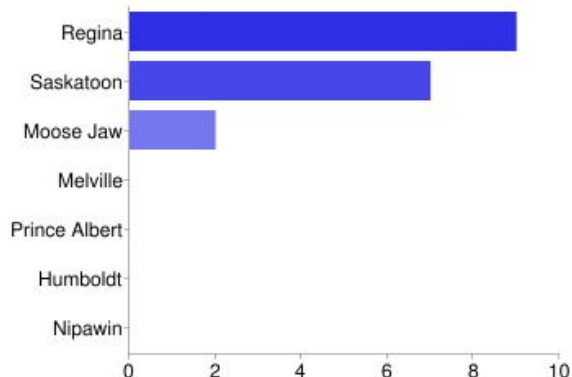




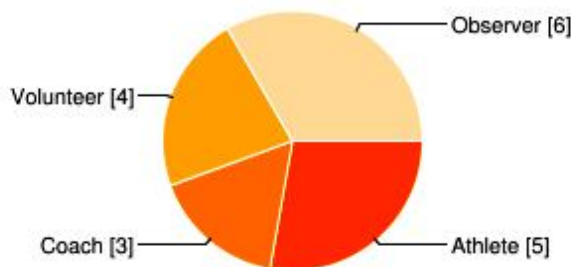
YARA FALL CLASSIC MEET SURVEY



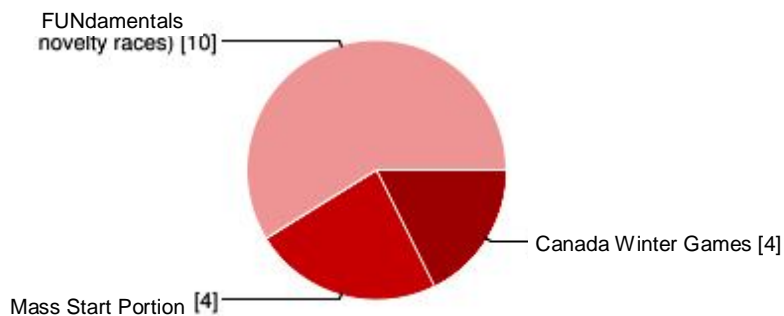
What Speed Skating Club are you associated with?



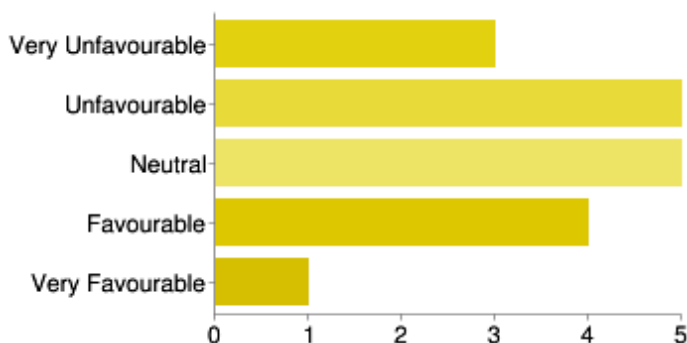
How were you involved with the Yara Fall Classic Short Track Meet?



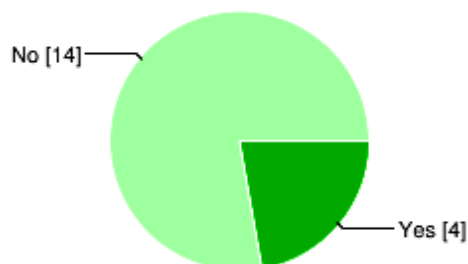
What part of the meet were you most involved with as an athlete, coach, volunteer or observer?



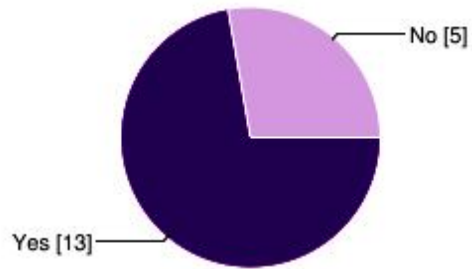
What was your overall impression of the FUNdamentals component of meet?



