



FILE PHOTO S (LEFT TO RIGHT): MIKE OTTO, LAUREN STIEGLITZ, PETE YEE

THE WINNERS' CIRCLE Success came in many guises in CIS this year. The Bears won the volleyball championship, Calgary's men were golden, and the Manitoba women's hockey team picked up bronze.

Alberta drops to fourth in Gateway Sports Awards

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Sports Editor

Canada's university athletes have hung up their skates and rinsed out their spandex for the last time this season, and it's time to take stock of how well everyone did. Once again, we've done all the math for you, calculating how all the CIS schools stacked up against each other this year based on performance at nationals. There was a lot of movement in the top ten this year, as four brand new teams jumped in.

10. SFU (49 POINTS)
Unranked last year



The Clan sneak into the top ten this year almost entirely on the strength of their wrestling program. Though a few other teams picked up some points, it was SFU's grapplers that really went the distance. The men's team came in second at nationals, and the women did them one better by winning gold. There was also plenty of individual recognition for the teams, as Miranda Dick and Dustyn Fisher were chosen as Outstanding Female and Male Wrestlers respectively. Mike Jones picked up Coach of the Year honours for his role in taking them that far.

9. MANITOBA (51.5 POINTS)
Ranked tenth last year



It was close, but the Manitoba Bisons managed to advance one rung up the ladder of the Gateway rankings this year, thanks mostly to their football team. They upgraded from Canada West runners-up last year to Vanier Cup victors this fall, blitzing the St Mary's Huskies 28-14. On top of that success, Manitoba added a bronze-medal finish in women's hockey in Ottawa, a silver medal in women's curling, and a Rookie of the Year award for Samantha Loewen in women's volleyball. With Saskatchewan out of the top ten, the Bisons did the Great Plains division proud.

8. BROCK (53 POINTS)
Unranked last year



Brock's men's basketball team surprised the country this year by

capturing the national title, beating the Acadia Axemen, the Raven-killers, 64-61 in the final. It was one of two national championship wins for the Badgers this year—their men's wrestling squad proved to be the best at nationals as well—but it was enough to send them into the top ten. Brock's female wrestlers were talented this year as well, taking home bronze and earning a Coach of the Year nod for Marty Calder. As well, their men's hockey team came in sixth place at nationals—Murray Nystrom was named Coach of the Year.

7. LAURIER (56 POINTS)
Unranked last year



Unlike the Pandas hockey team, we at the Gateway have no grudge against the Wilfred Laurier Golden Hawks, and are happy to welcome them to the top ten. Laurier showed its talons on the ice in particular this year, demonstrating why they're a consistent contender for the women's hockey title this year. They played in the final and took silver in a 2-0 loss to McGill, and swept the curling championships too. They racked up significant points from individual awards as well. For instance, men's hockey Rookie of the Year honours went to Craig Voakes, while Kale Harrison earned that prize in men's basketball.

6. LAVAL (74 POINTS)
Ranked third last year



After spending one glorious year in third place, the Rouge et Or are back to their familiar stomping grounds in sixth. They're once again the only Quebec team in the top ten. In the fall, they picked up silver in men's soccer, though their women were only able to reach fifth in that sport, but it was their performance at nationals in the spring that put them on this list. Laval picked up big points in basketball, with their men and women placing fifth and fourth respectively. In the pool, both teams placed third, and the men proved their volleyball strength again, finishing in fifth at that championship. Add a few individual awards, like Karl De Grandpré's Rookie of the Year award in volleyball and Francine Brousseau's

soccer Player of the Year prize, and Laval are a first-rate representative of CIS's francophone competitors.

