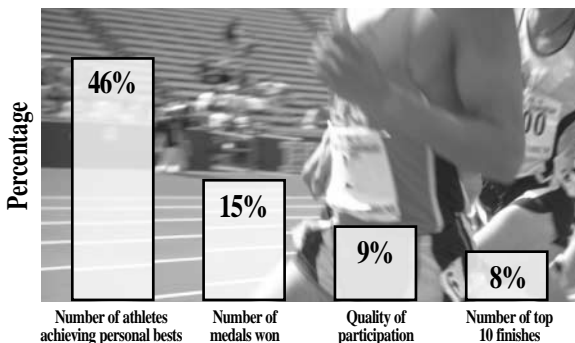


Edmontonians' poll station

By Linda Banister

While the torch has not yet been lit, the anticipation is already growing as the pinnacle of international sport gets ready to take centre stage this summer. The Summer Olympic Games is the most watched sporting event in the world and it is guaranteed that a few million Canadians will be tuned in this August to cheer on our Canadian athletes in Athens, Greece. This month, the *Poll Station* focuses on Edmontonians' views on the Olympics and the role of amateur sport in Canada.

WHAT DO YOU DEFINE AS OLYMPIC SUCCESS?



Respondents were asked what they feel is the most important factor when defining Olympic success. Almost half of all respondents (46 percent) defined Olympic success as the number of athletes to achieve personal bests. Fifteen percent defined success as the number of medals won by Canadian athletes, nine percent said the quality of participation by athletes and eight percent said the number of athletes to finish in the top 10 of their event. When asked how important Canada's success at the Olympics is to them, the vast majority of respondents said it is either very or somewhat important that Canada be successful (30 percent said very important, while 53 percent said somewhat important).

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT THAT THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT FUND AMATEUR SPORTS?

Respondents were asked how important they feel it is for the Canadian government to fund amateur sports (compared to other spending priorities such as health care and education). Interestingly, more than half of all respondents felt it was very or somewhat important that the government fund amateur sport (15 percent said very important and 43 percent somewhat important). Four percent of respondents said it was neither important nor unimportant that the government sponsor amateur sport, while 24 percent said it was somewhat unimportant and 14 percent said it was not at all important.

When asked if Canadian government funding for

amateur sport should increase, decrease or remain the same, 47 percent of respondents felt that funding should increase. Thirty percent of respondents indicated that funding should remain the same, while four percent felt it should decrease and 19 percent were unsure. Respondents were then asked which areas of amateur sport the government should focus its spending on. Almost half of all respondents (47 percent) felt funding should be put into increasing the number of children and teams who participate in sport, while 37 percent said they should focus on increasing the general fitness of all Canadians. Other responses included building new sports facilities (eight percent) and developing Olympic champions (three percent).

SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT GIVE ATHLETES MONETARY REWARDS FOR OLYMPIC SUCCESS?

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statement "the government should give athletes monetary rewards for Olympic success". Eight percent strongly agreed and 32 percent somewhat agreed with this statement, while 25 percent somewhat disagreed, and 28 percent strongly disagreed (seven percent were neutral).

When asked if they supported the idea of creating a new sports lottery to fund training for Canada's Olympic athletes, the majority of respondents (79 percent) indicated that they would support such a lottery, while 18 percent said they would not.

Respondents were asked if they had any other suggestions of how the Canadian government could raise money for Olympic athletes. Of those who provided a response 39 percent recommended the government learn to spend their money more wisely and efficiently and 22 percent suggested increasing corporate sponsorship. Other suggestions included more fundraising on behalf of the athletes (eight percent) and to create more awareness among the public to encourage donations (eight percent).

The *Poll Station* surveyed 100 City of Edmonton residents on the topic and, while the results of the research are not statistically reliable, they do provide a qualitative indication of what Edmontonians are thinking. ✓



Linda Banister is a certified management consultant and the owner of Banister Research & Consulting Inc., a full service provider of market research and program evaluation services. If you have a question you would like included in the Edmontonians Poll, contact Linda at

780.451.4444 or e-mail at research@banister.ab.ca. For further information on the firm visit banister.ab.ca.