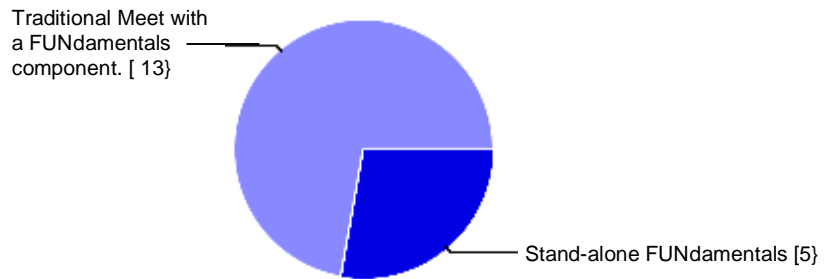
Do you think the FUNdamentals (fun-oriented races) contributed to your attachment to the sport of speed skating?



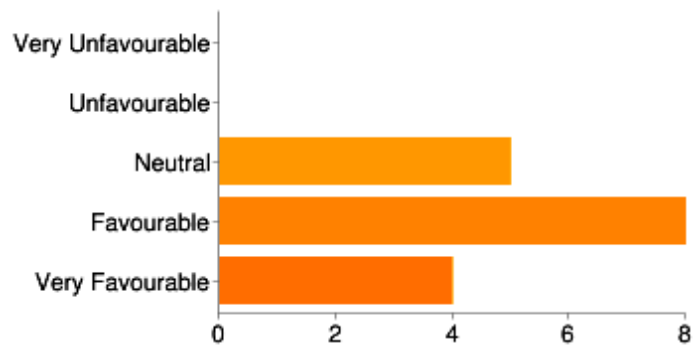
Do you think the FUNdamentals (fun-oriented races) contributed to skater development and learning?



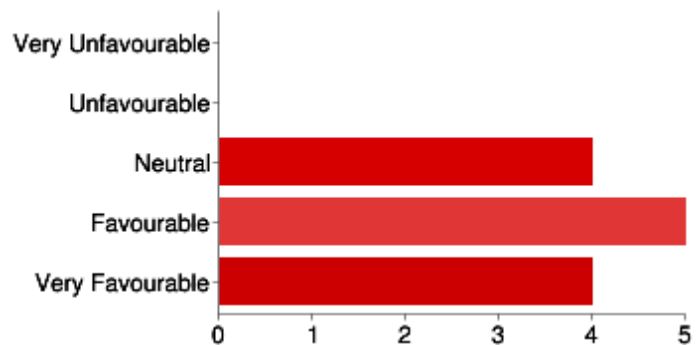
Would you like to see stand-alone FUNdamentals meets or traditional meets with time set aside for a FUNdamentals competition?



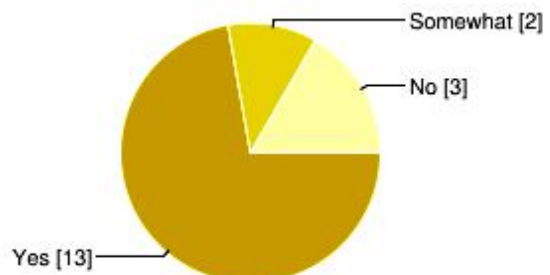
What was your overall impression of the traditional mass start component of the meet?



What was your overall impression of the Canada Winter Games Trials?



Are you aware of the Long Term Participation and Athlete Development Program?



How can the FUNdamentals component of the meet be improved?

