

Track takes run for money

by Karl Wilberg

Track and field sports, in one form or another, have been around long before misguided immigrants started to play field hockey on ice. In fact track and field is the core of any summer sports festival. More importantly though, in spite of the wide participation possible, and wide application of its benefits, track is neglected at the collegiate level.

This neglect involves not only a lack of a national university championship, but it also reaches to public schools students eventually teach in.

Late last fall U of A and Edmonton Olympic Club track coach Ken Porter stated track and field was the world's major sport with more people involved than in any other activity. Porter went on to say track is "the backbone" of the summer Olympics. At the university level Porter believed track "furthers the image of the university in the community."

One reason, Porter mentioned, for track's importance and potential is track's running, jumping, and throwing that "is the basis for all sports." Porter claims if an athlete "is good in track it is easy to adapt to other games." Still, he points out other sports, like gymnastics, are important. Porter states gymnastics make "suspensory and airborne movements" available.

The importance of track seems to go unnoticed. Porter and U of A track organizer Gabor Simonyi have lamented the traditional lumping of track together with other sports. Porter points out "track and field is so complex" and adds "if you can understand track and field

you can understand sport-explosive anaerobic and aerobic conditioning," and "whole systems." Consequently, giving track, in the schools, a peripheral sports status seems to be a terrible waste.

The potential for participation in track is wide. Because the sport is complex almost anyone can find a discipline well suited to their abilities. Still, at most schools, track is less important than football and basketball, sports that have size and, for football, sex standards that must be met.

Simonyi points out high school teachers do "a bad job coaching it (track) because it frightens them." The lack of qualified or willing coaches may stem from a lack of teacher training. Porter mentioned "It's incredible someone can get a BPE without gymnastics, dance, or track and field."

Just as important though in determining track's role in primary schools and in universities have to be traditional North American priorities for sport. Porter believes track's international prominence is not recognized by Canadian university sport governing bodies. Porter states "I feel the UAB should consider track and field as important as any other sport" because it "is a co-ed activity that involves people from all parts of the campus."

The U of A's role has been important and under Simonyi, Porter and others, the U of A has assembled a team able to win three CIAU West conference titles in a row. Whether the U of A squad is the nation's best college team is another question. For the last few years national championships have been

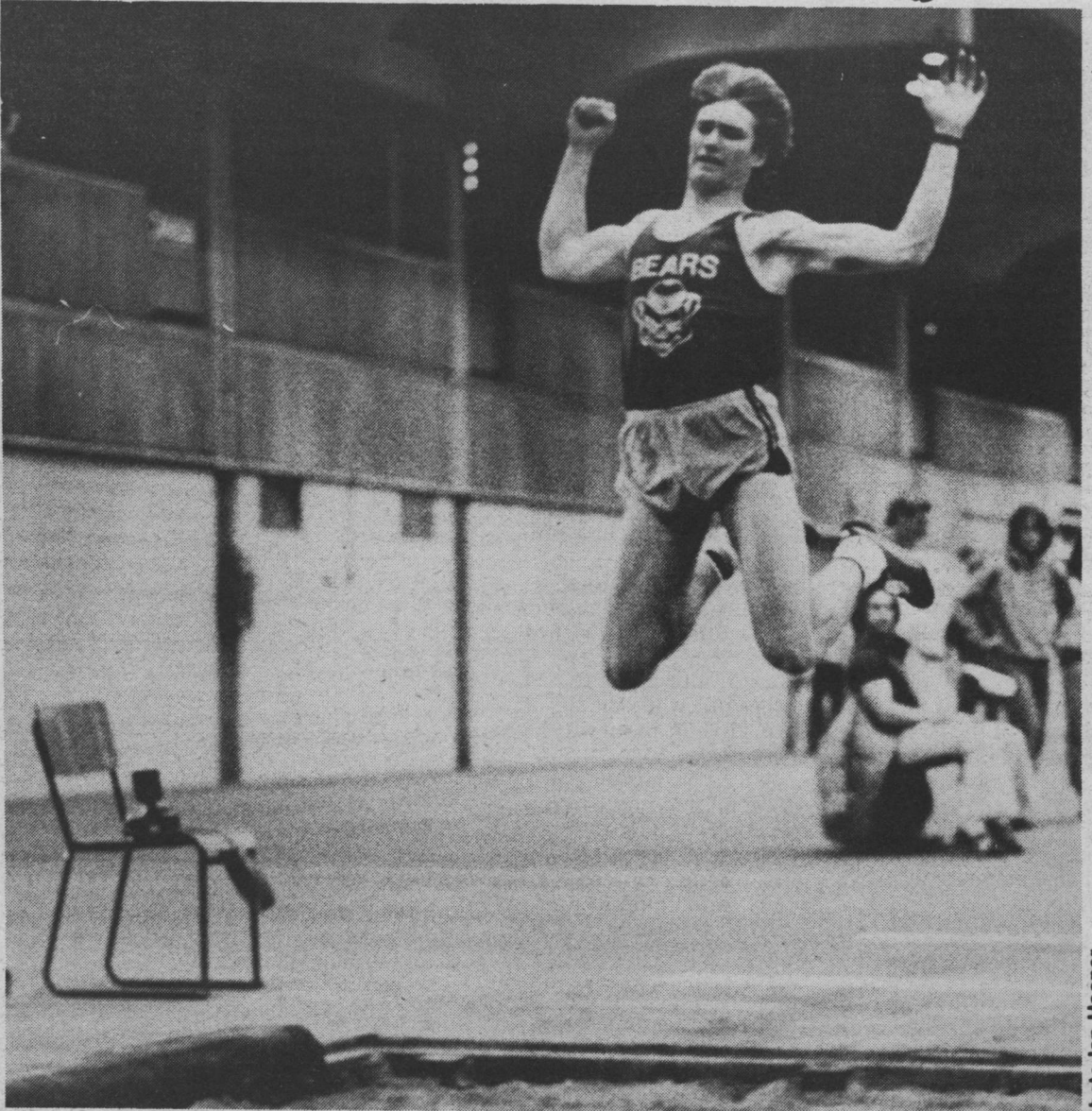


photo Ian Hooper

Bears long jumpers are winners but they too miss national finals usually cancelled every year.

cancelled. Porter maintains "if the university is to play a proper role in track and field it is nothing short of a crime that there are no national championships.

