



Athletics Manitoba Board Meeting, March 29, 2016

**President's Report**

A lot can happen in 2.5 months.

There have been several Branch Council meetings since our last Board meeting. Each Branch is considering a motion to exempt refugees from membership dues in the first 2 years after their arrival in the country. All of the other branches but Ontario have approved this policy, and it is recommended for approval in Ontario. I think it is a positive idea (not binding on Athletics Canada, but would be persuasive), although I think it raises questions about discounts for other disadvantaged participants in our sport. The optics of rejecting this motion would not be good for Manitoba and so I am hoping that the Board will approve this at our meeting this evening.

I have attended more track meets and continue to be impressed at the numbers of athletes, the high quality of athlete performance and officials' work that marks our meets. The Bison Classic and Boeing meets attract large contingents from out of province clubs, which makes the competitions that much more interesting. The entertainment is first rate and I would still like to see more board members attending these meets.

My work at Athletics Canada continues to expand. There have been teleconferences on appointing AC committees, on nominations to the AC board and several on risk management. It turns out that chairing the Governance and Nominating Committee is not an easy gig.

Simplot (a Portage la Prairie French fry plant) is a client of mine and I was excited to see their support for sending Manitoba athletes to the Simplot Games in the USA. Our athletes, and particularly Victoria Tachinski who repeated as 400 m champion, distinguished themselves with their performances. There was to be an evening of celebration in Portage on March 21 that I was to attend, but it has been re-scheduled to April.

Several Canadian Olympians passed on the World Indoor Championships, including Andre DeGrasse, Damian Warner and Derek Drouin. However, Brienne Theisen-Eaton produced personal bests in almost every event of the heptathlon and won the final event, the 800 m, by well over 10 seconds ahead of her Ukrainian rivals to claim the World gold. It was an inspiring performance and bodes well for Rio.

I will attend both the national championships (July 7 and 8) and the AC AGM in Edmonton (July 9 and 10). I also plan to attend the MRA awards night on April 11.

Grant Mitchell, President of AM