- Fundamentals components should be a smaller part of the meet, maybe one fundamentals component and the rest races. Most kids do not like the games and only want to race.
- As a coach I thought there should be a smaller portion of the meet being "fun-oriented". In a brief survey of the kids before the Fundamentals component 99 per cent did not want to do it, and a few didn't even go to the meet. After the Fundamentals component, they all liked the games, but didn't think it should be in the competition, particularly the Chicken Race. These games should be done at the "Active Start" level. It's kind of ironic that the Active Start is doing 111m races, while FUNdamentals and L2T are doing the games. I find that when changes are made to a sport, the decisions are made at the top and seldom do they ask the actual participants what they want. SASSA needs to talk to the kids.
- Experimenting with different races, trying new races and working out the kinks of what is provided will provide for improvement. The less time skaters are not skating while on the ice, the more they will enjoy their races. No need for times, placings for the FUNdamental races. Thanks.
- Drop it completely.
- Reduce the amount of flooding in between groups so this goes faster. Like at the very end of the day on Sunday.
- Longer races for the younger kids because we are not babies and we actually want to race and not do super short races. The fun stuff should just be for the little kids because most beginner speed skaters won't have already done a lot of racing and would probably rather do the games.
- Remove it from meets and leave only at the club level for training purposes, not as part of the overall competitive side.
- Adjust the criteria so it isn't entirely age-based, but also skills or experienced based (coaches are the best to make that decision). For example, there were several skaters with four or five years of experience who are much faster than some of the older kids, but because they were 11 had to do the FUNdamentals rather than racing.
- From my observation and conversations with parents and skaters the overall impression is that the FUNdamentals component has been introduced to far up the age classes. Many of the older children involved have been competing for 5+ years and just want to race. This component is applicable to this age group but should be phased in more slowly as the older kids age out of the age category.
- Keep them as a stand-alone meet and incorporate the games into regular practice.

They are fun and a great way to develop skills, but should be separate from the context of the traditional meet.

- Have an overview or pre-race meeting for all volunteer officials, so that volunteers are better prepared before these events.

- I think it went well. I wouldn't make any changes.

- We have been involved in speed skating for a number of years and therefore believe it is important for younger skaters to attend meets with all skill levels in order to expose them to all aspects of competition. We have a few comments about the way the FUNdamentals were held at the Regina meet: the exercises seemed to be well received for the FUNdamental skaters, however, for the Learn to Train youth, we believe they are past the age of gaining anything meaningful from the FUNdamental format of racing. Each event/activity of the FUNdamentals were repeated too many times (first day format). The kids were also on the ice for an extended period of time, waiting around, and not doing anything meaningful. As they were often standing around on the ice, they became inattentive. We believe the FUNdamentals should be incorporated into regular meets for the above mentioned reasons, but should be much shorter in duration - perhaps a half day of activities, combined with their races. And it should also be made clearer to the skaters who is on their "team". We suggest having the skaters wear the same colour helmet cover. Also, encourage some further interaction amongst the "team" off the ice - could have a volunteer or a coach spend some time with the "team". This was done on the ice, however, could be carried over one step further to include getting the "team" together off the ice. Some reward recognition is also important for the winning team(s).

- Long wait times between skating - hard for the younger ones to stay focused and interested.

- It needs to be brought in gradually. There are kids in older age groups who have skated longer distances in traditional meets for five or so years and to have this suddenly changed is too much for them. They do not understand why and do not like to have to do the novelty races or short distances. I don't know why the FUNdamentals has to be part of a meet. It can be done as development in practice if desired. Standard FUNdamental race types should be developed so they can be practiced if they are to be part of competition meets.

How can the traditional mass start component of the meet be improved?

- Keep the 111 track.

- Again, as a coach I am seeing the kids gravitate towards the traditional mass start. Smaller groups would create more competitive races, particularly in the younger kids.

- Well organized - thank you volunteers.