In total Porter believes "we have to fight tradition or the lack of tradition" in building support for track and field. Porter continues "We have the task of making track and field one of the

major sports in Canada." Certainly Porter is convincing, but one wonders if institutions like the CIAU and EPSB are ready for change.

Guild stays put



Guild strikes a typical pose.

The Bears ski team's Jeremy Guild has quit school and is residing in Calgary until May. Actually, Guild is not in self-imposed exile. More accurately though a Lake Louise tree, travelling at high speed, collided with the ski ace.

Shortly before Reading Week the tree viciously attacked Guild and broke his femur into three pieces. The tree emerged unscathed. Doctors maintain Guild will spend up to two months in traction and they are reluctant to have him moved to Edmonton.

Generously, the ski team has offered to tow Guild's bed behind a U of A van back to Edmonton. However, Guild declined, commenting, "I don't have any insurance on my

wheels." In spite of Guild's ingratitude, the Bears maintain "he's alright, but his girlfriend is better." They add, "She's getting really lonely these days."

Always follows ready with kind words, the ski teamers have some fond memories of teammate Guild. Chris Wright, downhill ace, says, "Jeremy could ski real nice, but he was slower than me." Bear Bryan Mekechuk states, "Whenever I dropped something Jeremy was there to pick it up." Noted Bear worthy Chuck Johnstone says, "How much does Guild want for his skis?"

In all though, coach Bruce Wilson summed it up best whenever he belted, "Guild, get off your ass."

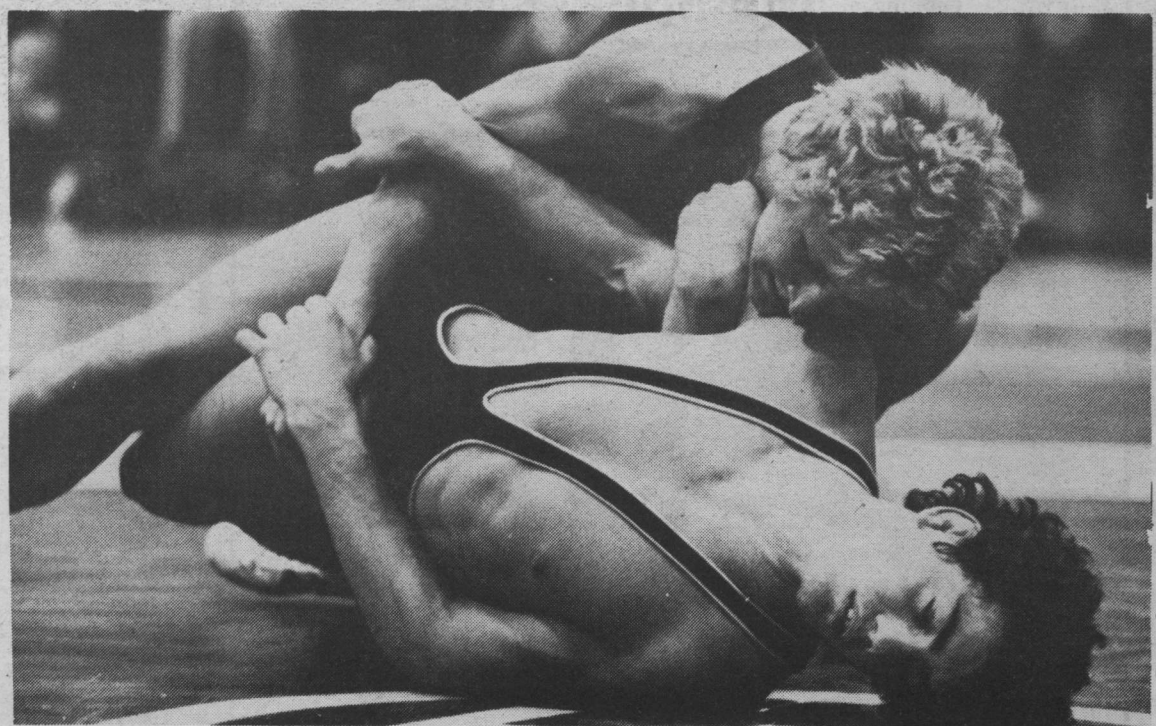


photo Russ Sampson

Grappler's season is over but match with Japanese All-Stars will keep the Bears practising.

Barry: coach of year

by Birt Townshend

John Barry has a hold on the Canadian Amateur Wrestling Association coach of the year award. According to Golden Bear wrestler Mark Yurick U of A coach Barry did not expect the award. Certainly the Bear's winning 7 out of 12 individual CIAU titles had something to do with the CAWA's decision.

More good news for the Bears last weekend was Tom McKee's fourth place finish at the Junior Nationals in Calgary.

McKee, at 62 kilos, was joined by Al Harmon who placed sixth in the 52 kilo category.

Although the CIAU season is over the Bears will be matched up with the Japanese All-Star team. However, Yurick has informed the *Gateway* no Sumo wrestling is expected.

In addition to the U of A-Japan match Golden Bear Glen Purych may be fighting in Ohio at the World Cup wrestling tournament. Purych has been

named alternate for the 114.5 lbs. class because of his good showing in the CIAU finals.

