

The official magazine of the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association

sweat

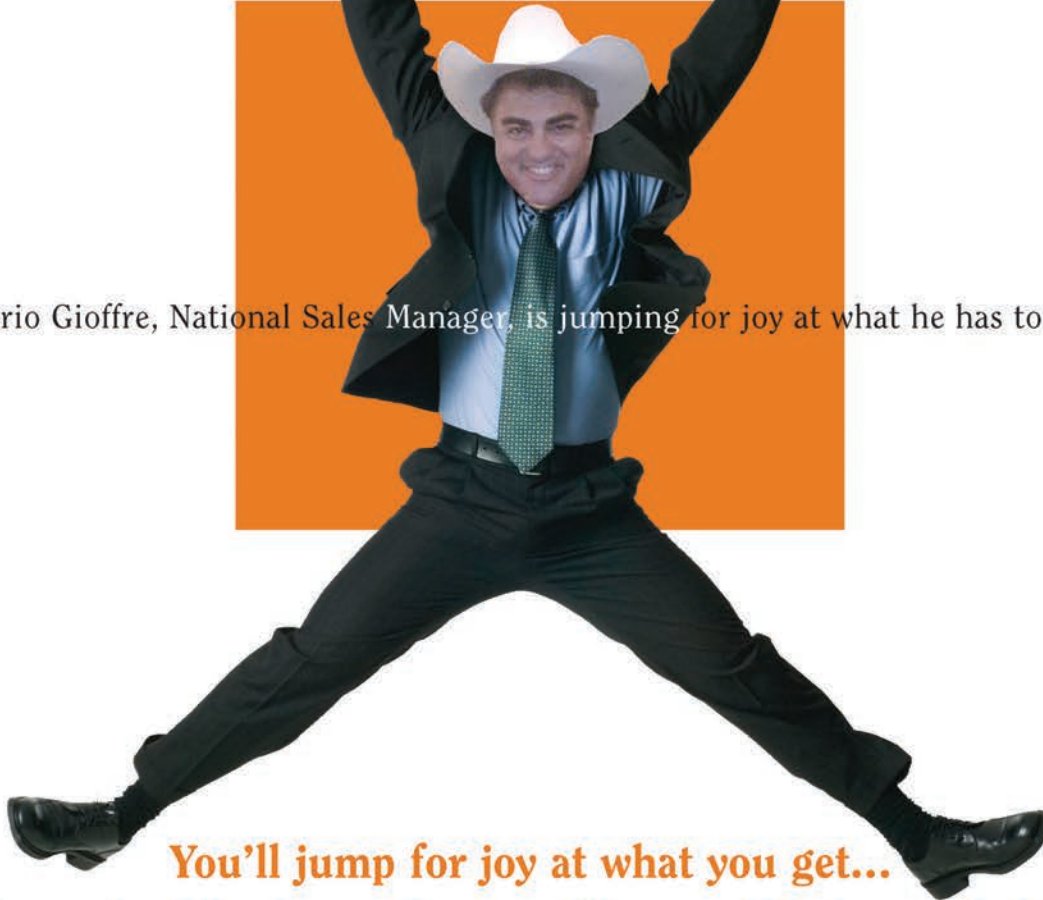
spring 2010



THE OCAA
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OCAA PHOTO OF THE YEAR

Belleville, ON – Loyalist Lancer Zach Turpin gets tackled by St. Lawrence Viking Ian Pope during the last regular season game. The Lancers won a lopsided victory, 47-7, capping off a perfect season.

Adam Gagnon | 2009

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well it is hard to believe this is the 10th Anniversary of Sweat magazine. Sweat has actually been with the OCAA longer than I have. There have been many interesting articles and covers over the years, and it has been a resounding success for the OCAA. A huge thank you to the students and staff at Humber College for their time and effort in making this magazine what it is today. We are looking forward to the next 10 years of Sweat and what it has to offer to the OCAA.

In keeping with the 10th anniversary theme, I would like to focus this message on some of the highlights of the past 10 years in the OCAA and also to look forward to the next 10 years.

In looking back, there are a few areas I would like to highlight. In 2003 the OCAA introduced the Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony takes place every two years and honours our past coaches, builders and student athletes. In 2005, we revised and updated our website, www.ocaa.com. Beginning in 2007-2008 we started providing live webcasting of our OCAA Championships. Over the last 10 years we have seen a huge growth in our partnerships and sponsorships, including Belair Direct Car Insurance, Big Kahuna/Adidas, Westmont Hospitality Group, Boston Pizza and VSP Sports.

In looking forward for the OCAA, we are currently in the process of developing our strategic plan for the next five years. It will



Jay Shewfelt
St. Clair College, Windsor

be an exciting but challenging next few years, without a doubt. Some of the key areas of focus will be working with provincial sport organizations to implement the Long Term Athlete Development Model in Ontario and also the development of a new and improved OCAA website. In addition, there is a study taking place investigating a possible partnership and/or merger between the CCAA and the Canadian Interuniversity Sport. There are many hurdles to overcome to make this happen, but I feel this would be a major step in making the Canadian post-secondary

educational system one of the best in the world when it comes to combining athletics and education. The benefits of such a merger greatly outweigh the negatives.

One cannot help but look forward to the future without considering the recent success of Winter Olympics in Vancouver. Hopefully the impact these Olympics had on Canadians has proven the significance that sports can have in our lives and our country. Sports can be a tremendous tool in developing leaders, building character and bringing communities and people closer together. The OCAA plays a key role in that process in this great province. I have never been more proud to be a Canadian and I know many people feel the same way following our success on and off the field of play at the Olympics.

Next year will be an exciting one for the OCAA as we host two of the most prestigious CCAA National Championships. Durham College will host the Men's Basketball Nationals and Niagara College the Women's Basketball Nationals from March 17-19, 2011. Be sure to mark these dates on your calendar as you do not want to miss out on these great events. A sincere thank you to both colleges and their athletic departments for stepping up and bringing the best of college basketball in Canada to Ontario.

Congratulations to all of this past year's OCAA champions and medalists, and to those who have represented the OCAA at the National Championships.

Have a great summer. We are looking forward to an exciting and entertaining 2010-2011 OCAA season.



PHOTO OF THE YEAR RUNNERS-UP

left:
Sean McMurtry
Loyalist Lancers
Adam Gagnon

right:
Will Bradbury
Fanshawe Falcons
courtesy of
Fanshawe Athletics



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courtesy of Lucas Timmons

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photo illustration by
Chris van Doorn

Special thanks to Annie Lau (George Brown Huskies), Rob Lefler (Humber Hawks) and Katerina Conde (Seneca Sting)

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And so begins Sweat magazine's 10th year. Since December 2001, final-year print journalism students at Humber College have worked to provide the OCAA, its athletes and its fans with a bi-annual sports lifestyle magazine. And it's been our pleasure every time.

In this issue, our focus was getting into our athletes' heads. Sure, we're also interested in scores, trophies, and championships – but this time, we wanted to figure out what makes OCAA players and coaches tick.

Steph Davidson's cover story *Armies of One* delves into pressure and how players deal with it. Miguel Agawin took to the road to find the loudest crowds in Ontario and looks into what type of impact this has on teams in *Make Some Noise*. Alana Gautreau found what makes a good coach in *The 'Doug' Factor*.

Sports bond us. Playing for a team – or simply cheering for one – makes an individual a part of something bigger. To be an athlete, especially at the OCAA level, requires a physical, emotional and mental commitment that we at Sweat pay tribute to every year.

Here's to another 10.



Scott Rennie
Editor-in-chief

spring 2010 team



...IN BRIEF

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Compiled by **ERIN DeCOSTE, SEPTEMBRE ANDERSON, NICOLE McISAAC, MICHAEL SUTHERLAND-SHAW, TIM MORSE**

Thunderbirds sport yellow and pink for cure

The Algoma Thunderbirds and their supporters raised more than one thousand dollars for the Canadian Cancer Society during their cancer awareness basketball weekend in January.

