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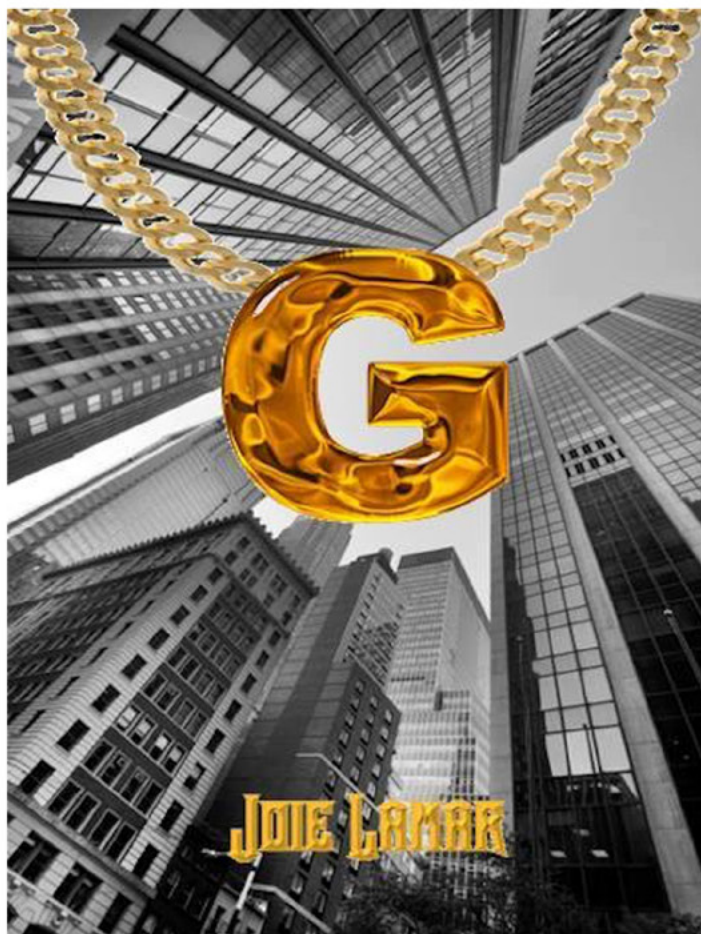


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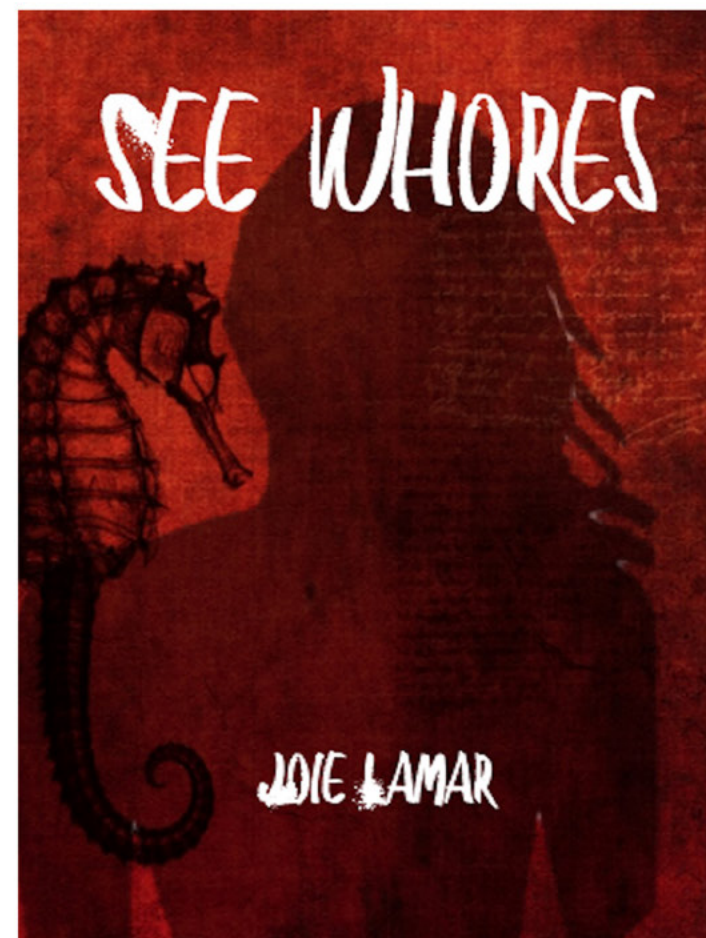
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Greetings and Salutations,

Our second sports-themed issue is here, and we cover plenty, both locally and internationally. Our main feature is written by Melissa MacMullin, who takes a look at **Inclusion and Diversity in Sports**, highlighting several organizations who are taking a stance toward making sports welcoming to all. In our second feature, Aaron Rothermund covers the fun and friendly **Gay Games**, which were created as a platform that is welcoming to everyone to compete, regardless of skill level, gender, or identity. This will be the first time the games will take place in Asia, which unfortunately were just recently postponed and will now be taking place in Hong Kong in 2023.