5. WESTERN (79.5 POINTS)



Ranked eighth last year

Another school that saw big movement in the rankings this year, the Western Ontario Mustangs galloped their way to fifth without taking home a single national banner and grabbing only three medals. They did it by making it to no fewer than nine championships, with a healthy number of individual awards thrown in. The Mustangs' highest placements this year were in rugby and women's track—both teams took home silver, and Rachel Spearing was named Rookie of the Year in rugby. The men came in fourth at the track and field championship, and jumper Andrew Judge was named Male Field Athlete of the Year, while sprinter Randy McAuley won the student-athlete community service award. The Mustangs picked up bronze in men's soccer, and the women's and men's cross-country teams came in ninth and fifth respectively. Western's field hockey coach Brenyn Hodge got the nod as Coach of the Year.

4. ALBERTA (91 POINTS)
Ranked first last year



For the first time in the storied two-year history of these rankings, Alberta's dropped from first place. In fourth place after Calgary this year, the Green and Gold suffered from the loss of some of last year's best athletes. While the U of A captured national banners in men's hockey and volleyball—last year the U of A picked up three golds—none of Alberta's other teams even managed to make it to the podium this year, even though eleven teams sent representatives to national championships. The Pandas hockey and volleyball teams, both defending champions, were relegated to fourth place this year, while the defending silver-medallist Pandas basketball team finished last at the Canada West Final Four and didn't even earn a berth at nationals. In the fall, not a single team advanced to nationals.

3. CALGARY (92 POINTS)
Ranked second last year



Another good all-around school, Calgary dropped one position this year and is down to third place. What's most impressive is that they're as high as they are despite picking up only a single national championship. Their men's swim team was the main attraction this year, making a splash by ending UBC's decade-long grip on the men's title. Their women's cross-country and wrestling teams each collected silver medals, while the men finished in fourth place in both sports. Calgary's women were in fourth place at that event, and the Dinos also earned a few points from sprinter Sam Effah's Athlete of the Year award. The only real disappointment for Calgary this year was their men's basketball team's failure to make it to nationals. Though it might pain Edmontonians to see Calgary succeed—and to be higher than the U of A in the rankings—the Dinos certainly earned it this year.

2. UBC (95.5 POINTS)
Ranked fourth last year



After a year in fourth place, the Thunderbirds have regained their position as national runners-up, something that will certainly please the people that are putting together UBC's bid for membership in NCAA Division II. The T-Birds were just raking in the banners this year, taking national gold in women's swimming—hardly a surprise, considering they have Annamay Pierse, who's already qualified for Beijing, on their team—as well as men's soccer and women's basketball and volleyball. They had four national

championships last year as well—men's soccer, both swim teams, and field hockey—but this year UBC collected a couple of other pieces of hardware: their women's soccer team took home bronze, while their men picked up silver medals in the pool—not to mention that two of the gold medals they earned were in the higher-profile sports. Add that to the fact that their men's basketball team came in sixth, their defending-champion field hockey team came fourth, and Blair Bann was CIS Libero of the Year, and it's clear that UBC is one of the most well-rounded schools in CIS.

1. GUELPH (99 POINTS)
Unranked last year



Like the mythical beasts from which they take their name, the Gryphons soared straight to the top of the rankings this year, mauling their competition and proving that you don't need to be the best at the big-name sports to rake in the points. Previously unranked, Guelph made it to the top on the strength of their track and cross-country athletes' gold-medal performances, with a big boost from individual award-winners as well. Both the men's and women's track teams took home banners, as did both cross-country teams. Long-distance runner Lindsay Carson won Rookie of the Year honours in both track and cross-country. She was also named cross-country Athlete of the Year, and her coach Dave Scott-Thomas got the nod for Coach of the Year as well. The Gryphons picked up another banner in the fall, defeating Toronto to take home field hockey gold. Guelph also picked up points from wrestling and women's rugby.

HOW'D THEY DO THAT?

For our third annual CIS schools ranking, we used the same formula as last year. Points were given based on schools' performance at nationals only. A first-place finish earned a school ten points, second place meant nine points, and so on. Individual awards were also worth points—a performance-based prize like Coach of the Year or Rookie of the Year was worth five, while community service and student-athlete awards were worth three. In the seven sports with televised finals—women's and men's hockey, women's and men's basketball, men's and women's volleyball, and football—the point value was multiplied by 1.5. Simple!