

Thunders' Port of authority

Money and athletics at the college go hand-in-hand but more than most people know



ANDREW DIRIENZO PHOTO

Ron Port is the head athletic director at the college. He is responsible for all things to do with sports and money.

ANDREW DIRIENZO

Money plays a key role in many things, especially when it comes to athletics at Algonquin because money is what keeps everything going.

Just ask Ron Port, head athletic director at Algonquin College. As head athletic director, Port has many responsibilities such as: budgeting for each team – making sure there is enough money for travel, meals, uniforms, equipment, and such costs as those, as well as getting enough money to introduce a new sport and even deciding on whether or not a new team should be added.

“I present my budget based on the schedule, travel commitments and equipment that I need for the program,” Port said.

This year, Port had to budget for four sports: basketball, volleyball, soccer and rugby – with both men’s and women’s teams in each. He said the start-up costs for these teams can range depending on the sport.

“You’re implementing new programs which means you’re purchasing any number of items that you didn’t have before,” Port Said.

For the newest program, rugby, he made note of many costs such as practice gear, arm shields, blocking dummies and a scrum sled which all amounted to \$10,000.

I present my budget based on the schedule, travel commitments and equipment...

Ron Port
Athletic Director

He said the regular athletic fee students pay helps the teams out, but he needed something extra for the rugby programs.

“We had an increase in our student athletic fee last year,” Port said, “and that helped us bring on the two rugby programs.”

A lot of money for these teams is spent and budgeted based on tournaments and out of town games throughout the season.

Port said there are many other ways that money is spent for each team such as “travel, accommodation, a meal subsidy and uniforms – if need be.”

Another area where money is spent is for teams to go off campus. Port pointed to curling and golf as examples of this, for different reasons.

Curling is held at the Sportsplex, which means the college has to pay to use the ice.

For the golfers to practice, they have to go to driving ranges and pay for the buckets of balls they hit.

Port said that – as with other teams – there is also an additional cost for transportation in order to travel to tournaments.

The cost of running all eight teams in the year is pretty substantial. “It’s about \$475,000 to run four sports,” Port said.

He went on to say that not every team gets the same amount of money because some teams may need uniforms one year and others may not.

We had an increase in our student athletic fee last year and that helped us bring on the two rugby programs

Ron Port
Athletic Director

“We try to keep our uniforms for about three years,” Port said.

Port responsibilities also extend to the decision making process on whether or not to add another team. He said money is not the sole factor in adding a new team, however.

Competitiveness, too, is a big factor in adding another team, he said, because “It’s a lot of money if you’re not going to be competitive.”