

# Rookie coach takes honours

by Tim Enger

Usually they give Coach of the Year honors to coaches who take their teams from the bottom of the barrel to the penthouse of their respective leagues. But such is not the case in CIAU women's basketball.

This year's recipient of the award is Pandas coach Sherry Melney. She earned the trophy not because of a big leap in the standings but because Alberta stayed very competitive, even after losing three veterans from a year ago.

The U of A Pandas actually lost one more game this year than last. The team also scored less points (587 to 626) and allowed more (548 to 537).

And to top it all off, the Pandas of '86 went down to defeat in both of their playoff games while the '85 girls went to the nationals and placed fourth in Canada.

The Alberta Pandas didn't look to be in very good shape at the beginning of this season. They had lost three starters from last year, including 6'3" post Toni Kordic, a national team member who practically owns the Panda's record book with eight currently standing records.

As well, their head coach of 12 years, Debbie Shogan, was taking a season off to finish up her dissertation in sports psychology.

So Melney stepped into a rather unstable situation, coming right out of McNally High School here in the city.

But she managed to take the Panda club that averaged a tiny 5'8½" and built them into one of the better run-and-gun teams in the nation. As the season wore on the Pandas climbed steadily up the



Photo Alex Miller

Rookie Panda coach was named Coach of the Year in the CIAU last night.

CIAU rankings, much to the surprise of the rest of the Canada West conference. They eventually wound up fourth in the country and second in the conference heading into the playoffs in Lethbridge.

Last week Melney was named Coach of the Year in Canada West. Last year's CWUAA winner was Lethbridge coach Louisa Zerbee,

who also went on to claim national honours.

Melney's use of her players talents and her innovative coaching ideas were the main reason that the Pandas enjoyed as much success as they did this season. As a rookie head coach, doing what she did makes her truly deserving of Coach of the Year honors.

Congratulations Sherry.

## Last chance to see Pandas gymnasts at U of A

by Mark Spector

Edmontonians will get their last chance to see the Pandas gymnastics team this season on Friday the 18th in the gym room (W-98) at 4:45.

And for three gymnasts, Heidi Ross, and Margie Drysdale, and Shelley Spaner, it will be their last performance here on the U of A campus as a member of the Pandas gym team.

"This is really a great opportunity for people to see these girls for one last time," commented Panda coach Sandy O'Brien.

"But we're mainly holding this exhibition because we need one more meet before the CIAU's on March 7th and 8th.

The Pandas stand an excellent chance of defending the national championship that they earned last year. They have qualified seven team members for the CIAU's, but unfortunately only six members per team may compete.

Nancy McLeod will draw in as an alternate for Alberta.

Heidi Ross is Alberta's top gymnast, finishing at number five in Canada last season, but is in her fifth and final year of university competition.

Margie Drysdale and Shelley Spaner finished 14th and 15th respectively in the country last year. Drysdale will retire after her fourth year on a knee that will not withstand another year of competing, while Spaner finishes her degree this year and may not return to school for the '86-'87 year.

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To be awarded to a student who has achieved a satisfactory academic standing, and made an outstanding contribution to campus life through hard work and leadership.

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Award: The interest from the Eugene L. Brody Fund.

To be awarded to a physically handicapped student who has achieved a satisfactory academic standing and has made a valuable contribution in extra curricular activities.

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To be awarded to a student who has achieved a satisfactory standing in the 1985-86 academic year, and has made an outstanding contribution to student life through active involvement in public service clubs registered with the Students' Union and/or Students' Union Services.

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To be awarded to a student in his/hers graduating year who has achieved a minimum Grade Point Average of 7.5, and who has the ability to work well with students, staff, and the general public in extra-curricular involvement in University and/or community activities.

Note: All awards criteria are subject to ratification at Students' Council.

Additional information and application forms available in the Students' Union Office, Room 256, SUB V.P. Academics Connie Uzwyshyn.

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