The men's basketball team sported yellow shirts for its first OCAA Plays for Prostate Cancer campaign, while the women wore pink for its OCAA Plays for Breast Cancer campaign.

Both teams hosted the Redeemer Royals and Niagara Knights in Sault Ste. Marie on Jan. 26.

The OCAA launched its inaugural Plays for Breast Cancer Awareness campaign during the championship season.

Patrick Murray, an OCAA League and Championship All-star in 2009 and current Algoma basketball player, was responsible for the inclusion of prostate cancer awareness in the fundraising weekend after losing his father four years ago to the cancer.

OCAA student-athletes and fans have raised over \$8,000 for charity this season with combined efforts from all varsity sports.

Yip and Lay rack up badminton accolades

It's been one heck of a year for Humber Hawks women's badminton player Renee Yip.

The first-year badminton player has dominated the net and been rewarded with a 2009-2010 OCAA female badminton player of the year award to go along with her fist full of medals.

"Taking both men and woman into account, Renee has been the most dominant force in the OCAA this year," said Humber head coach Michael Kopinak. "She will be a force in this league for several years to come."

Yip and her doubles partner, 2008 OCAA Male Player of the Year Raymond Wong, had a nearly undefeated season, suffering two losses at the national competition.

Yet the team has still managed to come out on top with wins at the 2010 OCAA West

Division Regional Championship and 2010 OCAA Championship.

The dynamic duo went where few OCAA badminton players have gone before — it capped off its near-perfect perfect season with a CCAA Mixed Doubles gold medal.

Humber Hawks men's badminton player Charlie Lay is the man with the golden racquet — and the golden medals. The Windsor native was named the 2009-2010 OCAA male badminton player of the year after a stellar season.

After winning the West Division men's doubles championship with partner Mark Wong, the male badminton player of the year last season, Lay and Wong went on to win a bronze medal at the provincial badminton championship at St. Clair College in Windsor.

Lay's resume also includes a bronze medal at the 2009 national championship and two more provincial doubles titles — a 2008 mixed doubles title with St. Clair and a 2009 title with the Hawks.

Lay's coach Michael Kopinak credits him with being "the hardest worker on our team. He is our captain and our leader."

Saints' middle shatters blocking record

On Jan. 13, 2010, Corey Cole of the St. Clair Saints made history by setting a new OCAA career block record.

In a game against Niagara Knights, the six-foot-four middle blocker made four blocks bringing his total number of blocks to 177, three ahead of the previous record holder Brendan Barrett-Hamilton of Cambrian/Georgian College.

The Saints had six games remaining in this season, and Cole ended his five-year career with 69 blocks this year.

OCAA golf goes international

The OCAA will be greatly represented at this year's Federation Internationale du Sport Universitaire world university golf championships in Antequera, Spain.

From June 7 to 11, a number of OCAA student-athletes and coaches are participating in the event in support of Canadian amateur golf.

Ray Chateau of Humber College will act as head coach and team leader of the Canadian contingent for the third consecutive FISU

championship, having held the same positions in 2008 in South Africa and 2006 in Italy.

The five women who have been selected to compete for Canada next June are Humber's Danielle Greene, Victoria's Anne Balsler, McGill's Melissa Cor, UBC's Jocelyn Alford, and Waterloo's Tiffany Terrier.

On the men's side, Canada will be represented by Humber teammates Ryan Willoughby and Mike Zizek, Laval's Mathieu Gingras, Victoria's Mitch Evanecz, Waterloo's Garrett Rank and Montreal's Philippe Andre Bannon.

The best result for team Canada came in 2006 when the men finished seventh out of 14 countries. The women's team had its best finish in 2004 with an eighth place finish.

Canada has competed at the FISU world university golf championship since 2002.

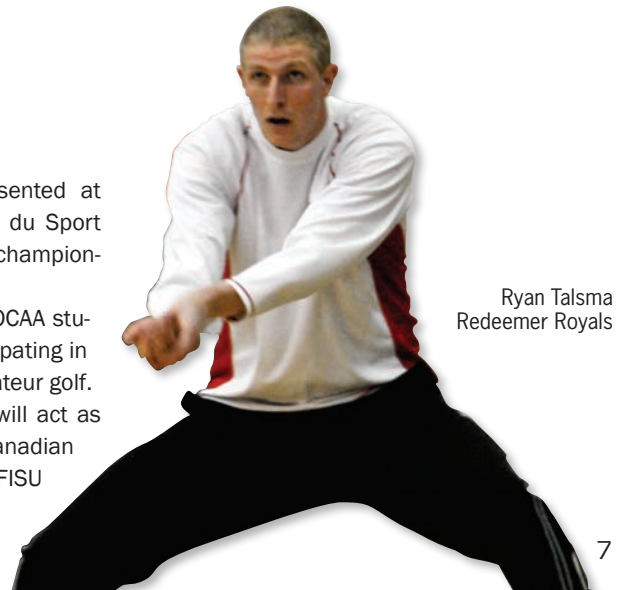
King of the court

Four-year veteran and player of the year, Ryan Talsma, finished out the year setting numerous records in the OCAA for total points and kills. The once-rookie-of-the-year finished the season with a career total of 907 points and 719 kills.

The Redeemer Royals front man may do another year at the university, but is also looking to semi-pro and European leagues to see what's available for him.

At the heels of this revered player is Humber's rookie of the year, Terrel Bramwell who killed this year, finishing as top player in the western division. Though Bramwell could be standing in Talsma's place a few years from now, no one will forget what Talsma brought to the game.

"I know it's a cliché to say it's a treat to work with kids, but it's true," says Harris. "Ryan is the most gifted, hardest working player who works on all aspects of the game."



Ryan Talsma
Redeemer Royals

WHO GOT THE GOLD?

Men's basketball

LONDON – Humber's Daviau Rodney had a weekend to remember. The Hawks' guard had to leave the tournament and return to Toronto to welcome the birth of his first child. He then returned to his teammates to score 20 points in the tournament final, clinching the Hawks the provincial championship. The new father was named MVP.

Women's basketball

BARRIE – The Sheridan Bruins won their third straight provincial title. The Bruins, who went 14-0 in the regular season, handed defeat to Algonquin, Fanshawe and St. Clair on their way to the crown. The Bruins' Hali Burns averaged 18.3 points per game, and was named the tourney's MVP.

Men's volleyball

ANCASTER – Led by OCAA rookie of the year Terrel Bramwell, the Humber Hawks won their fourth OCAA championship with a straight sets win over the Seneca Sting. It was the Hawks' first since 2005.

Women's volleyball

SUDBURY – The Humber Hawks won their third consecutive provincial championship. Led by rookie of the year Kelly Nyhof, the Hawks defeated the Nipissing Lakers in the gold medal match.

Men's indoor soccer

VAUGHAN – The Sheridan Bruins were the kings of the turf this season. They defeated the Fleming Knights 2-0 to win the gold. Jonathan Costa of the Sheridan Bruins was named tournament MVP.

Women's indoor soccer

VAUGHAN – The Fanshawe Falcons beat defending champion Humber College to win indoor soccer gold. The victory means double gold for the London-squad, as Fanshawe also won the OCAA outdoor soccer gold medal in October. The Falcons outscored the Humber Hawks 6-5 in title-deciding penalty kicks, after neither team scored in regulation time.

Badminton

WINDSOR – The hometown men's pair of Vuong Tran and Sam Lamour smashed birdies all the way to the men's doubles gold. Women's honours were won by Cambrian's Jody Carruthers and Kayla Odorizzi. Timothy Chiu of George Brown won the men's bracket, while Valerie Breen of Boreal was the women's singles champion.

