



**Strategic Plan 2017 - 2021**

**Alberta Racquetball Association**



### A Word from the President

The Alberta Racquetball Association has reached the end of its current 4-year planning cycle, and with that comes an exciting opportunity to review, refocus, and explore new opportunities. As we reflect on our history and successes we see a depth of strength in our athletes, coaches, officials, and volunteers upon which we hope to build.

When setting new goals for our future, it is important that we consider not only the environment of racquetball in Alberta, but also the greater context of sport in our modern society - both provincially and nationally. Current trends and issues include diversity, technology, participation, and increasing costs. The Association hopes to meet these challenges head on with the goals and directions outlined in this document.

Our Strategic Plan is intended to promote growth and sustainability while building a stronger foundation for you, our membership, through accountability and transparency. Let us strive to be national leaders for our sport. To reach such heights will require the participation and support of our community, and so I ask for your involvement; help us to reach our objectives and create an active racquetball community in Alberta. Be it running a tournament or league, investing time as a Board member, volunteering your unique skills, or even simply continuing your membership, you will become a vital piece of the future success of racquetball in Alberta.

I look forward to implementing this plan with Alberta's racquetball community by my side.

Yours in Sport,  
Jeff Buller  
President, Alberta Racquetball Association

## Executive Summary

### Overview

In September of 2016, the Alberta Racquetball Association's Board of Directors met for a full-day discussion on the strategic direction of the Association. A committee was then formed to break those directions into objectives, consisting of a subset of Board Members and the ARA's Executive Director. The committee focused on setting specific and realistic goals for the Association, setting the framework for its Operational Plan. The Strategic Plan was then brought back to the Board for final review and approval.

The purpose of this Plan is to serve as a management tool; to define the Association's future direction and paint a picture of the outcomes it expects to deliver. Finding guidance from Racquetball Canada's Strategic Plan and Sport for Life's Values, it focuses on clearly defined operational goals.

This is a living document that will grow and evolve with the Association, providing a solid foundation for planning between now and 2021.

### Renewal of Mission & Vision, Creation of Values

An important component of the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan is a review and renewal of the Association's foundational statements – its Mission and Vision statements. The Alberta Racquetball Association took this opportunity to review these statements to ensure their timeliness, accuracy, and usefulness in guiding the day-to-day operations of the Association. The Association also expanded its foundational statements to include Values. These Values will serve as a guiding compass for decisions, discussions, and future Strategic Plans.

### Moving Forward

The Alberta Racquetball Association is proud of the work it did and the insights it captured throughout the strategic planning process. It looks forward to engaging its membership in the implementation and revision of this document to better meet their needs. This Plan moves the ARA in a new direction with new areas of focus, but continues to emphasize the pillars of its success. It is the Board's hope that this investment of time, resources, and energy will prove fruitful in the years ahead.



### **Our Vision**

The Alberta Racquetball Association's vision is to make racquetball accessible to all Albertans: to be a national leader in programming, athlete development, and good governance.

### **Our Mission**

Our mission is to facilitate the participation and enjoyment of racquetball through the development of programs, resources, coaches, and officials. We strive to build a strong future and legacy for racquetball by supporting competitive athletes and fostering life-long participants. We endeavour to increase involvement and accessibility at all levels through promotion, advocacy, and funding.

### **Our Values**

In contributing to a strong and vibrant Albertan sport system, the Alberta Racquetball Association is committed to being an accountable and effective organization by promoting and living the following values in our work and through our actions:

**Sportsmanship:** We promote an attitude of sportsmanship, whereby the goal is not simply to win, but to have fun and give one's best effort in the pursuit of victory.

**Respect:** We foster an environment of respect, striving for equal opportunities and maintaining policies that are free from discrimination or bias.

**Community:** We support the development of the racquetball community at large by encouraging mentorship and facilitating program involvement.

**Leadership:** We develop athlete leaders, who lead by example, inspire others to excel and contribute to meaningful change where they live, work and play.

(Vision, Mission and Values approved by Board of Directors on January 24, 2017)

## Strategic Plan 2017 - 2021

**Strategic Direction 1: Sport Awareness - Increased awareness of and accessibility to Racquetball, the ARA and its programs.**

Strategic Priority	New Strategy/Action	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote racquetball in Alberta</li> <li>• Create easy access to racquetball programs</li> <li>• Improve stakeholder communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and implement a marketing strategy that utilizes creative means and modern trends</li> <li>• Foster relationships with clubs across the province and support them in program promotion</li> <li>• Identify/Create a platform to provide access for community groups to communicate and create synergy</li> </ul>	<p>By 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed marketing strategy by June 2017</li> <li>• A fully implemented marketing strategy by end of year</li> <li>• Have met with 25% of clubs in the province and gone over needs and opportunities</li> <li>• Have selected, implemented &amp; promoted a member communication platform</li> </ul> <p>By 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of awareness of the sport of racquetball, its athletes, programs, tournaments, and the Association</li> <li>• Highly visible and accessible racquetball programs in all zones of the province</li> <li>• A thriving racquetball community that frequently self-organizes</li> </ul>