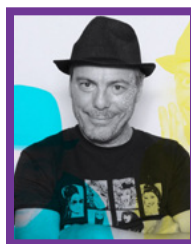
In our columns, we welcome guest Wiggled Out columnist, and RuPaul alumni, **Violet Chachki** who is hosting the **Night of the Living Drag** tour, which stops here in Toronto on October 16, 2021, with a slew of other queens dying to show you a good ole spooky time. Our regular columnist Cat Grant spotlights the **Women's Hockey Club of Toronto**, which is back for this fall/winter season, and encourages all levels of players to join. Boyd Kodak caught up with transgender advocate and triathlete **Chris Mosier**, who challenged the *International Olympic Committee* policy, which resulted in the creation and adoption of new guidelines. Jon Pressick got the scoop from **David Wilson**, the current Treasurer of the **Toronto Historical Bowling Society**, about the joys of big balls, and Rolyn Chambers chatted with **George Pratt** to discuss his first foray into the bar scene (*18 East, Club Colby's*) to create space that was welcoming to the burgeoning gay sporting leagues at the time.

Be sure to also check out our [online event listings](#) as Toronto begins to open up once again for live events.

Wishing everyone a joyous and colourful fall season!

Bryen Dunn

Editor-in-Chief



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BREAKING BARRIERS AND PAVING THE WAY: LGBTQ+ INCLUSION IN SPORTS

By Mellisa MacMullin

Canadian and international organizations and individuals are building safe bridges and transcending differences for the games and gays we love, by going beyond first base to enact serious change.

In Canada, sport organizations have a legal and ethical responsibility to make sport a safer place, and to create positive spaces, especially for members of the LGBTQ+ community. Canada is known as one of the most LGBTQ+ friendly countries on the planet, citing 4% of its total population aged 15+ as identifying as part of the LGBTQ+ community. While initiatives, campaigns and programs have been undertaken nationally for decades, there still remains a multitude of challenges.

For sports to become more of an optimal learning environment through embracing and practicing inclusivity, accessibility must be increased. Pushing boundaries and creating inclusive spaces where athletes, coaches, officials and even sports fans can be their authentic out

and proud selves, is where the movement that has been steadily progressing. Canada is a forefront leader when it comes to promoting a sporting environment that is safe and welcoming, with visible athletes who influence, inspire and rally for LGBTQ+ sport inclusivity.

Canadian sport organizations at national, provincial, and local levels have been working to adapt and improve their policies and practices as they seek to reflect the changing demographics, such as understanding LGBTQ+ language, and having knowledge of sensitive issues and protections in place to combat systemic discrimination. These organizations and sport leaders also provide and employ anti-harassment policies, educational programs, and LGBTQ+ specific resources which contribute to social, personal, and community development.

Assistant professor at *University of Waterloo's Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies*, **Steven Mock**, believes that sport is of both social and emotional importance. Mock feels sport gives the LGBTQ+ community an outlet to express their identity, feel better about themselves, and to garner affirmative support. "It helps them come to terms with their identity and increases the likelihood of them disclosing their sexual minority identity in their everyday lives," expressed Mock in his recent study

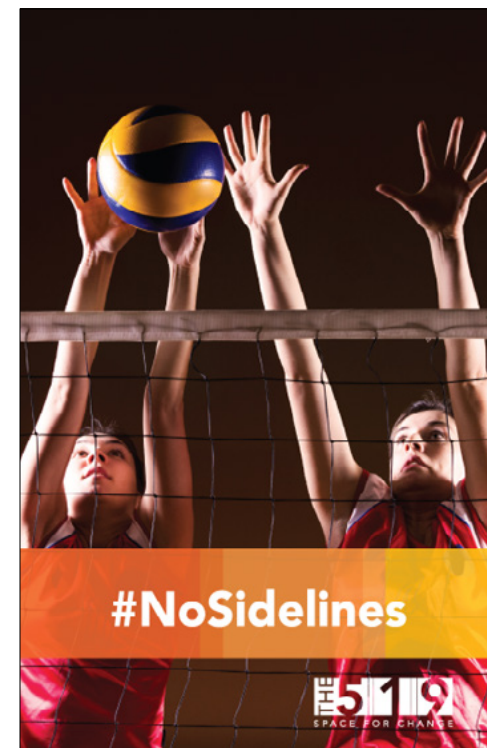
funded by the *Social Sciences and Humanity Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)*.