With files from Heather Alford, Kathleen Peroff, Jonathan Brodie, Kyle Hall

**Get out of
your seat
and...**

**SHOOT FOR
CASH**



CHANCE TO WIN \$1,000 CASH PRIZE AT ALL OCAA BASKETBALL

ON THE VERGE OF A MERGE

CCAA AND CIS CONSIDER JOINING FORCES

BY TIM MORSE



For more than five years, the OCAA and its partner the Canadian College Athletics Association have been trying to form a merger with the Canadian Interuniversity Sport body, with no luck.

But observers say an agreement between the two leagues to hire an external consulting firm to conduct a feasibility study, means that the prospect of a merger has hit a new high.

LBB Consultants Inc., a sports firm from Quebec City, will be diving deep into both leagues looking for any issues that could jeopardize the possible merger: everything from finances to location to competitive merit.

Niagara College athletic director Ray Sarkis, says though talks have been in the works for a while, it wasn't until December of last year that the CIS became interested.

Sarkis says the major hurdle was university officials who claimed it unfair to pit four-year university athletes against two-year college athletes. But that has begun to change — more colleges are offering four-year degrees and academic partnerships are being struck between universities and colleges throughout Canada.

"Colleges have really changed over the years, and the differences between colleges and universities has gotten smaller," says Darren Cates, Royal Military College athletic director and CIS representative. "Competition isn't all we should be looking at. The synchronization of the two organizations will be good, but I think whatever is best for our students is what's most important. I know that's what I look out for — my kids."

Niagara's Sarkis says the merger won't happen overnight, but the end result could prove to be huge for the OCAA. Travel costs, small sports and athlete sponsorships could all receive more funding should the merger occur.

"Though at this point, it has more to do with partnership (between the two leagues)," says Ken Babcock, CCAA and Ontario University Athletics representative. "For core sports, it's very unlikely the two will play together."

An athletic director since the late '80s, Babcock was drafted into the merger talks because of his unique position — he stands on both sides of the dividing line as athletic director of both Durham College and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology.

Babcock believes the merger will benefit small sports more than anything else. Golf, curling, badminton and cross country have the most to gain because interest in these sports is generally found in smaller schools with little funding, he says.

According to Babcock, the Steering Committee — composed of CIS and CCAA members — and consultants are using golf as a model for the merge, because college and university golf teams already compete against each other.

But Humber College golf coach Ray Chateau says if the CIS were to recognize golf as a university sport on its own and the merger doesn't happen — the success of their cross-institutional competition could be under threat.

"My players basically sit and wait until they can play University of Victoria for the national championship because that's where the real challenge lies," he says. "Not that there's bad college teams or players, we just have a real rivalry built with UVic."

For many schools in both leagues, the competition is either too high or too low. The merger could create a tier system, sport by sport, so that college and university sports teams can compete against teams at their skill level.

"My players are always asking me when we

can play the universities again," says Humber men's soccer coach Germain Sanchez. "We only get to play exhibition games against CIS teams, but my players are always excited about those games and love the competition."

But player enthusiasm doesn't mean the merger is anywhere close to being a done deal.

"As nice as that may be, that will be very difficult to achieve," warns Babcock. "There are so many issues that will come up during the talks."

CIS President and UVic athletic director Clint Hamilton prefers to see the glass half full. "I'm thinking more about the synergies between the two leagues. Some of the problems can be fixed while others won't be. Either way this is looking positive," says Hamilton.

What everyone can agree on, though, is the length of time a merger will take.

"It could take three to five years just to get the leagues in order," says Sarkis. "It's so much work, but in the end it will be worth it, for the students."

Humber College athletic director Doug Fox says the road to a merger "will be a long process at best." But he's hopeful following the "positive" feasibility meeting held in February that saw "a lot of agreement from both sides."

Over the last few months, surveys from each of the institutions involved were compiled along with recommendations for a potential business plan. Fox says positive outlooks for the CCAA such as the ability to hire full-time coaches for the first time could mean big things for colleges.

Banking on the success of small sports, continued partnership between colleges and universities — and time — the potential merger's stock seems to be up. Which means student athletes are on their way to reaching new heights of competition. ☺

IN RETROSPECT...

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST DECADE IN THE OCAA

2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

2000:

In 2000, the OCAA makes its first changes to the logo in over a decade



2001:

- After a 15 year hiatus St. Clair college re-joins OCAA hockey
- Seneca College captures its first of five rugby crowns
- Algoma University/College joins the OCAA – with the addition of new fitness centre
- Humber's Joanna Vitale wins OCAA player of the year, leading women's outdoor soccer in scoring



2004:

- Cricket makes its mark on the OCAA – starting with Seneca college
- Fastballer Erin Smith goes 7 - 0 with a sparkling 0.00 ERA, carrying her Durham Lords to the OCAA title. She even gets a mention in Sports Illustrated magazine.

2003:

- Confederation College wins its fifth straight women's curling championships
- April 2003 – first Hall of Fame induction ceremony
- Georgian College's Tee Jay Alderdice wins his third consecutive men's skiing championship

2002:

- Georgian College receives \$5 million face-lift with new athletic centre
- In May 2002, the OCAA creates a Hall of Fame
- Algonquin Thunder men's outdoor soccer wins its first of two provincial and national championships.



2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

2009



2008:

- Humber College golf team is the first school to ever win both titles in back-to-back year – men's and women's gold at provincials
- In their first season the St. Lawrence Kingston Vikings win the OCAA D2 rugby championship
- Humber Hawks rugby takes second OCAA title in a row
- Mohawk Mountaineer Jasmin Cull shatters OCAA single season record for service aces



2006:

- OCAA and Fan 590 sign partnership for weekly college report
- Fleming College's women's ski team takes first gold since 1988-1989
- Cambrian College, for the seventh straight year, wins best overall badminton team in the OCAA

2007:

- For the first time ever two badminton teams both walk away with gold – Fanshawe and St. Clair tied for first place in the badminton finals
- Algonquin Thunder complete a big season with OCAA championship in men's volleyball
- OCAA athletes can compete for five instead of the previous four years
- OCAA broadcasts live games online
- Niagara golfer Matt Hunter wins provincial championship

2009:

- Redeemer starts plan for new soccer field
- Algonquin Thunder men's soccer – six OCAA gold medals in a row



2005:

- Anthony Batchelor of the Durham Lords finishes his first OCAA season with basketball rookie of the year honours. He'll eventually retire as the all-time leading scorer

2005

2006

2007

2008

2009

PERFORMANCE ENHANCING THREADS

**SLEEKER,
STRONGER,
FASTER –
UNIFORMS**

BY MELISSA SUNDARDAS



THIS SEASON, THE GOLD AND NAVY of Humber College women's soccer jerseys got an updated look – again.

First-year Humber College early childhood education student Melissa Migliazza has been a defence player on the Humber Hawks soccer team for four years. And already, she's onto the third style of uniform since she's been on the team.

"The material is different – it's lighter and there is a lot of room to move around in," says Migliazza. "This year has been my favourite set of jerseys yet."

It's a huge improvement from what they used to be like, says Linda Stapleton, director of sport and recreation for Seneca's Newnham Campus.

"In the '70s, our rugby players wore really thick, polyester knits that were just terrible for athletes to move in because they were very hot, they didn't breathe and they smelled," says Stapleton.

"Uniforms have really changed and the science of athleticism has really now just caught up to the technology of uniforms – so you're getting things that are breathable and you're getting fabrics that have wicking capabilities."

Wicking materials in sports apparel provide compression, help regulate body temperature and work to keep the perspiration and any moisture from soaking the uniform. It keeps athletes dry, cool and unburdened by dense fabric.

