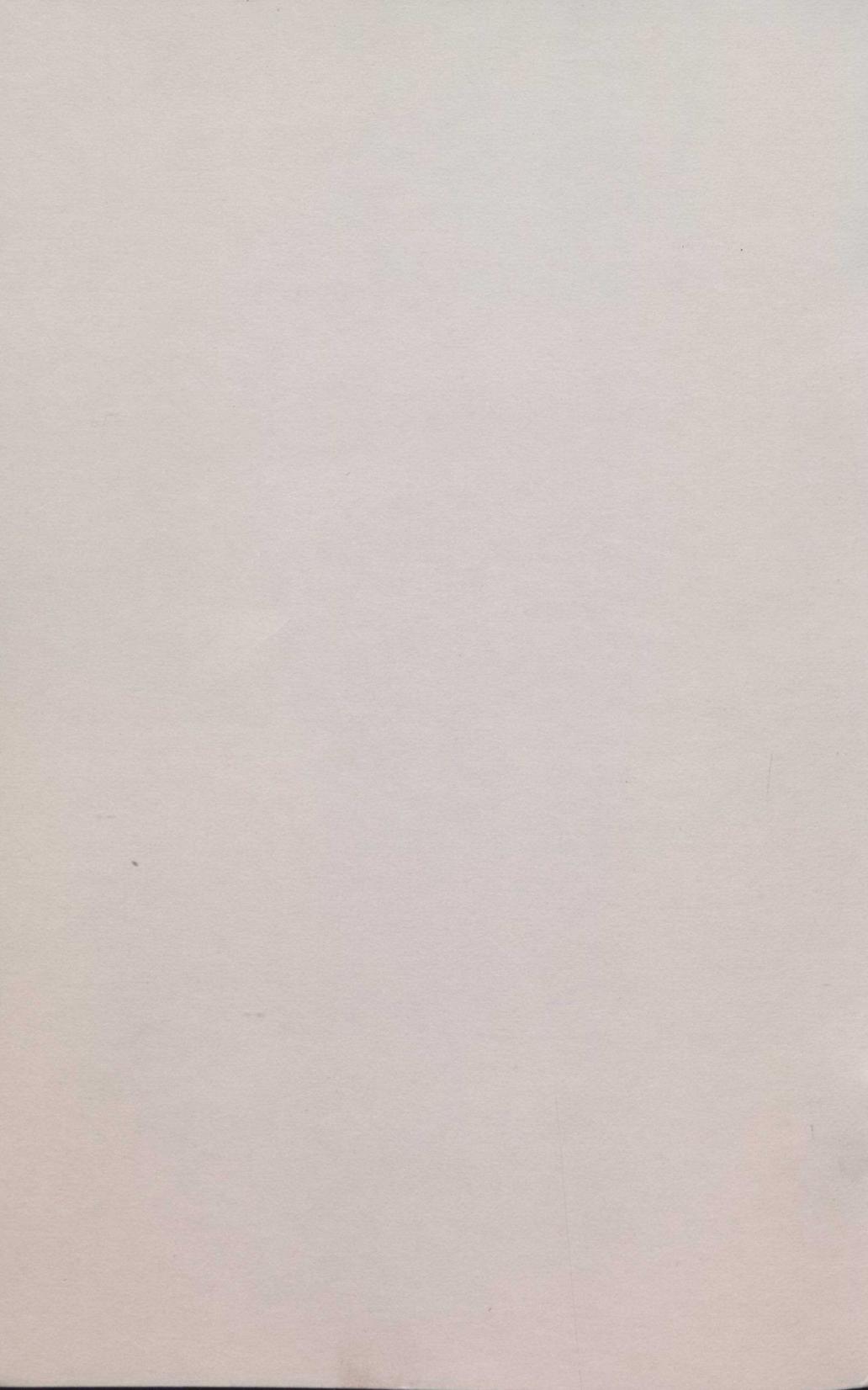


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Fitness and Amateur Sport

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Fitness and Amateur Sport

Prepared in
Fitness and Amateur Sport Canada,
Department of National Health and Welfare,
Ottawa.

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16135511

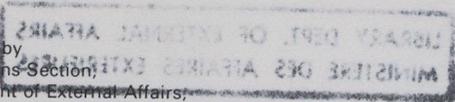
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Min. des Affaires étrangères

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Published by Authority of the
Honourable Jean Chrétien,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
Government of Canada, 1984.

