

SPORTS

Pandas win in Klondike Challenge

by Jeanette Christopher

The U of A Gymnastics Pandas wrapped up their last major home competition in fine style as they finished first in the 1985 Klondike Challenge held this past weekend at the Universiade Pavilion.

The Pandas finished first in the team competition by defeating the Cal-State Northridge Matadors (Los Angeles), the Calgary Dinosaurs, and the Edmonton Gym Club.

Individually, the Pandas did very well as four of the top six finishers wore U of A colors. Heidi Ross finished first overall with 33.85 points. She was followed by Shelly Spanner (33.56 points). Carrie Newata was fourth (32.65) and Janice Neill was sixth.

There were some outstanding individual performances recorded by the Alberta women. Neill placed first on the uneven parallel bar routine with a score of 8.7. She also finished third on the beam. Heidi Ross was third on uneven bars and

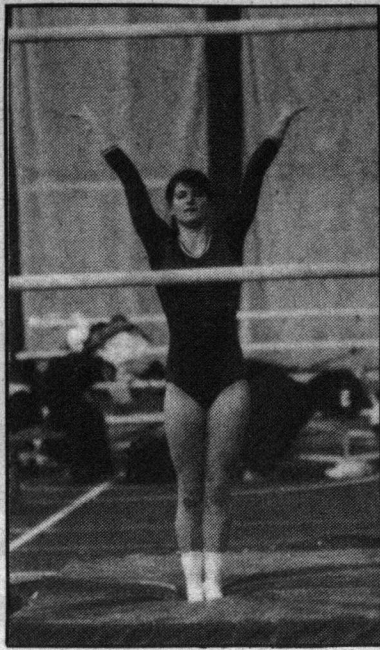


Photo Alex Miller

third on floor exercise. Spanner was second on beam and Margie Drysdale placed third on vault.

Pandas coach Sandy O'Brien was very pleased with her team. "This is perhaps the best they've performed this season," she said.

The Gymnastics Bears, however, did not fare as well in the Challenge. They finished fourth in a five-team competition that included the Calgary Dinosaurs, the Saskatchewan Huskies, the Manitoba Bisons and a local Edmonton Gym club. To their defense, though, only 10 points separated the Bears from the first place Dinos.

The overall individual winner was Ray Heiderich from the University of Manitoba. He scored 50.7 out of a possible 60. The top finishing Bear was Malcolm Dunford with 43.6 points.

Impressive individual Bear performances were turned in by Russell Slochinski (second place on the rings) and Dunford (second on vault).

Despite their ranking coach Dale McNeely was pleased with his squad. "The team performed better than in their last meet and is

progressing well" he said.

Next week, the Bears travel to Vancouver to face UBC. On Saturday, January 27 the Pandas travel to

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to compete against McMaster University (Ontario) and Clarion College (Pennsylvania).



Photo Alex Miller

The Gymnastics Pandas triumphed in the four-team Women's competition

Sports comment

Hey Glen Sather, give us a break

In last Friday's edition of the *Edmonton Journal*, Oilers Head Coach Glen Sather verbally blasted the city daily. His ire had been provoked over the paper's earlier printing of a Yardley Jones cartoon that depicted suspended forward Mark Messier as a hulking neanderthal. But it is Sather's responses to this cartoon that have my ire up. Check out these gems:

"Nobody goes into a game to hurt somebody, but I don't think people understand the emotions in hockey."

That's nice, Glen, but what are you trying to say? Are Mark's actions only a natural extension of the emotions of the sport? What about the hundreds of players in the game who play effectively without resorting to blatant cheap shots? Do they not understand the emotions of the game either?

"It was unfortunate (Calgary Flames defenceman) Jamie Macoun cracked his cheekbone, but he missed three games."

Wait a minute, Glen. How does

Dean Bennett



that go? It was unfortunate *Jamie Macoun* cracked his cheekbone? What do you mean? Do you think maybe Macoun should have received a five-game suspension for deliberately trying to injure Messier's fist with his face?

And so what if Macoun was only out three games? What's that got to do with it? It just so happens that a hockey player can play with a cracked cheekbone. What if Messier had decided to two-hand him on the forearm and break a bone? Then Macoun's out indefinitely. Would this then justify a lengthier suspension?

"I guess it (the cartoon) is supposed to be sarcastic or funny but it

had to have been somebody from Calgary. I don't think anybody from Edmonton would be as hard on Mark."

What does this statement tell you about Glen's perception of the function of the Edmonton sports media. To hell with objectivity, right Glen? The team's the thing. I know, Glen, let's talk to ITV. Let's see if we can get them to televise Oiler games in soft focus. That way the hometowners can look more ethereal, more god-like. And I know, let's talk to Hockey Night in Canada. If the Oilers are losing by three or

more goals heading into the third period (which is rare anyway, right) we'll have the game blacked out in Edmonton. Let's save true Oiler fans the embarrassment.

Personally, it's not my opinion that Sather believes everything that he is saying to the press. He seems to enjoy playing psychological games with the media and there's no question that he puts the interests of his players above just about everything. But what's wrong with a little open objectivity?

One of my roommates is just as arrogantly supportive of the Flames

as I am of the Oilers. Few things give me greater vicarious pleasure than seeing Edmonton beat (and beat up) Calgary. But this passionate distaste for anything bearing flaming "C" does not deter me from viewing incidents like this in a clear light.

Messier deserved at least 15 games. His actions are not only injurious to other players but to the reputation of the league itself.

Another quote of Sather's was, "I'm sick of this garbage and I'm not going to take it anymore." Well us too, Glen. Us too.

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vs.

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