Stapleton explains playing through seasonal

changes can be a nightmare without the proper undergarments to help athletes adjust.

"You want an undergarment that makes them warmer so they're not pulling muscles."

Uniforms have really changed and the science of athleticism has really now just caught up into the technology of uniforms.

*Linda Stapleton
director of sport & recreation
Seneca College (Newnham Campus)*

Compression shorts are another popular option, known for keeping muscles tight and warm, says Stapleton.

But wicking is just one feature added to most college athletic uniforms.

Dave Bethune, account manager for Big

Kahuna Sport Company, one of Canada's largest distributors for apparel and sporting goods, says other performance enhancing materials on the market for college uniforms include dry fit, non-cotton and sublimated materials, such as Climalite, Climacool, Climaproof and Climawarm from Adidas and Cold Gear, Heat Gear and All-season Gear from Under Armour.

As the official retailer for CCAA colleges, Big Kahuna supplies most colleges in Ontario.

Bethune says the evolution of performance-enhancing materials has benefitted college athletes.

"[It] allow[s] for better fit, allows for lighter, more form fitting apparel, which allows athletes to be more comfortable while performing," he says. "The last thing you want to worry about while performing is what you are wearing."

Alex Paris, fitness and facility officer and rugby coach for Mohawk College in Hamilton, says the quality of the materials in new uniforms will provide the college athletes with more comfort in their games.

An example Paris gives is basketball jerseys now being made to resist more water so they don't become as heavy.

"We have zero cotton – I got rid of all of that

a long time ago. The main material — it's like a tissue — it's a dry fit type of material," he says.

Paris says each sport wears a different fit of the dry shirt depending on the physical demands of the game.

Humber College purchased sublimated uniforms from Big Kahuna for each of its varsity athletes this year.

"Sublimation is almost like a dying process because it dyes ink into the material so that it can't come off and fade . . . it gives you a lot of design creativity and it doesn't inhibit the technical properties of the fabric," says Bethune.

Doug Fox, athletic director of Humber College, says it was time to renew all of Humber's athletic uniforms and sublimates became the way to go. He likes the convenience of sublimation — if the team loses one number, the order can be punched into the computer and sent out. Before, a minimum of 12 uniforms had to be ordered and all the numbers would be re-sewn.

Fox also says Humber's volleyball uniforms have changed significantly—players have switched from shorts to tights because it's less restrictive.

"The volleyball uniforms are tighter so there are no infractions on the net," he says. "They used to have loose uniforms and if you hit the net with your uniform, it was a point scored for the other team."

Migliazza says the soccer uniform she now wears is a great improvement and feels better than most that she's had to wear. She also says uniforms can help an athlete's performance and if there are materials to help improve that, she's all for them.

We watch what the pros wear and our athletes tend to believe that if someone is wearing a particular brand at the professional level that it's going to be able to help them.

*Alex Paris
fitness & facility officer/rugby coach
Mohawk College*

"If the uniforms can be made using materials that make them lighter or adjust to the climate then I'm all for it. If I am focused on how heavy my jersey feels or how soaked I am, it distracts me from playing and takes me out of the game altogether," says Migliazza.

Beyond comfort, there are new base layer materials coming out that physically assist athletes.

"[Adidas has] a TechFit line, and it's a compression piece that looks like it's got these little tape bands on specific spots on the shirt and they're called tech bands," says Big Kahuna's Bethune.

He says these bands are supposed to help muscles in a certain position to increase power and endurance.

Under Armour has a similarly functioning product coming out in June 2010.

"They've come out with a full body suit and it does the same thing — it almost looks like a one-piece swim suit that you wear," he says.

And although some of these materials may be costly for college athletic departments — dry-fit sublimates cost between \$52-\$78 per jersey while polycottons can run about \$45-\$50 each — more and more schools are considering them.

"More of us are now looking for these better materials. Any time you have an athlete competing, you want them at their best capabilities and these products have a market — it's whether or not colleges can afford to purchase them for their athletes," says Seneca's Stapleton.

The buzz around most materials that help enhance athletes' performance have generally been associated with professional athletes, like Olympic gold medalist swimmer, Michael Phelps. Mohawk's Paris says the desire for student athletes to strive for the best has made performance enhancing materials more popular than ever with colleges looking to buy new team uniforms.

"We watch what the pros wear and our athletes tend to believe that, if someone is wearing a particular brand at the professional level, it's going to be able to help them," Paris says.

As much as the best materials can help however, when game time rolls around, it's still up to the athlete.

"In the old saying 'look good, play good.' There are some advantages to having those particular materials, but at the end of the day it's still the player who does all the work." ☺

development in the last 10 years (Durham volleyball)



'00 - '01

Cotton — does not wick sweat quickly throughout garment, resulting in a heavier shirt and discomfort. Stitched-on items also fold around corners after continuous washing.



'04 - '05

Sportira — Polyester reduces weight and sublimated logos and numbers dyed right onto the garment avoid a coarse chaffing



'09 - '10

Adidas' Climalite wicks moisture throughout the garment faster, speeding up the drying process. Climalite does not shrink and weighs less than all previous uniforms.

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE IT

DUNKING IN THE OCAA

BY SCOTT RENNIE

ORLANDO PALMER'S coach always says Palmer is "swagging on someone."

That's when the six-foot-three Fleming Knights' small forward comes down from the rim after a dunk. Landing back on Earth, beside the defender he's just soared over, he gives a look and flexes his muscles. "I'm trying to make a statement," says Palmer. "You aren't going to be able to stop me."

He's not the only dunk artist on the squad. Power forward Jermaine Duke says he dunks to intimidate. "I look at them [opponents], I shake my head, I make them feel stupid."

Dunking is the act of leaving the floor and everyone else below — slamming the ball through the net. It's a decisive moment of gracefulness that goes beyond the score-

board and it carries mental and emotional cache like no other play.

"It captures not only the breath of a building," says veteran NBA broadcaster Chuck Swirsky, "but it also deflates the other team." And Swirsky would know — he called Toronto Raptors basketball games for close to a dec-

ade, and was front row centre for most of former Raptors superstar Vince Carter's electrifying dunks.

For Swirsky, who has also lent his voice to professional baseball and hockey over his 30-year career, there is nothing like a dunk in the sporting world. Take a breakaway in



In photo: James Forrester. Courtesy of Seneca Athletics



Plays with cache in the OCAA

Sweat jogged alongside some of the OCAA's best athletes to get their take on what compares to dunk in their sport.

"Either diving across the box, stopping a shot going top shelf and hanging on to it, or stopping a breakaway point blank, sliding on the ground, getting the ball. Each one says "in your face" like a dunk would."

*Emily Gillet, goalkeeper
Fanshawe Falcons*

"It would be making an open field tackle when you are on defence – where you stop the guy (with the ball) dead in his tracks or even take him back a foot or two."

*Brendon Conway, rugby player
Loyalist Lancers*

"It's getting a huge kill. You're making a statement that not every guy can hit as hard as you, and you want to be known as the hardest hitter. It pumps up everybody. The crowd gets into it, your teammates get into it and the momentum just changes."

*Terrel Bramwell, volleyball player
Humber Hawks*

above: Scott Roman Iszyn. Courtesy of OCAA / right: Terrel Bramwell. Courtesy of Kyle Hall

hockey, he says — the play is moving from one end of the rink to another, the crowd is on their feet — but they know the result, a goal or save. The slam is different, there's an element of surprise. "Sometimes with a dunk, you have no idea what's going to happen."

The player momentarily disregards the laws of gravity and removes himself from not only the flow of the game, but also the court the game is played upon.

He becomes the spectacle himself. "You're slamming the ball and coming down," says Swirsky, who moved on to broadcasting the Chicago Bulls in 2008. "And you've got nine

other players on the floor, anywhere between seven and 12 players on the bench, all collectively looking at someone who just jammed — it's pretty impressive, it really is."