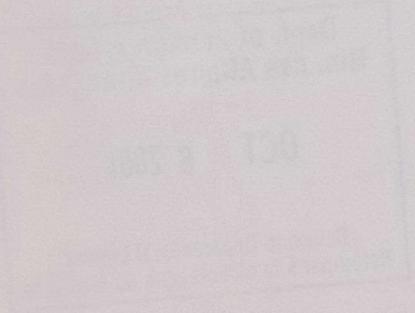
Produced by
Publications Section,
Department of External Affairs,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
K1A 0G2



First published 1979
Revised 1983

Amateur Sport
Fitness and

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Introduction

The Fitness and Amateur Sport Act was passed in 1961 to encourage, promote and develop fitness and amateur sport in Canada. It provided for the establishment of the Fitness and Amateur Sport Directorate within the federal Department of National Health and Welfare and for the appointment of a National Advisory Council to study the fields of fitness and amateur sport and to advise the minister on matters relating to the development of those areas.

The 1969 *Task Force Report on Sport for Canadians* recommended more government assistance to both sport and physical recreation in Canada. Sport was viewed as an important element of Canadian culture, requiring and deserving public support. Ensuing policy papers stressed the need to develop excellence in competitive sports by means of increased participation.

As a result of these new policies and the federal determination to provide stronger leadership, the Fitness and Amateur Sport Directorate was reorganized. To handle growing responsibilities, two program directorates were set up. Sport Canada was to concentrate on improving competitive ability at the national and international levels. Recreation Canada (now Fitness Canada) was to be concerned with encouraging Canadians to take part in sport and physical recreation.

A further consequence of the new policies was the establishment of four "spin-off" organizations. The National Sport and Recreation Centre was created to provide office space and administrative services for national sport and recreation associations. Hockey Canada was set up to organize and manage Canada's national hockey teams, to co-ordinate their participation in international competition and to encourage the development of the sport in Canada. The purpose of the Coaching Association of Canada was to increase coaching effectiveness in all sports and to provide programs and services for coaches at all levels. Finally, Sport Participation Canada, popularly known as "PARTICIPaction", was created as a private non-profit organization to promote the fitness of Canadians through participation in sport and physical recreation.

This important period of development also saw the inauguration of several national projects within the Fitness and Amateur Sport Program.

The national, multi-sport Canada Games have been held every two years since 1967, alternately in winter and in summer. The Canada Fitness Award Program was launched in the schools. Grants-in-aid were awarded to student-athletes. Game Plan, designed to bolster preparation for the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, Quebec, provided special assistance to Canada's world-ranked athletic talent in the Olympic disciplines. The Arctic Winter Games were conceived as a social and cultural as well as athletic gathering for the inhabitants of the Arctic.

By 1973, the Directorate had been elevated to branch status under its own Assistant Deputy Minister and the Program had been transferred to the health side of the Department, in recognition of its comprehensive "lifestyle" orientation.

In 1976, the first Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport was appointed.

In addition to hosting the 1976 Olympic Summer Games, Canada has hosted the 1978 Commonwealth Games and the 1983 FISU (World University) Games, both of which were held in Edmonton, Alberta. The 1988 Olympic Winter Games have been awarded to Calgary, Alberta.

The government of Canada decided to support the President of the United States' call for a boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games. The Canadian Olympic Association voted to accept the government's recommendation and, as official recipients of the Moscow invitation, so advised national sport governing bodies and Canadian athletes.

Eighty-two communities across Canada took part in the 1981 Canada Fitness Survey, the most comprehensive study of physical fitness and lifestyle habits conducted anywhere in the world. This survey was funded by Fitness Canada.

In 1982, Fitness and Amateur Sport sponsored the first National Conference on Fitness in the Third Age to create an effective forum for discussing the needs and concerns of older Canadians with relation to fitness, physical activity and a healthy lifestyle. The following year, Fitness Canada initiated National Physical Activity Week, during which Canadians across the country were urged to participate in some form of fitness or physical activity, not just for a week, but for a long, healthy lifetime.

Fitness and Amateur Sport Program

The Fitness and Amateur Sport Program represents the principal instrument by which the federal government discharges its commitment to contribute to increasing the fitness of Canadians as well as activity in domestic and international amateur sport.

To meet this objective, the programs of Fitness and Amateur Sport endeavour to attain the highest possible degree of success by Canadians in competitive sport and to foster extensive participation in sport and physical activity within the nation, thereby contributing to the involvement, fitness, and sense of well-being of Canadians.

The Program is organized into four directorates in Ottawa: Fitness Canada and Sport Canada are the two program directorates while Promotion and Communications and Financial Planning, Management and Services are the two service-oriented directorates. In addition, there are four small regional offices in Halifax, Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver. These offices are primarily concerned with the provision of information and assistance to the public and to national events (e.g., Canada Games) in the region they serve.