- Liked the long races and partner relays.
- Skaters should still skate 500m in all the T2T divisions so that they have a "benchmark" for tracking improvement if they want to do that.
- The races were just too short.
- Do not allow kids to be standing around on the ice for "any" length of time, they get cold. To often, officials were creating "humorous" situations at the expense of kids just standing around while on the ice. Also, during the individual pursuits, kids were standing and waiting at center ice while their groups individual races were being completed. This can be better served with kids off ice. We were not that pressed for time.
- As always better attention to scheduling and better communication of schedule changes. It was ridiculous to see the younger kids skating a 3000m race as that distance is not part of ANY age category distances anymore. The 10-minute race however should be part of the older skaters races as well.
- No complaints. The skaters weren't opposed to the new distances. The 100m vs 111m track caused a few challenges, but overall the skaters seemed to like the new distances they were skating. The pursuits and relays were a great addition to the program for the younger (T2T) skaters.
- It would have been nice to see a relay and/or pursuit races, to gain some experience and enjoyment of these events.
- Allow more time in between races or do individual distances races at the same time.
- Combining CWG meets with mass start prolongs the meet due to the incessant flooding. Need to separate or schedule to minimize down time.

How could the Canada Winter Games portion of the meet be improved?

- Thank you very much, Regina, for hosting this meet, running the LTAD component and your efforts to assist in change.
- It was fine.
- Better scheduling. By the time they finished racing and had supper it was 10:30 pm. Then they had to be at the rink for warm ups at 7 am and didn't start racing until after 9. The fundamentals portion could have gone most of the morning with the CWG athletes arriving mid-morning for warm ups and racing starting closer to 10, allowing them time to get a proper sleep and have time to attend to their equipment.
- Promoted/advertised/recognized more, as well as more signage and posters. It seems to me that the CWG was not given the notoriety it deserves, nor is trying for it resonating with the skaters at the level I would have expected.
- I would not make any changes it is pretty good right now.

We invite you to comment on any aspect of the meet - good, bad or just an observation.

- This Regina meet, given all the changes, was the best run meet I have attended so far. All events seemed to go on time, which is unusual in our sport. I stated it above, SASSA needs to talk to the kids when developing new formats that affect them. As a primarily FUNdamentals coach, I try to bring in as much FUN to the practices and will incorporate the games I learned here. But, I have noticed, particularly at the 8 + level the kids start liking laps and learning skills more than the games. The games at the competition need to be done at the Active Start Level.

- We were very disappointed that some L2T skaters were treated differently than others and were invited to move up to the T2T group and not everyone was informed or invited to do this. This was very discouraging for our son to see his age group buddies skating up and having fun racing when he had to wait for the L2T group and then only got to do very short distances. This was not fair and we understand that this issue was discussed and resolved and we appreciate that. Thanks for the meet.

- I would have liked to have moved up but we found out too late.

- Overall, scheduling is as always an issue. It is important that the athletes have adequate rest and time to attend to their equipment. Skaters who skate on Friday evening should not be scheduled to race before 10am.

- Keep the Sat AM FUNdamental games (barrel/chuck/chicken) as part of a stand-alone meet/part of regular weeknight practice. The drag race went over really well and should remain part of the meet, as well as lots of short lap races. That's what the FUNdamental/L2T skaters love the most about the meets - getting out and racing with their friends! Try adding a relay for the L2T skaters. The T2T skaters really enjoyed that, too. A big thank you to everyone that helped to put the meet on this past weekend! I'm sure we can tweak with the new format to find the best way to keep the skaters having fun & excelling in their sport :)

- The Wickenheiser is a great rink, but access from hotels in Regina is poor. I am a Regina resident and realize the locations of good hotels in Regina are limited to the south, east, and north central (Seven Oaks is the closest though I heard that was occupied due to a ringette tournament). I saw many families from out of town and wondered where they were staying and how far they had to drive to get to the rink, especially to be there at 7 a.m. Maybe it is not that significant, as traffic is not that bad in Regina plus if you have quick access to the Ring Road you should not take that long early in the morning. However it might be worthwhile talking to those that travel from out of town and get their opinions.

- It was pretty well done I enjoyed being there.

