

# Wrestling teams heading in opposite directions

PAUL OWEN  
Sports Editor

After years that saw the Pandas wrestling team carry the load while the Bears laboured in the middle of the pack, last season saw a reversal of fortunes as the men jumped up to fifth place, and the women fell into obscurity. Now, halfway through a season that has seen both the men and women stand fast in their positions, the wrestlers host the University of Alberta Varsity Open and Golden Bear Invitational this weekend in the Butterdome.

While the women's team finished in the top three nationally in the first four seasons of its existence, the team has fallen on hard times since, and, while this season appears brighter than last, which saw the team fail to qualify for CIS Nationals, the women are still at the back of the wrestling pack, according to wrestling head coach Vang Ioannides.

"On the women's side, the rest of the teams in Canada West are probably four of the five top teams in the CIS, so it'd be unrealistic to think we'd be able to climb that ladder this year. We're so much better than we were last year—not that it'd be hard; we were very weak last year," he said.

The decline of the Alberta women's program can be linked to a decline in the local athletes, according to Ioannides, who noted that not just the amount, but the quality of athletes has declined in the capital region.

"We had a very strong program for our first six years in CIS competition, and unfortunately that led many athletes to go elsewhere because they knew they couldn't start here,"



KRYSTINA SULATYCKI

**THE NOT-FAKE KIND** U of A wrestlers are hosting some of the top athletes in western Canada this weekend.

he said. "Aside from that, our high school program in and around the Edmonton area has really taken a hit. British Columbia and Saskatchewan are developing more, better wrestlers than Alberta is now."

On the men's side, last year's fifth-place finish was a huge step forward for the Golden Bears, who had been hovering around tenth for the four previous seasons. The Bears return two CIS bronze medalists—Anthony Kulak and Jarrett Wall—who both have aspirations of upgrading this year's medal colour to gold.

"My goal is to have the best season I've had yet in university and win nationals. I've placed third the last three years and I want to break the streak," Wall said. "My strengths are in my footwork and my technique.

My fitness is really strong right now, and I just need to finish out the next couple months competing strong and putting my matches together before nationals."

The return of two medalists and improvement of some other veterans has led to high hopes from Ioannides for his individual wrestlers.

"Jarret Wall and Anthony Kulak have both set their goal at winning not just the Canada West Championship, but also CIS. It'll be tougher for Jarret than it will be for Anthony because his weight class is a little bit more competitive at this point; whereas, Anthony, as long as he doesn't beat himself, he'll win," he said. "I have high hopes for both Bram Ratay and Mike Hulburt; I think both of those guys have a chance at qualifying for

CIS and placing in the top sixth, if not higher."

Despite edging into the top five nationally, the Bears were still unable to creep higher than third in Canada West last year, a position they haven't topped since the 1988/89 season. While the team is still probably fourth in the conference, according to Ioannides, it also has a dark-horse shot at bringing home a banner.

"I think the Bears have the capability on any given day to compete with any team in Canada West," he said. "And, with that, I think our goal is ultimately to win a Canada West championship."

The Varsity Open goes Friday night at 5pm in the Butterdome and the Invitational starts Saturday at 11am in the same venue.

## SPORTS SHORTS

Written by Paul Owen

### Bears Hockey

The Golden Bears will be heading to the City that Bachman Built to take on the Manitoba Bisons in a pair of games this weekend. Bears forward Ben Kilgour leads Canada West in goals with 15 and sits second in points with 31. Dylan Stanley's 26 points are good enough for fourth in the conference, while second-year goaltender Aaron Sorochan leads all keepers in wins, save percentage, goals-against-average, minutes, saves and awesomeness.

### Shorts

I've always acted under the assumption that boys wear underwear and girls wear panties, with each term being a catch-all phrase designed to describe anything a member of the respective sex wears atop their genitals. Apparently, however, I'm wrong.

According to Natalie Climenhaga, you have three basic types of feminine underwear: the panty, the thong and the boy short. The panty covers part of the bum, the thong—and its cousin the G-string—don't cover the ass at all, while boy shorts cover the ass and hips.



NATALIE CLIMENHAGA



Think you know how to be a sports editor? Well, you probably do. Paul's kind of an idiot. Send your best captions for the above photo to [sports@gateway.ualberta.ca](mailto:sports@gateway.ualberta.ca) and we'll run our favorites in Tuesday's Pep Rally.

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