**Strategic Direction 2: Membership Growth - Increased membership at junior, adult, and senior levels.**

Strategic Priority	New Strategy/Action	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a membership growth strategy</li> <li>• Develop club affiliation policy</li> <li>• Provide tangible benefits to membership</li> <li>• Effectively track membership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine and implement the model for a membership program that includes recruitment strategies for general public, non-member recreational players, and under-represented groups or minorities</li> <li>• Design and realize a model for club membership</li> <li>• Develop a comprehensive membership database</li> </ul>	<p>By 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed membership growth strategy with quantifiable targets</li> <li>• Established baseline figures for membership</li> <li>• Reviewed membership package including cost and incentives</li> <li>• Designed affiliate club membership package</li> <li>• Completed membership database and input all historical data</li> </ul> <p>By 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent and well-communicated membership program</li> <li>• Increased membership by 15% from current levels</li> <li>• 95% of racquetball courts in the province affiliated with ARA</li> <li>• Detailed membership database that simplifies tracking and renewal of membership, certifications, applications, and approvals.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Direction 3: Program Development - Identify and train high performance athletes, candidate coaches, officials, volunteers, and course conductors.**

Strategic Priority	New Strategy/Action	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of juniors in high performance programs</li> <li>• Continue support of current high performance athletes</li> <li>• Increase number of high performance coaches</li> <li>• Support and develop community leaders</li> <li>• Foster a mentorship environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and sponsor introduction to racquetball programs</li> <li>• Outline funding parameters for high performance athletes</li> <li>• Provide opportunities and funding for the development of coaches and officials</li> <li>• Establish roles for Provincial Head Coach, Provincial Head Official, and High Performance Team Leader</li> </ul>	<p>By 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held introduction to racquetball clinics in Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, and Lethbridge</li> <li>• Written, approved and communicated athlete funding policy to membership</li> <li>• Offered at least one coaching clinic and one officiating clinic to membership.</li> <li>• Defined qualifications and responsibilities of Provincial Head Coach, Provincial Head Official, and High Performance Team Leader</li> </ul> <p>By 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of coaches and officials in the province by 15%</li> <li>• Increased number of players in high performance programming by 20%</li> <li>• Consistently offering coaching and officiating clinics each year</li> <li>• Established annual leadership and mentorship awards</li> </ul>

**Strategic Direction 4: Operational Excellence - Strengthen systems and structures that enable the achievement of strategic goals and ensure legal and financial accountability.**

Strategic Priority	New Strategy/Action	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish policies for all areas of board responsibility and funding</li> <li>• Improve stakeholder relationships</li> <li>• Ensure the long-term financial viability of racquetball in Alberta.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a Policies &amp; Procedures document including sections on financial transparency and Board positions &amp; responsibilities</li> <li>• Review &amp; update Association Bylaws</li> <li>• Create a guide to outline board recruitment, orientation, development, recognition, and succession planning</li> <li>• Foster relationships with representatives from our provincial funding bodies, national governing body, affiliated leagues, and clubs</li> </ul>	<p>By 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and Procedures document written, approved</li> <li>• Bylaws updated</li> <li>• Board of Directors Management guide brainstormed and outlined</li> <li>• Established first-name basis contact with ASC, AGLC, RC, 50% of racquetball clubs in Alberta</li> </ul> <p>By 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full transparency in policies, financials, and their communication to stakeholders</li> <li>• Clear bylaws, policies, and procedures to govern day to day operations of the Association</li> <li>• Completed and implemented Board of Directors Management Guide</li> <li>• Developed and well-maintained relationships with all key stakeholders</li> </ul>

**Links to Racquetball Canada's Strategic Directions**

Strategic Directions	Player Development	Sport Development	Operational Excellence	Marketing & Promotion
SD 1: Sport Awareness			✓	✓
SD 2: Membership Growth	✓			✓
SD 3: Program Development	✓	✓		
SD 4: Operational Excellence			✓	

**Links to Sport for Life Values**

Strategic Directions	Excellence	Inclusion	Fairness	Fun
SD 1: Sport Awareness		✓		✓
SD 2: Membership Growth		✓		✓
SD 3: Program Development	✓	✓	✓	✓
SD 4: Operational Excellence	✓		✓	

**Members of the Strategic Planning Committee**

Jeff Buller, President, Alberta Racquetball Association Board of Directors

Reg Atkins, Treasurer, Alberta Racquetball Association Board of Directors

Caleb Smith, Program Director, Alberta Racquetball Association Board of Directors

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