"If you can play, you can play," is the slogan for social activism campaign and project, *You Can Play*. The organization has been challenging sport culture while ensuring safety and diverse inclusion since 2012. An official partner of the *NHL*, *You Can Play* centres around equality and respect through fair opportunities given to LGBTQ+ athletes solely assessed by skill and what they contribute to their sport or team's success. For the past decade this group has been working and partnering with sports teams from professional to youth-level as a consultation hub on inclusion policies, increasing LGBTQ+ athlete participation, and fan engagement. **Patrick Burke**, co-founder of *You Can Play*, stated, "We want the day to come when it's not a story when an athlete comes out, but when athletes are only judged by how they can help their teams win."

From the stands to the fields! *The 519 Community Centre's* campaign and education program, *#nosidelines*, focuses on making an impact with action rather than setting intentions in the sector of recreational sports and sporting spaces. They place emphasis on the importance of making the early experiences in sport more supportive and free from discriminatory language and behaviours. They offer complimentary workshops exploring practical strategies and proposing ways on how the LGBTQ+ community can fully engage and benefit in sport through developing measurable actions to foster safe and dignified environments.

Founded during the Toronto 2015 *Pan Am Games*, and managed by a group of sport leaders such as the *Canadian Olympic Committee*, *Sport Inclusion* is a resource mecca that supports national, provincial, and local sport organizations to develop policies, educate, and understand allyship. "There has been a lot of progress made by many within our community to develop programs, initiatives, and resources. Having a centralized website to house these resources and best practices will go a long way in supporting sport organizations on their diversity, equity and inclusion journey," said CEO and Secretary General of the *Canadian Olympic Committee*, **David Shoemaker**. The *Sport Inclusion Task Force* is



their recently formed coalition aiming to end LGBTQ+ bias through encouraging sport organizations take action with tangible steps and the necessary tools required to prioritize diverse acceptance.

Since the creation of the *International Gay and Lesbian Football Association* in 1992, over 100 teams and clubs from 30+ countries have joined and participated at their IGLFA competitions promoting equality through the beloved game of football (soccer to North America).



Kimberly Hedley from Canada is their Vice President of Diversity, ensuring IGLFA represents all members. Having gained the support of Adidas and Nike at their 2016 World Cup Championship Tournament, they had also been nominated for the first-ever *FIFA Diversity Award*. With full support from the *Argentina Football Association*, the 2024 IGLFA World Cup Championship Tournament will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This will be the first time an LGBTQ+ event in South America has received this level of support and recognition.

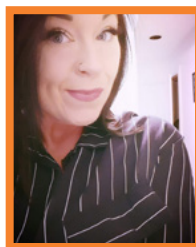


of real Newfoundland towns paired with LGBTQ+ word play, to reclaim pejoratives used in open spaces and in locker rooms.

Inspired by **Don Cherry's** homophobic slurs, he felt compelled to make a statement and contribute to the take-down of toxic masculinity. "Hegemonic masculinity needs to be addressed. This is both for players and fans. Teams must become more supportive of their players whether they are struggling to come out publicly, or having family issues, mental issues, etc. The biggest goal is to help change sports culture so that players feel more comfortable being who they are. I think we're seeing a pivotal change since the pandemic, where athletes, regardless of the sport, are starting to stand up for themselves and prioritize their well-being" Morneau expressed to theBUZZ.

More work needs to be done to grow and foster acceptance and awareness, as well as to be able to hold open and vulnerable conversations to squash ignorance, stereotyping, bigotry, and homophobic attitudes across all tables. Sport inclusivity ensures that every person regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity gets to live their lives genuinely, to be fully accepted, and not be left behind when it comes to presenting their athletic abilities to the world without judgment. Game on!

Melissa MacMullin is a freelance content writer and journalist for leading publications. A strong distinct queer Canadian voice with pride and purpose.



