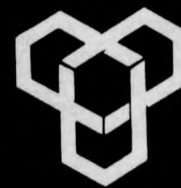




SPORTS



Ben Johnson reflects during a quieter moment before the big race last Friday. Surprisingly, though visibly smaller, Ben claimed he weighs the same as he did in

Seoul. One well placed source, however says Ben now weighs 30 to 40 pounds less than he did before his two year suspension for admitted steroid use.

Big Ben's still a big hit with international press at Copps

by Josh Rubin

There's no disputing Ben Johnson's popularity.

Inside a jam-packed Copps Coliseum, 17,000 fans that cheered wildly at Johnson's every move proved that.

Even sportswriters, a jaded bunch of people if there ever was one, got in on the excitement.

As word filtered around the basement-level press area that Johnson was warming up across the hal-

lway, a good portion of the more than 400 print and broadcast representatives scurried to get any tidbit which he might utter.

Johnson wasn't the only one getting mobbed, though.

Charlie Francis, on hand to see his former protegé run, was surrounded by a horde of reporters as he struggled to autograph a youngster's t-shirt.

Most writers agreed that sym-

pathy for Johnson isn't only found in Canada.

"People in Sweden think he's done his time and should be treated like anyone else," said the correspondent for Stockholm's Aftonbladet.

Also on hand to take in the race were TV and radio crews from Japan, Spain and Germany.

One particularly strong contingent came from Great Britain, which alone had 20 journalists in Hamilton.

Two-win weekend for York U runner Gareau

by Josh Rubin

France Gareau understands the attention Ben Johnson gets.

Now she just wishes a bit of it would come her way.

The 23-year-old York track star beat a strong university women's field to take the 50-metre, the same night as Johnson's much-vaunted Copps comeback.

The win came as a surprise to some, as Gareau has been concentrating on the 300-metre as of late.

Her training in the longer distance paid off the next day as she took the 300 crown at a meet in the Metro Track Centre at York.

Gareau also took part in one of the most exciting moments of the day.

As the anchor for York's substitute-laden 4x200m team, Gareau narrowly missed closing a 40-metre gap during the final lap.

Although she is working hard during the indoor season, Gareau admits she is looking ahead to the summer.

Known mainly as a sprinter early in her career, Gareau is gradually building up her endurance.

"I'm going to be running the 400 outdoors," Gareau said.

Her ultimate goal, though, comes as no surprise: Gareau will be gunning for next summer's Olympics in Barcelona.

Another potential York olympian is Nicole Masil, who took second spot in the 800-metre at Copps and grabbed the gold medal in them at York.



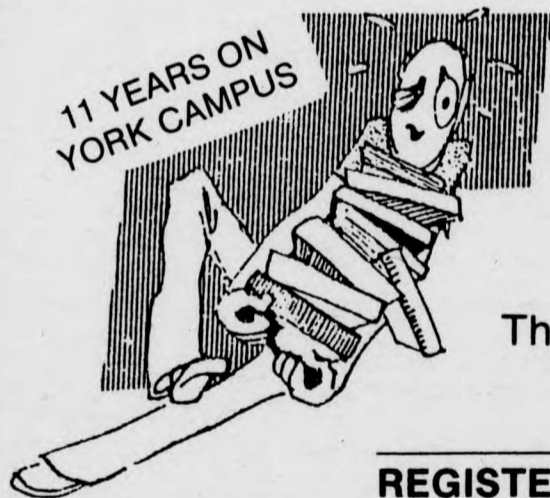
Clive Cohen

York University's France Gareau crosses the finish line in her victorious 50 metre race in the university section at Copps Coliseum's Hamilton Spectator indoor games last Friday. Gareau hit the tape ahead of four others, including Windsor's stellar Irma Grant.

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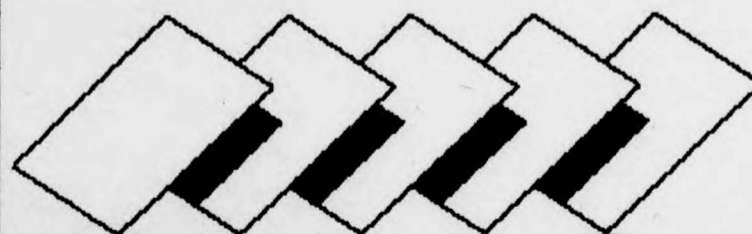
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