

# Bears golden all the way

Men's volleyball team beats Winnipeg in CIS final in reversal of last year's game

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Sports Editor

Sunday night saw a rematch of last year's men's volleyball national final, in which the University of Winnipeg defeated Alberta to claim CIS gold, but the Bears weren't willing to let the same thing happen again. This time, they beat the Wesmen 3-1 and came home with the banner.

"They gave us all that we could handle yesterday, but we managed to play well enough to win," Alberta head coach Terry Danyluk said. "It feels good. [The Bears] got their chance, they played really well, and it was an exciting game."

The Bears got off on the right foot from the start, winning the first set 25-17. The next two sets were much closer, with Winnipeg grabbing one 25-23 and the Bears winning the next by the same amount. Alberta took the fourth and deciding set by a clear 25-20 margin.

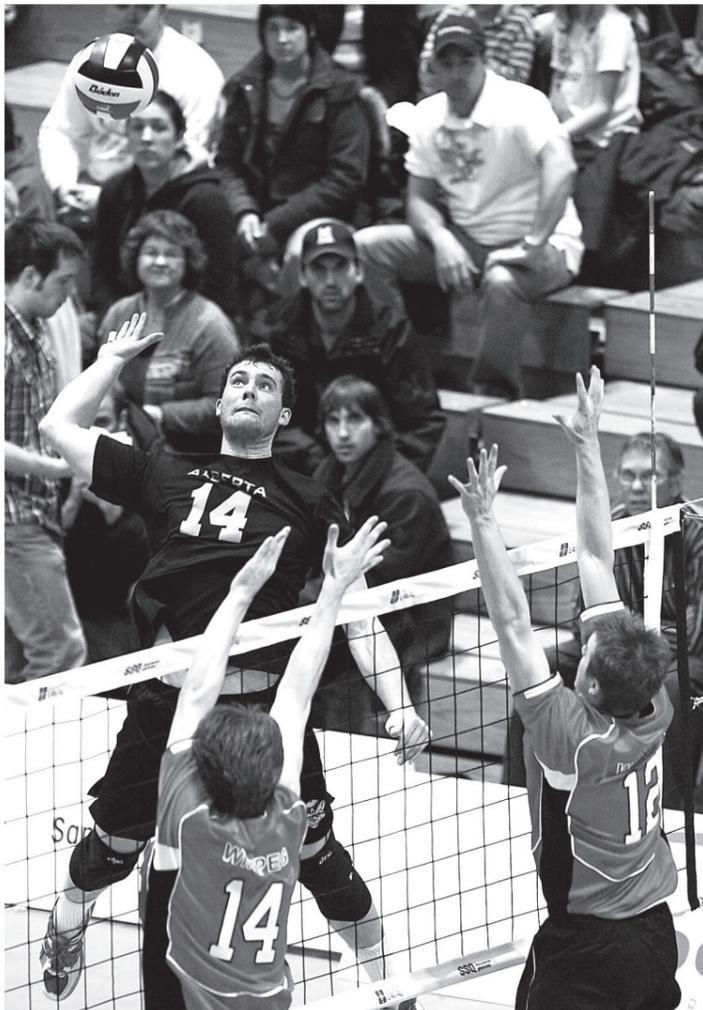
Fourth-year Alberta right side hitter Joel Schmuland had 24 kills in the gold-medal game, while graduating setter Brock Pehar put up 43 assists. Alberta also had twelve team blocks.

The match against Winnipeg was Alberta's third of the weekend; to get to the final, they had to first prevail over l'Université de Montréal and Thompson Rivers. They beat the Montreal Carabins in straight sets on Friday, 25-15, 25-14, and 25-21, and highlighted just why they were ranked number one in the country all season long.

"In the Montreal game, right from the start we played well," Danyluk said. "We served real well in all three of the sets."

Their next game was against TRU, a familiar Canada West opponent. The Bears had seen them three times already this year, and the WolfPack had yet to take even a single set from Alberta. And though the 'Pack—who were seeded fifth going into the tournament—were right off an upset victory over host Laval, Saturday's game was more of the same.