The non-profit [International Gay and Lesbian Tennis Alliance](#) organization's goal has always been to promote LGBTQ+ access to tennis around the world. They have a shared value of diversity and openness to varying skill levels placed in divisions determined by ability. Their sanctioned tournaments provide a safe and accepting space for approximately 10,000 players to compete. Founded in 1991, they quickly grew in the 90s branching to Europe, Australia, and Canada, and now have over 80 member clubs globally. Membership is not restricted to gay and lesbian individuals only, as the GLTA also encourages the participation of bisexual, pansexual, non-binary, transexual, and transgender participants.

An advocate for the rights of LGBTQ+ athletes, the [Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport](#) is an independent, national, non-profit entity that encourages sport organizations to implement fair, inclusive, non-discriminatory rules to activate a principle-driven sports system. The CCES feels that inclusion is not necessarily about making room for LGBTQ+ people in any existing borderline-archaic system, but about creating a new system where they are an intrinsic and integral part. Leading initiatives that navigate issues which threaten to interfere with fair and safe sport, they believe the future of sport requires a values-based conscience backed by ethical guidelines.

Using campy humour, **Lucas Morneau**, a queer artist from Corner Brook, Newfoundland, created a fictional "Queer Newfoundland Hockey League." His objective was to deconstruct gender norms while challenging prevalent heteronormative attitudes. Morneau had knit 14 jerseys for each fantasy team on his league, featuring the names

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By Aaron Rothermund

The Federation of Gay Games usually takes place every four years, and offer an opportunity to showcase athletes, artists, and advocates making waves within the queer community.

Entirely run by passionate volunteers, the multi-faceted event encourages a healthy lifestyle by improving on mental health resources, presenting nutritional education, and promoting joy within recreational activity.

The *Gay Games* was founded in San Francisco in 1982 by athlete and physician, **Dr. Tom Waddell**. Since then, the culturally diverse festival has appeared in such world-class cities as Vancouver (1990), Amsterdam (1998), Chicago (2006), and Paris (2018).

Next year the *Gay Games* were scheduled to showcase the curious mixture of natural wonders, urban landscapes, and innovative technologies of Hong Kong. However, the organization recently announced that they would be postponing the event until November 2023 due to concerns about the current pandemic situation. When safe to do so, the event is expected to warmly welcome over 90,000 individuals from around the world, adding to the Frangrant Harbour's already 7.7 million inhabitants. Over the course of nine days, the excited participants and spectators will surge through

the city streets, immersing themselves in the local customs, traditions, and cuisines, while enjoying a cavalcade of sporting opportunities.

This will be the first time in history that the *Gay Games* will take place in Asia. The organizers are hopeful that positive queer representation will ease the conservative element that still permeates parts of the continent. In Hong Kong, equal marriage is still not recognized, and bringing in the *Games* can hopefully help break down stereotypes and activate a change in policy.

The event is expected to be comprised of 36 sporting events, including swimming, bowling, wrestling, and badminton. New additions include dodgeball, trail-running, cheerleading, and esports- which has generated buzz from online gamers normally left out of live sporting events. Dragon Boat racing is one of the most exciting add-ons, taking place on Hong Kong's sparkling waterfront. There are a minimum of twenty-five rowers per boat with musicians keeping the paddle strokes on rhythm by striking their drums in unison. Although the *Gay Games* are not about winning, the *Fierce Dragons*, Hong Kong's all-inclusive LGBTQ2S+ Dragon Boat team is anxious to fuel the fire in preparation of stiff competition.

Everyone is welcome to participate in the competitive and house league tournaments regardless of physical ability, gender identity, or sexual orientation. The organization encourages "participation, inclusion, and personal best," and strives to provide a safe and fair playing field for all guests. During the sporting events, a positive attitude is paramount to

success. Often the least experienced, or those who finish last, receive the most praise, applause, and recognition from their peers and the media covering the event.

The *Federation of Gay Games* and [Gay Games Hong Kong](#) are fully understanding that not all genders are legally recognized in their country of residency, and this hinders many athletes from engaging in sporting events. As "Unity in Diversity" is key to the festival's mission, athletes can register in the category that fits their lived experience, without proof of their biological sex. Other recreational events will be mixed gender participation or run without gendered categories, allowing a more inclusive approach to team building.

"There's a wide range of participants," Co-Chair and Legal Counsel, Lisa Lam says. "We try to engage the community with surveys to gather feedback, so we can work together to update the policy to include more points-of-view from individuals on the gender spectrum."

