

Staff, grads and part-timers:

Still no contract settlement reached

Excalibur

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A China diary

Last May, four gymnasts and a coach from York were chosen for the Canadian Olympic Team. Among them was Marc Epprecht.

As a consolation prize to all athletes affected by the Olympic boycott, the government allowed each sport to decide on an alternate tour or competition to attend. The gymnastics team chose a three week trip to China and Japan.

In this, the first of a series of three articles, Marc Epprecht discusses his impressions of today's China.

by Marc Epprecht

We departed the morning of August 30, and with a layover in Los Angeles, the international dateline and gruesome 23-hour flight, we finally arrived in Beijing (Peking) late in the evening of September 1. The recent tourist boom that China is encouraging has put a premium on hotel space, and thus we were relegated to a quaint but creakingly old, roach-infested hotel—fifteen minute walk from city centre. The architecture and furniture seemed to have been lifted from a bad dream in the 1930s. That, in fact, holds true everywhere we went in China, even the most modern buildings. It gives one a strong sense of



having stepped back in time.

Although we had only three days in Beijing, our hosts insisted we devote the first to sightseeing. Regardless of the exhaus-

tion from our marathon trip there, that was a chance not to be missed. The two-hour drive to the Great Wall is fascinating and beautiful. The countryside is rich and

verdant. Rice, corn, sorghum and gigantic sunflowers are cultivated on every possible square metre.

The roads through the
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