Fitness Canada

Fitness Canada strives to encourage, promote, and develop increased participation in physical activity leading toward fitness for all Canadians. It has as its objectives:

- increasing the motivation of all Canadians to engage in physical activity leading toward fitness;
- stimulating the availability and accessibility of programs that facilitate increased participation;
- improving the physical, social and economic climate in ways that will promote and enhance participation.

Fitness Canada financial contributions are available to organizations and for projects that are national in scope and whose objectives are consistent with those of Fitness Canada. Funding may be provided for any of the following purposes:

- to assist in the development of national programs, standards and leadership;

- to facilitate communications leading to the development of national plans;
- to equalize opportunities for all Canadians;
- to conduct research and distribute information based on results;
- to encourage innovation through pilot or demonstration projects.

In direct service to the public, Fitness Canada produces and distributes numerous publications. Themes for publications include fitness for older Canadians, fitness for blue collar workers, and fitness and pregnancy. Approximately 700 000 pieces of literature are distributed annually.

Sport Canada

Sport Canada is the directorate that focuses on the development of excellence in competitive sport. It has as its mandate:

- to provide leadership, policy direction and financial assistance for the development of Canadian sport at the national and international levels; and
- to support the highest possible level of achievement by Canada in international sport.

The major goals of Sport Canada are:

- to co-ordinate, promote and develop high performance sport in Canada in conjunction with recognized national sport organizations;
- to assist in the development of domestic sport in Canada in those areas requiring co-ordination at the national level;
- to provide administrative and technical leadership, policy direction, consultative services and financial resources that will enable national sport organizations to function effectively as the primary agents for excellence and co-ordinated sport development in Canada;
- to develop federal government sport policies.

Sport Canada provides contribution funding to support:

- the administrative and project costs of national amateur sport organizations to assist in the promotion and development of amateur sport for Canadians;
- the National Sport and Recreation Centre toward the costs of services to resident and non-resident sport organizations;
- the academic, living and training expenses of outstanding amateur athletes; and
- payments to sponsoring organizations of regional, national and international multi-sport games, and toward the capital and operating expenses of the games hosted in Canada.

Sport Canada program activity is concentrated in the following areas:

High performance sport: encompasses those activities that have as their objective the attainment of the highest level of achievement for Canadian athletes in international competition. Sport Canada assists national sport organizations in such areas as national team program planning and evaluation, training camps, national and international competitions, coaching, sport sciences, sport medicine and international games missions operations. Projects such as the sport training centres located at selected Canadian universities are designed to help achieve Canada's sport objectives in the most economical fashion possible.

Sport association management: Sport Canada provides financial assistance to support the administrative headquarters, staff and organizational development of national sport organizations. Sport Canada staff are engaged in ongoing consultation with national associations to ensure the planning and operational functions as well as human resource development.

Planning and evaluation: Sport Canada also undertakes activities in the areas of planning, evaluation and departmental and central agency liaison, policy and special studies.

Canada Games: The Winter and Summer Canada Games aim to achieve the additional objectives of providing stimulus for the development of new and upgraded sports facilities, an opportunity for national competition in a sport festival environment for young athletes below the international level and an occasion to foster friendship and mutual understanding among participants.

International games: Canada continues to host not only major multi-sport games but a wide variety of single-sport world championships and international qualifying events.

Athlete assistance: Through the Athlete Assistance Program, Canadian athletes ranked 1 to 16 in the world and those who have been identified as having potential to advance to the top 16 are eligible to receive financial support from this Fitness and Amateur Sport Program.

"Best ever": As part of the federal government's over-all strategy for the 1988 Olympic Winter Games in Calgary, Alberta, a plan has been developed to provide special assistance to Canada's winter Olympic disciplines aimed at fielding the country's "best ever" team in 1988.

Other fitness and amateur sport programs

The Women's Program seeks to improve the status of women in the fields of fitness and sport in Canada.

Through its program for the disabled, Fitness and Amateur Sport seeks to support the promotion of participation by disabled Canadians in both fitness-related activities and the pursuit of competitive excellence.

The Sport Action Program consists of two mobile exhibition units which are used to promote sport and physical fitness activities. The units are set up at exhibitions, fairs, schools and community centres, and members of the local community are invited to participate in the sports activities.

The Canada Fitness Award Program was developed in 1970 by Fitness and Amateur Sport in co-operation with the Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, and tests the speed, power, strength, agility and endurance of boys and girls aged 6 to 17. Some 12 million children have been tested since the program's inception.



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ISSN 0228-3808