Lam has worked toward an equitable platform for the community, first by studying Social Work at the University of Calgary, and later studying Law at York University. Lam went back to Asia after graduating to teach in Southwest China, and enjoys the quiet countryside.

"Although policies and laws change slowly, they tend to follow the ideals of the public," Lam states. "With mainstream media portraying more gay characters, it's normalizing the queer lifestyle, and it's only a matter of time before the government catches up with the will of the people."

Now back in Hong Kong, Lam takes time to celebrate the little moments in life, by swimming at one of the thirty-six public beaches, or walking the numerous winding park trails with Co-chair, Dennis Philipse.

"I'm most excited for the academic collaboration with local universities that have opened their doors and archives to allow public access," Lam tells me. "Libraries will be open for visitors to read research papers written by professors, lecturers, and students. We will be able to have a shared forum to meditate on various research and community works."

The *Gay Games* opening ceremony will begin with a celebration infusing the spirit of the Games with Hong Kong pride, featuring exhibition dances, concert presentations, and artistic performances on the Village Main Stage. The first day also kicks off the International Rainbow Memorial Run, paying tribute to queer athletes and icons that inspired the *Gay Games* movement.

During the following days the Festival Village will take over two plots of land with pivotal art exhibitions, including the [Sunpride Foundation](#), which collects hybrid works from LGBTQ2S+ artists from Asia. Other essential events include the New Media Arts Expo hosted in the historic *Tai Kwun Centre for Heritage and Arts*, the Former Central Police Station Compound. The interactive art installations will include a presentation of the Names Project Memorial Quilt, and a



Niel Enopia and Ezekiel Vargas

graceful retrospective service led by the *Hong Kong AIDS Committee*.

Victoria Harbour will alight with pulsating digital influences of light and darkness mixed with ancient vibes of a time gone by. The closing ceremony will explode into the night sky by showcasing an incomparable display of multi-media, including video installations, live cabaret acts, and of course a remarkable display of fireworks. The final celebration will feature leading queer musicians, dancers, and performance artists from around the world coming together to shock and delight the massive crowds.

On the 40th anniversary of the *Gay Games*, Asia's World City will come alive with the electric dreams of LGBTQ+ athletes as they fight for acceptance and combat traditional homophobia that still permeates the older generation. These out-and-proud gladiators will break through stereotypical expectations, foster new allies, and combat each other in friendly competition.

While the *Games* maybe postponed temporarily, you can still guarantee yourself a spot on the first-come-first-serve participant list by [registering](#) now. By reserving soon, the event organizers can get an idea of the popular choices, and participating athletes can take advantage of the early-bird pricing.

Aaron Rothermund is a freelance writer, theatre creator, and filmmaker. Aaron has worked on articles for *The Courier*, *Culture Days*, *theBUZZ*, and *PinkPlayMags*.





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WIGGED OUT

BY VIOLET CHACKKI

RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE GHOULS STORM THE STAGE IN NIGHT OF THE LIVING DRAG

LIVE IN TORONTO OCTOBER 16, 2021



This Halloween, the fabulous ghouls of RuPaul's Drag Race will be in Toronto for their most spooktacular event ever: The 10th Anniversary **Night of the Living Drag** is a fierce evening of fright that takes place Saturday, October 16, 2021, at Toronto's Meridian Hall, the only Canadian date on the tour.

Queen of Darkness **Violet Chackki** will host and guide audiences through a series of untimely deaths, with performances by Drag Race favourites **Gottmik**, **Rosé**, **Aquaria**, **Jaida Essence Hall**, **Alyssa Edwards**, **Kandy Muse**, **Plastique**, and **Kim Chi**.

"Halloween is my favourite time of year and I am obsessed with Night of the Living Drag," says Violet Chackki. "All Drag Race fans know that I have always been drawn to over-the-top costumes, opulent scenery, and jaw-dropping performances that shock and amaze. In this show, I'm not only lifting spirits, I'm summoning them!"

"We pull out all the stops with this production," says Night of the Living Drag producer **Brandon Voss**. "In addition to deadly performances, we're bringing massive decor installations and a phenomenal lighting system to make it an immersive experience. Audiences won't only be watching the action in the cemetery; they will feel as if they are in it."

Here's what a few of the queens had to say about their character, and what fans can expect from their performance.

