

One Sport Information Officer's Point of View

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This will be my second time attending the Canada Summer Games in the role of Sport Information Officer (SIO) for the sport of swimming. I am excited to be heading to PEI to participate in one of Canada's premier competitions for our young athletes. Here is a little bit of perspective on my experiences in 2005 and what I look forward to in Prince Edward Island.

Although there is a lot of hard work involved when you sign on to become a Sport Information Officer; there are also perks to the job as well, but shhh...don't tell anyone.

For one, you are able experience all competitions of the sport you are covering "poolside" or for the other sports, on the field of play. Hopefully you get to catch a glimpse of the action if you are not too busy with media.

Secondly, as an SIO, you are fortunate to be present for all victories, defeats, smiles, tears, laughter and anger; pretty much every emotion you can think of! Whatever emotion is etched on the athlete's face, an SIO is there to help them through the fury of the media. You are usually the first person the athlete will see when they are finished their event/competition and your role is to help coach them through the media mix zone.

Thirdly, you get to meet and interact with the athletes and coaches by getting quotes for your daily summaries, by researching human interest stories and by setting up interviews with the media.

Last but not least, you get to meet people from all over the country and if you have some free time, you are able to go and watch other sporting events.

The key to being a successful SIO is being prepared – making sure you know your sport inside and out. Know the rules, records or highlights of the teams and/or individual athletes. Learn the names and interesting facts of all your athletes and coaches. But the most important thing to remember in PEI is to allow yourself to have fun and enjoy the whole experience.

It's been four years since my first introduction as an SIO for swimming at the Canada Summer Games. It feels like yesterday I was preparing the information package and reading up on all of the athletes for the Games in Regina. Based on my experiences in 2005, one of the highlights of those games was the atmosphere of living in a "village environment"; the feeling of anticipation and excitement is infectious. For some of these athletes, this is the highlight of their career, for others – we will see them grow into our future Olympians. Who wouldn't want to be a part of that?!

I am looking forward to being a member of the SIO team and spending the hazy days of summer in Prince Edward Island – see you there!

Erin Sulpher

