



TAYLOR MERRITT

**STOP IN THE NAME OF THE LAW** Campus Security (dark) beat the Listerites 4-3 while raising \$855 for charity.

## U of A athletic year leaves plenty of opportunities to play what-if



PAUL OWEN

Sports Commentary

In 185 conference games this season, the Bears and Pandas teams lost a combined 37 times in regulation. That's ridiculously good. Alberta's .765 winning percentage is better than every team in the MLB, NFL, NBA and NHL—except the Dallas Mavericks and the Baltimore Ravens. And we're not talking about a single sport here: Alberta competes in men's and women's volleyball, basketball, hockey and soccer, as well as men's football and women's field hockey and rugby. Those eleven sports combined for only one losing season (field hockey's 3-5-3 mark) and one .500 year (Bears football going 4-4). Alberta had two CIS MVPs and five CIS Coach of the Year awards. They boast 20 all-Canadians and sent six of those eleven teams to Nationals. Yet, despite an athletic year that'll go

down as one of the most impressive in school history, the Golden Bears and Pandas could've had so much more.

The most glaring omission in the list of accolades the Alberta teams racked up this year comes courtesy of the Golden Bears hockey team. Easily the most shocking of the five teams that didn't make Nationals, the Golden Bears blew two chances to book their ticket to Moncton on two straight nights—giving up goals in the waning moments of the third period in both contests. The Bears were one of the favourites for the National crown despite having a ridiculous turnover, and those involved in the program thought they had a good shot of taking it for the third-straight year.

Also missing Nationals after a dominating stretch was the Pandas rugby team, who had medalled for seven-straight years before this season. Still, when Lethbridge upset the Pandas to take the Canada West crown, thus keeping Alberta out of Nationals and snapping their winning streak, it was the first truly shocking moment of the Alberta sports season.

Let's not forget about the Pandas

basketball team and Bears volleyball squad. The former will be playing "what-if" all summer as they wonder what could've happened had they hit free-throws in the second half of their 72-68 loss to SFU in the National Final. Similarly the volley Bears will be left wondering why they didn't pass the ball better in their five-set loss to Winnipeg in the gold medal match.

It was a terrific season for Alberta athletics all around, and a couple of bad days in key games doesn't change the fact that this was one of the most dominating seasons from a school ever. It came to the point this year when an Alberta loss in any sport came as a surprise, and that's something special. But while the Bears and Pandas gave their fans plenty of reasons to celebrate, it would be wrong to forget that they were within 12 points of winning two more National titles and that two pre-season favourites didn't get to see the big dance at all. It's really a shame; I was hoping to surpass Colin Gallant's 2001/02 record for titles won during a Gateway sports editor's tenure. And I would've liked to put sports on the front page a few more times.

## Athlete DUI arrests must be a bigger deal



TREVOR PHILLIPS

Sports Commentary

An interesting trend has developed over the course of spring training in southern Florida. On two separate occasions last month—only six days apart—an MLB player and a manager were pulled over and arrested for drunk driving. It wasn't two Joe Blow minor leaguers on their first trip south either; it was full-fledged major leaguers who tipped a few back and got behind the wheel.

Typically, I would tend to disagree with the argument that athletes don't deserve to be treated differently. I mean, we're talking about people that have an ability that only a hundredth of a percent of the entire world has. However, when boneheads like Blue Jays pitcher Gustavo Chacin and World Series manager Tony La Russa get charged with driving while intoxicated, they become part of a significantly larger section of the population—people who spent the night in prison.

Early on 16 March, Chacin was pulled over by Tampa cops. The pitcher had a blood-alcohol level almost twice that of the legal limit, yet he was released on a \$500 bond. Moreover, the Toronto organization declined to comment on the incident while the whole messy situation was swept underneath the rug. Chacin was even allowed to pitch in his next scheduled start. He got rocked for seven runs in a case of karma biting him in the ass.

This kind of behaviour is bullshit, and the Blue Jays' brass didn't even have the sack to step up and reprimand him. It's bad when anybody drinks and drives, but when a professional athlete does, and the management and media don't blow the lid of the situation, that shows a huge flaw in the system. Take Todd Bertuzzi for example. After he broke Steve Moore's neck, the press went apeshit over it. Everywhere you turned, you had to hear somebody's opinion about whether or not Bertuzzi crossed the line or should be suspended. The same thing happened after Kobe Bryant was accused of rape; the media was relentless in making sure that wherever Kobe went he was bombarded with questions and scrutiny. DUI is a much bigger problem in North America than violence in hockey, and is still

too common of an occurrence for the media to shrug it off.

But it gets worse. Just six days later, La Russa was arrested for a DUI after Palm Beach County Police found him passed out at the wheel of his SUV with his foot on the brake, at a green light. After La Russa failed the sobriety test, he was administered a breathalyzer where he blew a 0.093—that's about 0.06 lower than Chacin's rating, and La Russa couldn't even stand up. At least the two-time World Series Champion had enough class to apologize publicly after the incident.

Regardless of the efforts to deal with this properly, La Russa and everyone else in pro sports have to realize that drinking and driving must stop. Portraying the image that it's okay to drink and drive as long as you apologize or play for a perennial third-place finisher doesn't support the fact it's fucking stupid.

People and the media have to stop ignoring that drunk driving is a problem, and when it happens it deserves no less attention than any other criminal offence. MLB and the national media should be ashamed of themselves, and Chacin and La Russa should be thankful that these cops stopped them before they could do any real damage.

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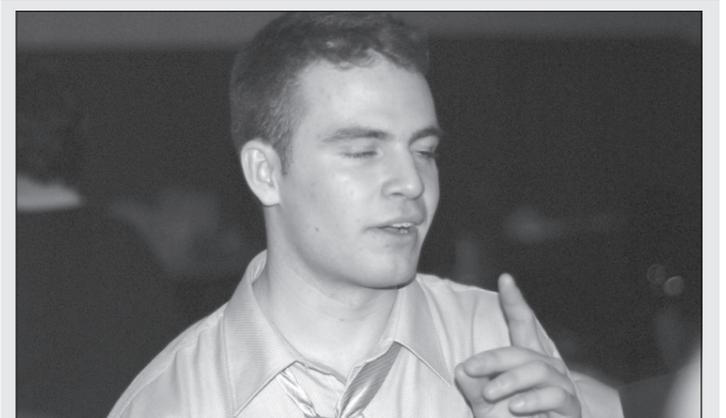
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**This is next year's Editor-in-Chief, Adam Gaumont**

Adam enjoys long walks on the beach, snuggling up next to our Design & Production Editor in bed and making punctuation corrections on Molson ads in bars. Adam also enjoys making stupid bets. Like the one he made with sports editor Paul Owen earlier this year that the Oilers would make the playoffs. They didn't.



"But they're still a good team," he might say. No Adam, no they aren't. You were wrong, and it's time to face the music.



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