Violet Chackki

1. We are still fleshing out all the details, but I will be the storyteller of sorts. The queen who rules over the dead souls and the underworld.
2. I'm going all out. We are having a brand new custom aerial apparatus made, and it's going to be insanity!

Rosé

- 1) I'm staging the historic and legendary beheading of Mary, Queen of Scots.
- 2) You can expect beautiful period costumes, hot shirtless Englishmen who are literally trying to murder me, and me trying to do group choreo with no head.

Kim Chi

1. I'm going a slightly different route than one might expect. Instead of a gory bloody death, my character will be dying in a more romantic way, like in a grim version of a fairy tale.
2. No spores... I mean spoilers. I've already said too much.

Plastique

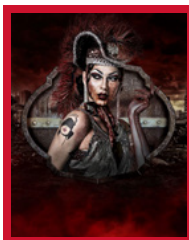
1. I'm gonna be Shevenom, an innocent girl who got taken over by venom and now has to feed on humans to survive.
2. It's gonna be a different side of Plastique that not many people has seen before

After drag fans witness the demise of their favourite queens on stage, Violet summons them back from the dead as flesh craving drag zombies in the show's grand finale!

Pre-sale tickets for Night of the Living Drag are now available at VossEvents.com. There are also a limited number of VIP pre-show meet-and-greet tickets available, and there is rumour that a second show maybe added. As per government regulations, double vaccination is required to attend.

Violet Chackki's sophisticated and entrancing visuals blend striptease, aerial acrobatics, and fetish aesthetics, while distorting the gender binary. She was crowned the Season 7 winner of RuPaul's Drag Race.

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SHE BEAT Women's Hockey Club of Toronto

BY CAT GRANT



It is undeniable that Canada has deep roots in its love of hockey. Originally from Toronto, **Janice Martin**, grew up a tomboy playing street hockey with the neighbourhood kids. “My family didn’t play hockey, although we cross-country skied together,” Janice said. “I played women’s inter-faculty ice hockey (poorly, lol) when I went to the University of Toronto” She would later play again at the age of 40, after coming out as a lesbian and joining the *Women’s Hockey Club of Toronto* (WHCT).

WHCT is an adult recreational non-body-checking ice hockey league, open to women (18 or over) who identify as lesbian, bisexual, queer, trans, two-spirited, non binary or allied. The Club was initially created in 1993 to offer a safe space for gay and gay-positive women to play ice hockey. After 28 years, the Club has progressed into a League that is now also welcoming to two-spirit, trans, and non-binary players.

All players are welcome regardless of skill level — beginners just learning to play, mid-level, and experienced players. WHCT is believed to be the only queer women’s hockey league in Canada, and certainly one of the largest in North America.

“One of the things I love about the League is that there is such a range of ages and abilities,” Janice stated, “I’m personally at the low end of the skill range and, now in my sixties, am at the high end of the age range!”

Women’s hockey has become one of the fastest growing sports worldwide, with an over 33% growth since 2007. “Thankfully, over the years there have been more opportunities for girls to grow up playing hockey, resulting in many of WHCT’s young players being at a high skill level.”

“I’ve been playing with WHCT since 1999, and though you might think it’s tempting to stay home on a dark snowy Saturday night, I am ALWAYS glad to play,” Janice elaborates. The season runs September through April, with games held on Saturday nights at Moss Park Arena in downtown Toronto.

Janice spoke of the buzz in the change-room when players put on equipment and set up the lines. “We get to know each other over the season, and chat about hobbies, vacations, kids, and loved ones.”

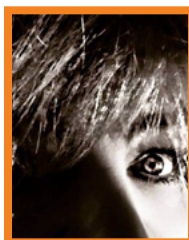
Her team even has a ritual cheer in front of the net before each game. “We work hard on the ice, and cheer each other on from the bench. Afterwards, we’ll go for a drink or supper and share the glow of having had good, fun exercise. And sometimes we will even have won!”

The League currently has 12 teams, each with 15 players including a goalie, and every attempt is made to balance the teams with a mixture of players of all ages and skill levels.

Want to join a team or cheer the women on and yell “Score!”? Visit their website for more information at whct.ca.

Cat Grant (OCAD) is a multidisciplinary fine artist, with a focus on photography, multimedia portraiture, and illustrating children’s books. She’s also a published poet, and senior reporter for *On the Couch* LGBTQ TV show.