Just ask teammates Palmer and Duke — two of the few players in the OCAA who have the athleticism to be able to dunk. "There's only a handful of guys who can go out and get one a game," says their coach Bill Crowdis. "And even the top dunkers in the league aren't getting that many."

And when dunking comes at a premium, it carries that much more of an impact. "The opponent doesn't know how to recoup — it's not like the NBA where everyone gets dunked on. If you

If you get dunked on, you remember that 'til your grave. That stays with you for 100 years.

*Jermaine Duke
Fleming Knights forward*

get dunked on, you remember that 'til your grave — that stays with you for 100 years," Duke says.

Felix Adjei, a shooting guard on the Seneca Sting, says he knows his dunking has an effect on the ebb and flow of the game. "A dunk brings energy to your team," he says. "So when they are down or need an energy boost, you go for a dunk."

And Palmer says that with dunks, timing is everything. In warm-ups, for example, he tries as many dunks as he can, to get his teammates excited, but once the game starts, he's all about elevating play. "When I dunk in the first half, I know my team is ready to go and they are going to work harder and try harder," he says. And in the second half, it's a means to victory. "When I dunk in the second half, it's more of a statement. Sometimes it can seal a game."

Duke agrees dunking is a duty. "I have to get my team amped, I have to get the crowd to go 'ooh.'"

On the flip side, it can suck the life out of an opponent. "Players understand the importance of a dunk, they understand the importance of taking out the heart and soul of a team," says Swirsky. "An emphatic dunk really creates a situation where the other team can sense it's one of those nights."

For coaches like Crowdis, the trick is to make the impact of being dunked on fleeting. "We'll get a guy come down and throw down an amazing slam on us, and I'll be like "forget it, get the ball, get it inbounds, and go down and score a quick layup — it's the same two points."

But even with this sage advice from the sideline, the humiliation can be hard to take. "It's really embarrassing," says Seneca's Adjei. "To be dunked on, you've actually had to think that you could stop the person, and then realize that they are higher than you and then there's nothing you can do."

It can even take a player out of the game completely if he lets it go to his head. "Your team morale goes down, the crowd goes down, and you don't want to play anymore."

And then there are the fans. The slam can take the roof off of any arena — whether it be an NBA game where a ticket costs a hundred dollars, or a college league game, where it's just a loonie or two to get in. In Swirsky's eyes, it's because the crowd is seeing an athlete achieve something not only exciting — but also seemingly impossible. ☺

MORE THAN PUSHING PEDALS

RACECAR DRIVERS PUT THEIR BODIES IN TOP GEAR



Every serious athlete is familiar with the wall. It's all about lactic acid, burning muscles, and the nasty little voice that says "quit."

For Andy Lee, the wall is all those things – but it's also more literal. "I lost my brakes and hit a barrier at about 70 miles an hour," says Lee, 27, an aspiring racecar driver based in Phoenix, Ariz. A racer and instructor for the Volkswagen Jetta TDI Cup series – a professional event where people aged 18 to 26 can get into the sport of racing across North America – says being out of shape in his sport means, "guys get hurt pretty bad or killed."

Racing is a lot more than just pushing pedals. Like any OCAA varsity sport, it takes a lot of training, concentration and fitness, Lee says.

"The TDI Cup is probably the most fierce racing I ever took part in because you're all in completely identical equipment," Lee says. "All the cars are completely the same. You end up running really close to a bunch of guys that are just as fast as you are. It's definitely exciting."

But getting behind the wheel is both a gamble and a sacrifice.

"We sold my mom's house and we bought a Mustang and started racing," Lee says in an interview from Phoenix. "My mom has been everything in my career. She's pretty much everything to me."

It wasn't until the racetrack accident that Lee realized physical fitness needed to be a bigger part of his career.

"Cardio is probably the biggest training part of my regimen," he says. "When you get locked into a car for a couple of hours, it's 150 degrees

inside the cockpit of the car. Just to be able to focus for two hours straight, it demands a lot of your body as well."

Jogging and cycling three to four times a week can also help drivers maintain focus for a lot longer, he says.

The similarities with other sports don't end there. Just as a soccer player will walk the pitch to look for quirks in the turf, or a golfer will strut the



Racecar driver Andy Lee, centre, after coming in first place at a Volkswagen Jetta TDI Cup race in Joliet, IL.

fairways and visualize the flight of the ball, Lee physically walks tracks, studying the surfaces, curves, and where rain will puddle. It's all about physical and mental preparedness – it's all about focus. Lee says he played a lot of basketball in high school, and feels it's a lot like racing.

"When you take a shot, you know if it's going to go in – you can feel it. It's the same for when you're going into a corner – you can feel it when you go to brake too late, you know you're not

going to make it."

Fellow Phoenix-based VW Series instructor Mark Miller, who raced in the 2010 Dakar Rally series in South America, says he teaches young drivers to be as fit as they can, which includes proper diet. "If [you] are not fit, you can lose your life."

And Miller practices what he preaches – he works out regularly at the same gym as the German national football team.

Another racing professional and fitness enthusiast, Karl Thomson from Toronto, Ont., leads the Compass360 racing team – winners of the first race of the 2010 Grand Am Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge series in Daytona, Fla. He says even his pit crew is physically fit.

"They [have] very low body fat and good body mass indexes, they watch what they eat and probably work out four or five times a week," Thomson says. "You'd be surprised how much physical fitness it actually requires." ©

For exclusive interviews and footage with Compass360 Racing team principal Karl Thomson, Subaru Product Specialist Peter Johnson – who speaks on a Subaru featured in the *Fast and Furious* movie – and the Director of Nissan Canada, with footage of the 2010 Canadian International Auto Show, check out <http://youtube.com/angelojrn1>.

All photos courtesy of Volkswagen Motorsport USA

SOMETIMES IN THE COURSE OF A GAME
THE REST OF THE TEAM **MELTS AWAY**
AND CERTAIN PLAYERS BECOME...



courtesy of Alex Magstaff

ARMIES OF ONE

BY STEPH DAVIDSON

PROVINCIAL SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIP. Algonquin Thunder goalie Aaron Taylor stands in net, poised, anxiously waiting for the striker to take his kick. A huge win or staggering defeat rests on his shoulders.

It's a situation that presents itself in every sport, but not for every player. »



On the rugby pitch, the team is celebrating a try, grabbing some water. No chance for the kicker to catch her breath though — all eyes are on her, she has to take a kick.

Over at the gym, the volleyball team has called in its defensive specialist. He stands apart from the rest. He couldn't hide even if he wanted to — his jersey doesn't match those of his teammates.

While victory or defeat is shared by all players in team sports, the pressure is not evenly spread. Often one man or woman takes responsibility for the outcome of the game — kickers in football and rugby, goalies in hockey and soccer, liberos in volleyball, closers in baseball.

"They tend to have personalities that are somewhat different than the rest of their teammates," explains Dr. Joe Baker, a kinesiology and health sciences professor at York University. "Response to stress and that sort of thing — goalies, pitchers, strikers in soccer — tend to feel a bit more stress than the average player."

For Algonquin's Taylor, that intense pressure is one of the things he loves most about goaltending.

"Some people buckle under pressure and some people flourish," he explains. "I guess I got lucky." Taylor's ability to perform under stress will come in handy after he graduates from Algonquin's firefighting program this year.

Minding net isn't for everybody, he admits. "You gotta be an extremely aggressive person. You gotta be able to handle the pressure of losing or winning possibly based on your results — what you do," the 23-year-old explains. "More aggressive people would probably make better goalies."