- Firstly, thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide feedback. We believe that open discussion, communication and dialogue are essential in order to continue to improve our sport. We chose to wait a few days to complete the survey in order to gather our thoughts and give a thoughtful reply, rather than completing it right after the meet and risk being reactive. Our family did participate in the Regina Meet and would like to congratulate the Regina Club for doing their best to host the meet utilizing the new format. It was evident that there were many frustrations in organizing a meet with the new format, yet each encounter our family had with any Regina Club member was positive as they did their best to work through issues. Regarding the LTPAD, we are knowledgeable and I think have a solid understanding of what the intent is, the philosophy of which we tend to agree with. Firstly, it is evident that on a provincial level, we all need to work out some kinks. Our "issue" is not with the LTPAD, but how some things were handled specifically at the Regina meet. As parents, athletes, coaches, volunteers involved with this sport, we have each been encouraged to embrace the LTPAD and to have an open mind. This is the mindset we went into the fall season and specifically into the Regina meet with. We have been "coaching" our kids about it, trying to prepare them for the changes, although we were uncertain of the changes ourselves. This strategy was very successful as we headed into the first day of the meet. However, it soon changed as we became aware that two boys who are of the age to be part of the FUNdamentals (Learn to Train), had been moved up to the Train to Train, (Div I). This information created confusion, anger and distrust of the Association as a whole. If special favours are granted to select individuals, how can we offer support to the new system and "sell" it to our kids and to parents, when they are equally as confused. We have been asked to be patient, understanding, accepting and open minded, however, we believe the Association needs also to have some understanding that many families have been skating for several years under the former format and that not only have the parents become accustomed to certain things, the skaters (who we are all here for) have also become accustomed to certain things. It is confusing for them and they are trying to adjust and adapt as well, however, when special privileges are granted to two skaters and their families, how do we as adults offer explanation? It is our understanding that the philosophy of LTPAD is that kids do not participate in sports at a level that they are not physically, emotionally and developmentally ready for. This has been the information that has been repeated over and over to our Association and to our Club - that boys under 12 and girls under 11 simply do not physically have the abilities they require to compete at the next level. It is evident there is inconsistency. Many of the issues that we are dealing with are the result of lack of communication at a provincial level. A prime example of this is the recent misunderstanding of the role of our provincial coach, which was only clarified after many unfortunate heated discussions. This is not the type of environment our family wishes to remain a part of, nor an environment that will foster the growth of the sport. We are very seriously concerned about the future of speed skating in this province and in our local club for this reason. We simply need to work together for the benefit of our skaters. A good start is that SASSA and the officials are on the same page. A last comment that we would like to make is that the families who make up speed skating in this province are from varied backgrounds. LTPAD is not being questioned by the vast majority (of individuals we encounter), the rationale is sound

and we believe in it as well. The confusion and misunderstanding is how it is being implemented within our sport. It is insulting that we are being accused of not understanding what LTPAD is, when it is a very simple concept. In our rush to implement LTPAD within our sport, we must also keep in mind that we are competing with many other sports for athletes, volunteers, and sponsorship. There are only so many families, athletes and volunteers to maintain a sport and our own club is currently struggling. We don't want to alienate existing or future members. Our intention is not to create further animosity and dissension amongst our sport, but rather to start again, build it up and foster its growth. It is important that the results of these surveys be communicated to all the Clubs and to all Members in order to be effective. We can learn from the Melville meet who bravely first implemented FUNdamentals - the full results were not shared.

- 1) It seemed to be a very long meet for the number of skaters present. 2) Not the Regina Club's fault, but a last-minute decision Friday night at 9:00 to allow kids to skate up does not help attendance or the mood of the skaters and parents who wanted their kids to skate up but thought they could not. 3) Again, not RSSC's fault but if the FUNdamentals are to continue as part of meets, some serious thought has to be given to the volunteers time (especially timers and place judges who are not required) and the times during the weekend that the FUN is scheduled for. 4) For FUNdamentals age kids, what distance is going to be used for SEED times now that they no longer skate a 500?

Thank You to everyone who took the time to participate in this survey. The results will be shared with other clubs, so we can continue to make improvements to our meets throughout the province.

- Trevor Sutter, Membership Development, Saskatchewan Speed Skating