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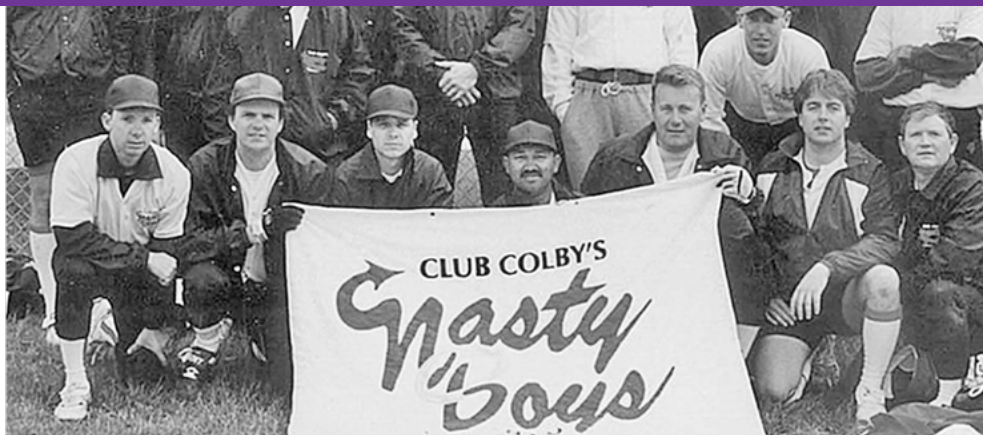
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It Took A League to Create A Village



In 1978, **George Pratt**, who now co-owns Toronto's *Flash On Church*, opened his first gay business. His inspiration to get out of teaching and open *18 East*, a gay bar in the east end, came at a time when gay men were finally able to own and operate their own spaces. Running parallel to this, Toronto's queer community began to come together through the creation of sports organizations.

Two of those, which Pratt was a member of, were the *Judy Garland Memorial Bowling League* and the *Cabbagetown Group Softball League*. These leagues created a need for a new type of bar; a place where players could be entertained post practice and game. They craved a more social space, and the sit-and-drink format of bars like the famous, straight-owned, *St. Charles*, did not fit that.

"The leagues were my anchor, my support system," Pratt says. "I certainly would not have left teaching without them."

Pratt would go on to become one of Toronto's most successful gay entrepreneurs, opening several memorable queer venues (most notably *Club Colby's*) over the last 40 years. Often queer people, especially gay men, get lost in bar culture because we think it's the only way to meet others. Being involved in organizations that are not centered around bars, but could still include them if wanted, can provide a good balance.

"I wasn't athletic growing up," Pratt admits. "But I became a star in the league. I travelled all over the United States, played in 25 *Gay World Series*, and got put into the *Gay Hall Of Fame*."

The *North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance* (NAGAA) organizes the *Gay World Series* in a different city each year. The *Gay Hall Of Fame Museum* travels with it, inducting new

players during a gala dinner and party. Toronto has hosted this event in 1981 and in 2000.

In 1981, players from all over North America were brought to Toronto for the first time. This was right before the infamous bathhouse raids of that year, and well before the formation of *Pride Toronto*. For many, this was their first time visiting Canada. For those living in Toronto, this was their first time experiencing a massive influx of queer tourists.

"We had to have places for them to go," Pratt says. "The leagues created a market for multiple gay bars to exist and to operate year round. They became gathering spots with each team having their own home bar."

The NAGAA also allowed Toronto men to travel to gay U.S. meccas that were further ahead in queer rights and tourism. Once our Toronto forefathers and foremothers saw how other queer bars and villages operated, they were armed with the knowledge needed to recreate it here.

Thus, *The Village* began.

Jamaican born Rolyn Chambers grew up in the suburbs of Mississauga, before attending Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD). In 2001, he began his *Deep Dish* column with *fab Magazine*, which ran for a full decade, allowing him to interview everyone from clubbers and promoters, to celebrities and politicians. *Deep Dish* has now been resurrected once again here in theBUZZ. IG @rahrhrolyn



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A KODAK MOMENT

Chris Mosier

BY BOYD KODAK



Men's National Champion and a Men's All-American. In 2020, I became the first transgender athlete to compete in the Olympic Trials in the gender with which I identify. Prior to that, in 2015 I was the first openly trans man to make a Men's National Team. My accomplishments and wins have been great, but my favourite accomplishment has been paving the way for every transgender athlete who comes after me. I want others to know they can be their authentic self and continue to play the sports they love.

BK - During that time, which was the most exciting event for you?