Taylor plays to win. He says he's learned to let it go when he gives up an easy goal, but, "the

pressure's always there just to win. You don't want to lose at any cost." Taylor finished the regular season with an 11-1 record, and helped Algonquin win its sixth-straight provincial OCAA championship with nine shutouts in 16 games.

Burlington rugby kicker Kiyomi French, also 23, says she prefers it when another team member takes on the duty. While she doesn't

mind being the centre of attention, she says it can be a major deterrent for other players.

Jim Flynn, rugby coach and technical development director for Rugby Ontario, says the lack of willing kickers, especially in women's rugby, is due in part to coaching.

"They're just not being coached very well," he says. "There has been a weakness in develop-



Algonquin goalkeeper Aaron Taylor leaps above the crowd during a game against Fanshawe.

courtesy of Lucas Timmons



ment of that skill, more so in the women’s game than the men’s game.” He also says there is a lack of really good female kickers, not just at the club level, but across the world.

“It takes a certain kind of person. Someone who doesn’t mind having all eyes on them all the time,” French explains. “I don’t care if someone sees me miss a kick and I don’t care if someone sees me get it in.”

Dr. Baker says the “certain kind of person” French refers to is motivated by a driving need to be the best in the game — and have that need acknowledged by others.

“They’re probably a lot more driven by what we call achievement motivation, the need to sort of demonstrate or experience achievement in a domain,” he explains. “That’s something that sports participants have more so than non-sports participants.”

Luke Leoen, 21, and Kaitlin Gagnon, 19, are both in their final year playing libero for Loyalist’s volleyball teams. Gagnon has been in the position for the past year after requesting the switch, while Leoen recently moved from right side due to an ankle injury.

For Leoen, the extra stress comes more from the adjustment to a new position in the middle of the season.

“There’s definitely always a pressure just to always play your best and maintain a certain level of athleticism and composure on the court,” he explains. He says the pressure is higher for him as a new libero since he’s still trying to make sure he’s in the right place at the right time.

Leoen describes the position as “more of a significant role because your main role is to play defence. So you’re coming in there to make sure

the other team’s not scoring points against you, kind of like a little spark plug for energy because you’re just gonna come in and fire it up and pass up balls and motivate the team,” but he says he’d like to go back to right or left side eventually.

Gagnon has a love-hate relationship with the pressure.

“I kind of like the idea [that all eyes are on me]. It makes me feel, not special, but I know that I have all the pressure on me . . . I’m wear-

They tend to have personalities that are somewhat different than the rest of their teammates.

*Dr. Joe Baker
kinesiology & health professor
York University*

ing this jersey for a reason,” she says.

Pressure from her coaches, however, is another thing entirely. “Once I got going, the pressure with coaches definitely got in my head — I had a lot of problems with that.” She had to learn to listen without over-analyzing in order to keep her head in the game.

Flipping a high stress situation is something Dr. Baker says some sports psychologists work on with athletes.

“They can typically take a stressful situation and get the athlete to change their perspective,” he says. “Something that might be seen as invoking a high, negative stress response — they can just change that and get them to see that from a positive perspective.”

Taylor says it can work both ways. His most stressful situation in soccer is also his most cherished during a game against Seneca.

“We were up one-nothing . . . we had a penalty shot called on us, kind of an iffy call. The striker stepped up, got ready to take that shot. I turned around into the net, told myself, ‘you know you can do this, you can do this.’ But it’s a penalty shot, so if you save it you’re a hero,” his voice quickening with excitement.

“The striker, the captain of Seneca actually, took that shot. I guessed right, dove left, hit that ball and saved the shot. It was probably one of my highlights of my soccer career and definitely one of the biggest pressure scenes I’ve ever faced in soccer.”

Managing stress and keeping their head in the game is crucial to all athletes, but the added pressure for the goalie, kicker, striker or libero can make it that much harder to perform. If they’re one of the lucky ones, like Taylor, they feed off it.

“Even when I’m 50, I see myself playing soccer ‘til I can’t run anymore, ‘til I can’t save anymore. As long as my body will let me play goal, I intend on playing.” ☺

top left and right:
Kaitlin Gagnon (top, previous page) and Luke Leoen take the spotlight as liberos for Loyalist’s women’s and men’s volleyball teams.

Steph Davidson

WHEN THE CHEERING DIES

HOW STUDENT
ATHLETES
DEAL WITH
RETIREMENT

BY SEPTEMBRE ANDERSON



Before Dave Templar called the plays from the sidelines for the Loyalist men's volleyball team, he wore the Lancers red and blue himself.

For Templar, the transition to coaching was a way to hold onto a sport that had defined his life since age 9.

For most athletes, there is nothing like the thrill of competition, the adrenaline rush after a game-changing play and the cheer of adoring fans. But what happens when the lights in the arena dim, the goal fades and the cheering dies?

"There's a lot of depression when people leave because they don't have outlets to express themselves," says Dr. Saul L. Miller, sports psychologist and author of *Why Teams Win: 9 Keys to Success in Business, Sports and Beyond*.

"For some athletes, your entire life is focused on training and playing," he says "In some cases, things are done for you and then suddenly you have to do things for yourself. And some athletes

don't have that ability, it seems, to adjust."

For others, it's the thought of disappointing fellow teammates, coaches or even parents that can cause the most emotional distress.

"You carry a lot of pride as an athlete and it's tough because you feel like you're letting a lot of people down if you're not having a great match or your team is not playing well," says Templar, a Loyalist Lancer from 1998 to 2002 and now the team's coach.

"Your coaches have put in an insane amount of time that year and you feel like you're really letting them down as a team collectively. It just sort of accelerates that feeling of panic."

Playing at the varsity level of sports also "takes a certain amount of your time and certainly your parent's time, money and effort," says Templar. "You don't want any of that to go to waste."

In order to compete, student-athletes must cultivate unflagging, unshakeable focus, determination, mental toughness and self-awareness. This

dedication regularly results in players developing strong, exclusive identities with their chosen sport, says sports psychologist Dr. Peter Papadogiannis.

Because student-athletes usually begin playing sports at such a young age, they "become very specialized, very young," says Toronto-based Papadogiannis, an athlete himself who played for former Northern Ontario Junior Hockey League team the North Bay Trappers.

"So you are known as a figure skater, a hockey player from a very young age and that's who you are and your identity is created and developed based on this sort of perspective," he says. "It's very hard to unravel yourself from that self-awareness because that's who you are, that's who you know yourself to be."

For Adrian Tomlinson, a point guard and shooting guard for the St. Lawrence Vikings men's basketball team, the sport is all-consuming.

Basketball "plays a big role just because I've been playing it for so long that it's a part of me,"

It's very hard to unravel yourself from that self-awareness because that's who you are, that's who you know yourself to be.

*Dr. Peter Papadogiannis
sports psychologist*



above:

Dave Templar went from the court to the sideline in order to stay close to college volleyball.
Courtesy of Ryan Templar

left:

Aleks Janjic has kicked his last ball for Humber. He's now left to consider life after OCAA soccer.
Courtesy of Humber Athletics

says Tomlinson. "Just to be able to play in a game that I love so much means a lot."

According to Dr. Miller, because many student-athletes focus exclusively on their sports, they can end up trapped in their identities as athletes. This is especially prevalent in those who play team sports, he says.

"I've seen a lot of people having trouble leaving the game because it's so exciting. You're challenged mentally and physically to the max. And you have this group of people, if you're on a team [with] a tremendous camaraderie — it's a family — so there's all of that stuff and your identity is wrapped up in it, so it's tough to leave," he says. For some, depression sets in.

"You have a sense of an identity, you're part of the team and then suddenly you're not part of that team and they're lost — they don't have an identity apart from the game," says Dr. Miller.

