

sports

Panda gymnastics

Second consecutive national title

For the second consecutive year the Pandas Gymnastics team are national champions. U of A women successfully defended their Canadian Inter-university Athletic Union (CIAU) title last weekend, versus other teams, at the Gymnastics Championships in Vancouver.

However, coach Sandi O'Brien claims they did it the hard way. "As a team we did well all the beam event. The girls from Calgary was less than half a point behind us at that point, and they simply choked. We averaged about two falls per girl and we almost gave away the championship right there."

Initially things looked better for the Pandas on the floor exercise, but potential winner Peggy Bureaud suffered a double-sided ankle sprain on her last tumbling pass.

Thankfully, U of A teammates Kathy Mattock, Sandra Dever, Janice Dever and Patricia McMillan, after a seven day delay, were able to lock up the championship with floor exercises.

Overall, Pandas' McMillan finished third, behind Waterloo's



photo by Jim Connell

Ann Samson and Manitoba's Lisa Johnson. U of A's Kathy Mattock placed seventh after all events, while her teammate Janice Dever put forth the performance of her life and proved the most consistent Panda.

Team results showed the Pandas victorious by the slimmest of margins. Four teams challenged the U of A contingent's 97.4 points (top three individual scores in each event counted): Calgary with 94.98,

York University with 93.65, Waterloo University with 92.75, and UBC with 92.65 points.

Pandas' Mattock, McMillan, and Bureaud each qualified to compete in three event finals; however, Bureaud was forced to drop from second day competition due to the ankle injury. McMillan and Mattock went on to record several medal winning performances.

McMillan, with two days of outstanding vaults and a particularly impressive Yamashita

vault, earned a Bronze medal. She continued with a personal best performance on the uneven bars that led to a silver medal. Teammate Kathy Mattock won the Bronze in the same event.

In the floor exercise both McMillan and Mattock performed admirably, with the former winning the Gold and the latter placing fourth.

Crisp Routines

Carol Brinkhurst competed for the Pandas in the uneven bars only due to an injury incurred at

the Canada West conferences two weeks previous. However, Brinkhurst, along with Mattock will be the nucleus of next year's team. With Bureaud contemplating retirement, McMillan hoping to attend coaching school, Dever graduating and Farley crippled by chronic injury problems the Pandas' incredibly successful squad will have its resources seriously depleted.

Pandas' coach Sandi O'Brien was named the CIAU gymnastics mentor of the season, in this the inaugural year of the award. O'Brien has somehow managed to form a squad of conference (seven consecutive times) and national champions (two consecutive seasons) even though the province of Alberta has a poor development program for younger gymnasts. Logic dictates that Ontario should have the numbers and the quality of athletes at the collegiate level to be eternally victorious.

O'Brien claims the Pandas' success has a lot to do with the team's hard work, determination, and spirit. She also speaks well of Alberta's club development program.



Dave Hindmarch hopes he can humble a few more Dinos this weekend during play-off action at Varsity Arena. Photo by Shirley Glew.

Hockey play-offs on the horizon

Now, the fun begins

by Shaune Impey

T.G.I.F. (Thank God It's Finished).

The Golden Bears' hockey team wound up the regular season on the downslide as they dropped three of their last four games.

On February 24-25, the Calgary Dinosaurs visited Varsity Rink and won both contests by 5-4 and 6-4 scores. Last

weekend the Bears travelled to Vancouver and split a pair of games with the UBC Thunderbirds, winning 6-0 and losing 6-5.

The late slump left the Bears with twenty wins and four losses in regular season play. Calgary captured the other playoff spot with a 15-9 record. The T'Birds were third and the hapless Saskatchewan Huskies finished in last place.

Hopefully, for Bears' fans, the recent play of the hockey club will not be a hint of what to expect in the playoffs this weekend. With Calgary playing much improved hockey in recent weeks, any complacent, lackluster play by the Alberta squad could prove disastrous.

Against Calgary the third period was the nemesis for the

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What is this man thinking? The answer to this question could bring you good news and fortune. Bring entries to the Gateway office. Photo by Jim Connell.