

# Sports

## Who will coach for Pandas hoop?

by Tim Enger

Just when you thought you'd had enough of job scandals ala Norm Kimball and the Edmonton Eskimos, there's a similar situation at the U of A that will soon come to a boil.

On April 30, 1986, Panda basketball head coach Sherry Melney's contract with the University expires. The problem lies in the fact that she was only signed to a one-year contract because Debbie Shogan, former Panda head coach of 12 years, was scheduled to return next year.

But Shogan isn't coming back after all. She has resigned completely from coaching and the Athletic Department. Subsequently, as of April 30, the Pandas are without a head coach.

There is no doubt that the favorite for the job is Melney. The University would be foolish not to rehire her should they get the chance. The job she did this year, taking her team from low expectations at the beginning of the year to the fourth ranked team in the nation at the end of the season, was outstanding. So good, in fact, that it earned her CIAU coach of the year honors.

Unfortunately for the Athletic Department, they may not get a chance to rehire her. There is a strong chance that Melney might just return to her stable teaching position at McNally High School, as was originally planned. "If this year

wasn't so much fun the decision would be easier to make," said coach Melney. "So I'll just have to wait and see how I feel when my contract expires." Adding to her dilemma is the fact that if she remains away from high school for another year she would probably lose her tenure. This means that should she ever return to high school she would have to start at the bottom of the pay scale again.

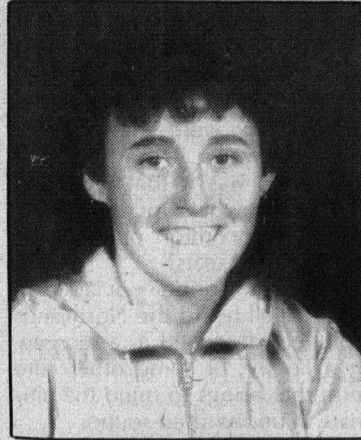
Now don't get the idea that if Sherry Melney doesn't return that nobody will want to coach the Pandas. Rumor has it that several people are interested in the job, most notably last year's CIAU coach of the year, Louisa Zerbe of the Lethbridge Pronghorns.

Zerbe, who took her team to the national championship tournament for the first time in their history this year, hasn't exactly kept it a secret that she would like to move on to a larger university. This would be just the opportunity that she has been waiting for and it would be surprising if she didn't jump at it if given the chance.

But still the fact remains that Athletics and the team would much prefer Melney over anyone else. "We were very lucky to find Sherry," said Athletic Director Dr. Bob Steadward. "I was impressed with her right from the start. She came into a very difficult situation (the departure of Shogan and three starters from the previous year), set realistic goals, developed instant credibility



**Louisa Zerbe...**  
CIAU Coach of the Year last year, will she jump from U of Lethbridge?



**Sherry Melney...**  
CIAU Coach of the Year this year, will she leave the U of A. for McNally?



**Debbie Shogan...**  
After 12 years behind the Pandas' bench she's had enough

### One of these?

and respect with her players, and turned it into a very positive situation."

Whatever choice she makes, her impact on the Panda basketball program will not soon be forgotten. Her attitude and coaching style have made Panda games a pleasure to go to.

But should she choose not to return, it will be interesting to see who throws their hat into the ring and applies for the job.

Because, like the Norm Kimball situation, she will be a tough act to follow.

## Football injuries serious

by Tim Enger

We've all heard of teams having bad luck years, but this is getting ridiculous. It seems that the Golden Bear football team can't avoid the injury bug that haunted them through the football season, even during the off-season.

Last Thursday, during an off-season timing practice, the Bears incurred four, (count 'em, four) injuries, all of them serious. Defensive lineman Karsten Kelm went down with a twisted knee and suspected knee ligament damage and, moments later, defensive back Quinn Wenniger suffered a sprained ankle. But the two most frightening injuries occurred near the end of practice during the same play.

Tight end Darwin Schweitzer and defensive back Trent Brown collided heads during a frame drill. Brown was covering the wide receiver and reacted to the pass intended for Schweitzer. Both were oblivious to each other as they closed in on the ball. The result was that Schweitzer hit Brown with the side of his face on the back of Brown's head.

Both were unconscious before they hit the Butterdome floor, and while Schweitzer lay motionless, bleeding profusely from the face, Brown went into convulsions. He had swallowed his tongue and was also bleeding from the face.

Fortunately for both players, they were attended to immediately by assistant coach Dan Syrotuik and head trainer Nancy Jette. Both players had regained consciousness by the time the paramedics arrived. But this was twenty minutes later. It

seemed that Campus Security put the phone call for help on hold when it was originally made.

This accident could have been disastrous for the Bears. If they were to lose Brown, last year's rookie of the year for Alberta, for an extended period of time, this would probably leave the team without its best defensive back for the start of the season.

Schweitzer, on the other hand, was coming off a disappointing season, and had worked himself into terrific shape since then, and was looking forward to next year. He had missed two games last season due to a neck injury and any more damage to that area could've meant the end of his career.

The reason the injuries were so severe was because timing practice is run without equipment. This meant that neither player was wearing a helmet. Normally this isn't a problem, but for some reason the practice was more competitive than normal. This, combined with the rock-hard floor of the Butterdome, made the practice a very potentially hazardous situation.

Schweitzer was released from hospital that night with lacerations to the facial area, a broken nose, and a mild concussion. Brown was kept overnight for observation. He received a broken nose and a severe concussion. Both Kelm and Wenniger are out indefinitely until the severity of their injuries can be determined. These injuries, combined with the five surgical knee injuries that the team had this season, makes this the worst year on record for football related injuries at the university.

## Gymnasts third at CIAUs

The Panda Gymnastics team ended their 1985-86 season in Hamilton, Ontario Friday, where they wound up third at the 1986 CIAU National Championships.

The Pandas accumulated 101.35 points which was 0.60 behind team champion University of Manitoba (101.95) and 0.30 points behind the University of Calgary (101.65). McMaster University finished in fourth place with 100.40 points.

Individually, Dianne Patterson (34.05) and Heidi Ross (34.00) were tops for the Pandas as their 4th and 5th place finishes placed them on the 1986 All-Canadian Team. Shelley Spaner finished in 13th place overall with 32.60 points.

Carrie Nawata, Margie Drysdale, and Donna Spaner also competed for the University of Alberta team.

The national championship marked the end of a long and successful career for head coach Sandy O'Brien. O'Brien began coaching the Pandas in 1971 and under her guidance, Panda gymnasts have always been a force to be reckoned with in CIAU competition. O'Brien, who was the CIAU Coach-of-the-Year last season, stated increased family time commitments as the reason for her resignation.

Saturday's finals saw Alberta gymnasts Dianne Patterson and Heidi Ross each win individual national titles — Patterson on uneven bars and Ross on the balance beam. For Ross, it was her second title on balance beam, as she had previously won the event in 1984.

The coaching staff was justifiably proud of the team's efforts and although the girls were unsuccessful in their attempt to defend last year's national title, they can certainly be proud of their 1985-86 season.



(File shot) The Pandas couldn't defend their title, finishing behind Manitoba and Calgary.

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