In his 2008 article, posted on global sport and exercise professional networking site

Instadia.com, titled *Life After Sport? Counseling Professional Athletes Facing Retirement*, France-based counsellor Peter-Danton de Rouffignac explains that "athletic advancement can often be at the expense of personal development."

"During their teenage years [student-athletes] have to adjust to a dual or triple role — as young people, students and athletes," says de Rouffignac. "These multiple roles produce a unique set of pressures, physical as well as mental, at a particularly vulnerable time in the young person's development."

Serbian-born Aleks Janjic grew up immersed in soccer from the age of six. But Janjic, a Humber Hawk striker, 2009 CCAA All-Canadian and the Fall 2009 OCAA lead goal-scorer, admits he's had to make a lot of sacrifices along the way for soccer success.

"I lost a couple jobs," he says. "I sacrificed going out with my friends sometimes because I had to practice in the morning. A lot of times

family might be coming over and I have to go for a tournament."

Student-athletes experience a sense of disappointment and heartache when they fail to move onto the next level and are faced with the daunting task of finding meaning outside of sports, says Dr. Papaogiannis.

"That's kind of tough, that lack of acceptance, denial. And when it is kind of accepted there is some anger that goes into it, frustration that goes into it," he says. "Then, finally, when it's accepted, the athlete knows that he or she is not coming back and that they need to make the transition."

"I will miss it a lot," says Janjic of his imminent retirement from soccer. "I can never picture myself not playing the game. But my father and my grandfather always say, 'When the time comes, realize there are more important things than just playing soccer.'"

Tomlinson is more succinct. When asked how he'd feel if he was unable to play professional basketball, he replies, "Heartbroken."

While Dr. Papadogiannis doesn't think all athletes ever completely transition from player to civilian, he feels there is still much that can be done to minimize the sting of retirement.

"One is awareness," he says. "Be aware of [your]self outside of sport."

"Another one is support systems, coaches, management, friends, family — they can be the ones to help individuals start getting ready for it (retirement)."

Dr. Papadogiannis is also a strong advocate of sports psychologists and career counsellors having more involvement with athletes at the early stages of their sports careers. He suggests athletes turn to campus career counselling centres for help finding new outlets for their energy.

"Will they ever let go?" asks Dr. Papadogiannis "I don't really think that you can let go because it really is a part of you and it develops early on."

As for Humber's Janjic and St. Lawrence's Tomlinson, one thing both young men can agree on is they would like to remain connected to their sports even after retirement.

"If nothing happens for me, one day if I have a kid — son or daughter — I hope they play soccer as much as I did. It helped me stay fit, kept me away from the wrong crowd and just helped me meet new people, social life, everything," says Janjic. "If nothing happens I'll still play and try to carry it on through my kids."

Tomlinson isn't resigned to leaving his heart on the court either.

"I'll just move on with my life," says Tomlinson. "You can't play basketball for the rest of your life. So I'll just move on from there and try to get a regular job, but I'll always incorporate playing basketball somehow, like coaching or something." ☺

NOT GETTING SIDELINED BY EMOTIONS

CHANNELING STRESS INTO BETTER PERFORMANCE

BY ROSE DITARANTO

IT BEGAN WITH A DISAGREEMENT WITH HIS girlfriend about hanging out with his teammates. Voices were raised, heated words were exchanged and the anger built, driving Mohawk rugby player Trevor Atkinson crazy.

"She says I wasn't spending enough time with her," he says of one romantic tiff. "With an athletic background, and the competitiveness of being an athlete, I get more angry than upset."

Fighting with a significant other can destroy an athlete's self-confidence and become all-consuming, when that stress translates into game performance, says London, Ont.-based sports psychologist Dr. Mario Faveri.

"When an athlete experiences a lack of self-confidence they are in trouble," says Dr. Faveri.

When the intensity of playing on a varsity team is combined with a tumultuous relationship, it can be detrimental to performance, he says.

The result for even the most court-hardened veteran can be rookie mistakes, such as scoring on the wrong basket, or running the wrong way on a football field.

But it can also go the other way — with a rookie performing with the focus normally associated with a vet.

Redeemer University men's volleyball coach Wayne Harris says he's seen the silver lining in the cloud of the lovers' spat.

"When there is turmoil in their life, instead of watching their performance go down, I've watched them when they are on the court with their teammates become more focused and more intent," says Harris.

Mohawk's Atkinson says it is tough to perform with a scorned woman on the brain. But Atkinson agrees with Harris, saying when he hits the pitch, he's more than willing to get lost in the game.

"For the one hour of your life that you are playing, you don't think about if your girlfriend's mad at you," he says. "It's the time you get away from it."

Atkinson concentrates sometimes by targeting some poor sap on the other team and unleashing his aggression. Other times, he just needs to hit the turf.

"I would say the big thing for me is playing contact sports. You've got to take a big hit or something like that to wake up, to say 'I'm actually playing a game right now.'"

Distraction though, waits silently along the sidelines.

Burlington, Ont.-based registered marriage and family therapist Dr. Marilyn Belleghem says

many things can stir distracting emotions and steer someone off track after a squabble.

"When we are emotional, often times it is hard to think," she explains. "People caught up in relationship difficulties are often distracted, so they can't focus on whatever it is they are supposed to be dealing with. It becomes consuming."

Belleghem says when concentration is low, performance is altered.

"When it comes to basketball, they will miss the basket, or tennis they will miss the ball or hit it too hard."

In these circumstances, a willing coach can sometimes assist by becoming a figurative punching bag or a shoulder to cry upon. Coach Harris says he has been approached by players experiencing turmoil and does offer a listening ear. Although he feels powerless in issues of a more serious nature, he says he tries his best to be supportive.

"The first thing I do is ask them whether or not they feel they can get their head back in the game. I ask them for their assessment and if they say they can't, then that's fine. I like having their honest assessment of whether or not they can continue."

Harris says he allows all his players a fair chance to go out on the court and prove themselves. If a player is not quite up to par, someone else is subbed in. However, he says he never threatens anyone on the team with losing their starting position.

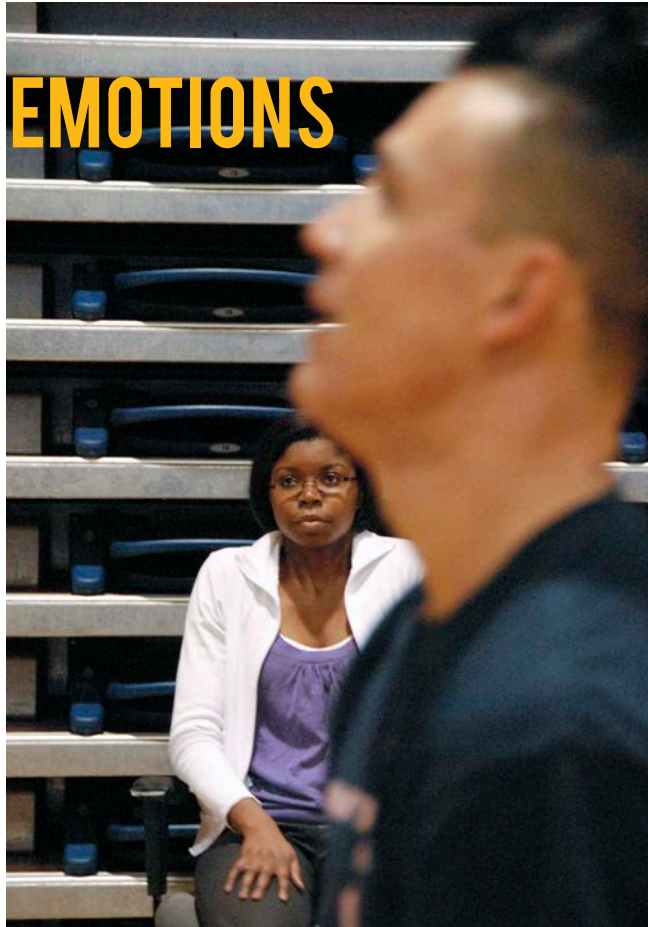
"That's why we are a team," he says. "If one of us falters, then someone else can step in."