"They had beat Laval in the semis in a really close match, so I wasn't quite sure what to expect, but same as the first three times we played them, we jumped out of the guns really quickly and served hard against them as well and put them in a lot of trouble,"



YAN DOUBLET (SUPPLIED)

**WE'LL SEE HOW MUCH YOU LIKE SILVER** Alberta left side Tim Gourlay goes in for the kill during Sunday night's gold-medal game against the Wesmen.

Danyluk said. "We had good performances from pretty much everybody. All the guys that played played pretty much to their full potential, which was great."

Pehar was named tournament MVP, while teammates Schmuland and fifth-year middle Adam Kaminski were named to the tournament all-star team. Pehar was also named a first-team all-Canadian.

Though Alberta was the favourite to win going into the weekend, the tournament did have a few surprises. In addition to Laval's loss to TRU, seventh-seeded Winnipeg beat second-ranked McMaster in the first round, and the number-three UBC team—Canada West silver medallists—were taken down by sixth-seeded Dalhousie.

"I think a lot of the first-round

games didn't go as people expected," Danyluk said. "I think a lot of people expected [Laval] to win, playing at home, but Thompson Rivers played really well."

"I think McMaster had pretty high hopes going in, too, because they had an undefeated season in Ontario."

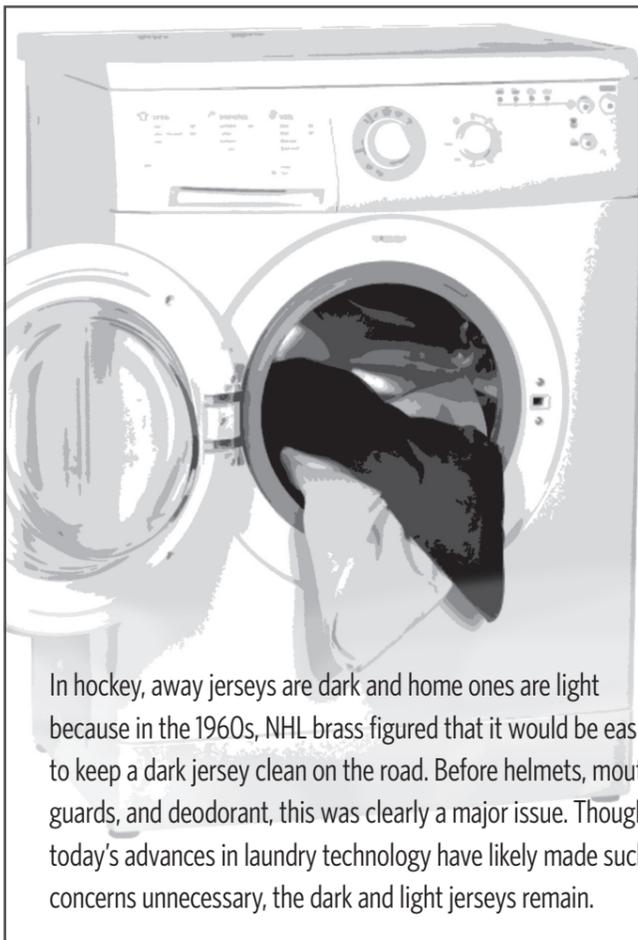
Sunday night's bronze-medal game was between Thompson Rivers and AUS champions Dalhousie. TRU won in five sets, which meant that once again, all three national medallists hailed from the Canada West conference.

"I don't remember the last time someone from outside our conference has won a medal at CIS," Danyluk said. "I think it's pretty fair to say that Canada West is [the strongest conference]."



YAN DOUBLET (SUPPLIED)

**WHAT NUMBER IS THAT AGAIN?** Alberta's volleyball players, coaches, and trainers celebrate Sunday's CIS victory.



In hockey, away jerseys are dark and home ones are light because in the 1960s, NHL brass figured that it would be easier to keep a dark jersey clean on the road. Before helmets, mouthguards, and deodorant, this was clearly a major issue. Though today's advances in laundry technology have likely made such concerns unnecessary, the dark and light jerseys remain.

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