CM - My first *World CCM Championship* race was beyond words. It felt like a huge moment not just for me, but for my community as well. Going to the Olympic Trials was a similar feeling. Every time I'm able to pull on my Team USA uniform, it feels significant.

BK - What are you looking forward to next?

CM - I'm currently healing from hip surgery for a torn labrum, so I'll be very excited to get back to my daily training and build my way back up. So many of my races have been canceled in the past 18 months, so it will feel like a grand return when I'm able to toe the line again.

BK - Future plans?

CM - Athletically, I'm planning a hard racing season when I return from my injury. This time has allowed me to focus more on my advocacy work and updating transathlete.com, as well as working on the launch of my new site, (coming soon!) nonbinaryathlete.com.

BK - Any message you would like to put out there?

CM - Trans people play sports for the same reasons as everyone else - to challenge ourselves, to improve our fitness, to connect with others, and for the simple love of the game. Every trans and non-binary person should be allowed to play sports.

Follow Chris on Instagram and Twitter @thechrismosier.

Boyd Kodak is an award-winning trans activist, musician, writer, filmmaker, curator, and festival/entertainment director.



[Chris Mosier](#) is an American transgender advocate and triathlete. In 2015, he challenged policy, which resulted in the creation and adoption of new *International Olympic Committee* guidelines. In June 2016, he became the first trans athlete to compete in a world championship race under the new rules, where he was the second-fastest American man in his group. He's been called "the man who changed the Olympics" by the *BBC* and *New York Magazine*. Chris has won numerous awards, and has been featured in many publications, including the *New York Times*, and the "Body Issue" of *ESPN Magazine*.

Boyd Kodak - Tell us about your accomplishments in sports?

Chris Mosier - I'm a six-time member of *Team USA*, representing the United States in the sprint triathlon and the short course and long course duathlon, as well as a two-time

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TORONTO HISTORICAL BOWLING SOCIETY



Got some time to spare? Looking to strike out and try something new? Really enjoy flashy looking shoes and rolling with big balls? Don't be a turkey! Get into the right frame of mind and check out the [Toronto Historical Bowling Society](#).

Founded in 1983 by a group of gay and gay-positive persons, *Toronto Historical Bowling Society* is a weekly bowling league rooted in the principles of "Friendship, Fellowship, Unity and Sportsmanship." Folks gather weekly at the Rexdale Bowlerama to have fun, socialize, and exercise—all while wearing those famous shoes, of course!

"I joined with the staff from a bar I worked at almost 20 years ago," shares **David Wilson**, the current Treasurer of the league. "It is an easy sport and I enjoy the comradery of it. The friendships I have made over the years have become my closest friends."

Bowling is a great sport to enjoy over the winter months. Indoors, and out of the cold! The THBS season runs from September to March, and the league is open to players of all levels. Throughout the years, the league has welcomed players from across the rainbow. "We encourage all gay positive persons to come on out and enjoy. It is a fun handicap league, which means there are bowlers of all skill levels. There is no judging and we even mentor some of the newer bowlers."

Another great aspect of bowling is how it connects generations. It is one of the few sports that can be enjoyed—with a hearty dose of competition—by people of all ages.

"Our members range in age from early twenties to over 80," adds Wilson. "Our oldest bowler was 98!"

THBS is a member of IGBO ([International Gay Bowling Organization](#)) that has over 9,000 members worldwide. Members have the opportunity to participate in many different tournaments across North America, practically every weekend.

Continued development of neighbourhoods and encroaching condo developments have made it harder to bowl in recent years, but THBS wants to keep this great sport vibrant and fun. Bowling houses are disappearing, but David hopes for a resurgence in interest in bowling, while *Toronto Historical Bowling Society* continues on with a solid core of membership. To show their commitment to community, THBS gives back with their annual *PWA Food Bank Fundraiser*.

Time to get rolling!

Head to their website for more information, to sign up for their newsletter, and to register for the season. Please note, COVID restrictions are in place, and proof of vaccination is required to participate.

Jon Pressick is a writer who focuses on sex and sexuality. View his work at [sexinwords.ca](#)



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As Ontario continues to ease up on restrictions and regulations, allowing more events and activities to take place in person, we have begun to update our event listings accordingly.

We are now back to providing a wide array of happenings throughout Toronto, the GTA, and beyond, and are hoping our regular events print section will return shortly

In the meantime please continue to check our combined online listing of both in person and virtual events
www.thebuzzmag.ca/events.

Let's all stay safely connected.

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