Atkinson says coaches may talk "sensitivity," but mostly the talk is all about the game.

"The coaches I play for — they don't really want to hear [about relationship issues]. They will turn it into a negative against you," he says.

He believes it's up to the player to get his or her head straight.

And while sports psychologist Faveri doesn't advocate the "go it alone" strategy, he says



Tim Morse

there are strategies an individual in turmoil might adopt. It helps if an athlete can think of training or game situations as a rest from his or her personal problems, he says.

"One strategy that is really important . . . is to avoid interactions or discussions about that tumultuous relationship with people or the person involved just prior to a game or a practice."

Belleghem says the key to regaining focus is to recognize that you can compartmentalize your thinking so you do not have to dwell on the situation.

"If you're really upset, a basic thing to distract yourself with is counting — because as soon as you start to count you have to think," she says. "When you are thinking it is harder to stay upset at something than it is just focusing on the problem."

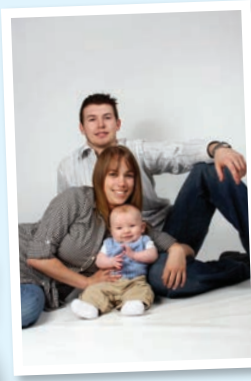
But Redeemer's Harris says team players have a natural advantage when it comes to problems of the heart.

"They withdraw a little bit from the team in terms of verbalizing a lot, but they bring forward a lot more intensity. I've watched them turn the volleyball team and the volleyball experience into a place of refuge," he says.

For Atkinson, the ideal solution to a spat is right there on the sidelines.

"If you're not talking, you can say come to my game. Then you see her there so then you know she cares enough to come. It's definitely bridging the gap."

And if that doesn't work, there's always that big winger on the other team to take care of. ☉



PLAYING FOR TWO

PREGNANCY DOESN'T NECESSARILY END THE GAME

BY JADEN PATO

A drop of sweat rolls down the forehead of a young athlete as she tenses and looks down at the stick. Shock sets in slowly. Her feeling of invincibility has quickly disappeared as her mind spins. She frantically tries to see the play in her head — but all she can see is a little blue positive sign staring back at her.

Kimber Evans, 20, an ex-midfield soccer player for Humber Hawks, found out she was pregnant in November, 2008.

"I was in shock," she says over the phone, recalling the experience. "The first things I did were talk to my mom and my boyfriend."

The challenges Evans would face as a teen mom were daunting on their own — but to top it off, she could no longer play the sport she loved.

Though she still managed the team for a while, and still does physical training with her teammates, Evans says "it's hard not being involved — I can't go out with my friends as often and I can't really do what I used to do."

Statistics Canada's most recent survey in 2005 showed more than 30,000 pregnancies among females aged 15-19. More than 20,000 of them were between 18-19.

Andy Watson, sports information co-ordinator for the University of Western Ontario says, "Unplanned pregnancy and other family emergencies can be very disruptive to the athlete as they struggle to juggle academics and sports and the emergency. It affects you immediately and can definitely sidetrack."

Evans faced some challenges as a student in Humber's nursing program. Her son Cameron — who was five-and-a-half-months-old at the time of publication — even comes to school with her some days, while her boyfriend works to support

the family.

Watson says on-campus support is available for athletes in these types of situations. Sports co-ordinators, time management and emotional counsellors can coach students through a transitional phase.

But the athlete isn't the only person affected by an unexpected pregnancy. In most cases, the team loses a player, either temporarily or until a replacement is found.

I think that it's a little bit worrisome for a lot of people to see a pregnant lady there and being able to compete. It is a physical sport to some degree but its not physical like your downhill racers who can potentially crash and have broken limbs.

"[Although] having a female athlete get pregnant isn't a very common occurrence during my time at Western, the team would be left at a definite disadvantage being a player short for the season or having to find a replacement," says Watson.

For some athletes, sports are their lives. Nothing can keep them from the game — some women even continue playing throughout their pregnancy.

Canadian Olympic curler Kristie Moore didn't let being seven months pregnant stop her from participating in the recent Vancouver Winter Olympics. The feat put her in rarified company alongside Swedish figure skater Magda Julin in 1920 and German skeleton racer Diane Sartor in 2006.

Moore, 30, told *Sweat* she and her boyfriend Shane Wray decided to start a family last summer because the team she was on didn't qualify for the Olympic trials — she wouldn't be busy competing.

By the end of September, Moore learned she was pregnant. She was still competing in curling, but at a lesser intensity.

That changed in November when she was asked to be an alternate for another team.

"I called them back the next day saying that I was still interested, however, I was pregnant and I didn't know how they would feel about that," Moore recalls. "They discussed it as a team and decided that it was alright."

From there, the team went on to the Olympic trials, to the playoffs and then the Games.

An athlete's body has been conditioned to the top level of fitness possible. So when an athlete becomes pregnant, changes to the body are even more drastic than for women with lower fitness levels, says Michelle Mottola, from University of Western Ontario's pregnancy lab.

Moore recalls talking to her doctor about the looming dual challenge.

"They encourage you to continue doing what you are doing already, and if you are already going to the gym, continue doing it," says Moore.

But it's not a risk-free endeavour. Some physicians warn heavy exercise could lead to tearing of the abdominal lining and even potential miscarriage.

Andrea Page, a trainer at FitMomFitness — a Toronto-based post-natal fitness program

*Kristie Moore
Canadian curler*

— says anyone going this route should expect to take some flak. "I've seen many pregnant athletes who continue to play their sport during pregnancy be criticized by society for not sitting on the couch."

Page says the critics are usually wrong. Some activity is needed to keep the woman and child healthy.

In the lead-up to Vancouver, Moore watched her heartbeat like a hawk. "The number one thing is to watch your heartbeat daily to make sure you heart rate doesn't get over about 150 beats per minute," she says.

And between handling the double duties of Olympian and soon-to-be mom, she had little time to listen to the critics. Moore says about 95 per cent of people were supportive.

"I think that it's a little bit worrisome for a lot of people to see a pregnant lady there and being able to compete. It is a physical sport to some degree, but it's not physical like your downhill racers who can potentially crash and have broken limbs and that sort of thing," says Moore.

"Is it ideal to be pregnant and competing? Probably not, but the one good thing about our sport is that we can play from the time we are 15 'til 50. So to fit in a family and a pregnancy, you kind of have to be prepared to do the extra work to be pregnant and compete."

Page says pregnant athletes can even see certain advantages. An elevated heartbeat for instance — usually the first clue to pregnancy — is more likely to be caught by an athlete, who is more attuned to their body rhythms.

And when blood volume increases during the first trimester, the body learns to better use oxygen. Most athletes find they play better in the first year after child birth, Page says.

Moore says if she ever gets pregnant again, she would definitely still play her sport.

For OCAA soccer player Kimber Evans, pregnancy meant putting her athletic life on hold. But she doesn't regret it for a second.

"For another athlete who finds herself in a similar situation, I would tell her just to think of what she is getting out of it instead of what she's losing — because then it's all worth it." ©

the more you know . . .

According to the Clinical Practice Guideline of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada and the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology, moderate levels of exercise pose little to no risks to the fetus during pregnancy.

Prolonged inactivity, however, can lead to loss of muscular and cardiovascular fitness, excessive maternal weight gain, higher risk of gestational diabetes or pregnancy-induced hypertension, development of varicose veins and thrombosis, physical complaints and poor psychological adjustment to the physical changes of pregnancy.

Michelle Mottola, Western University's pregnancy lab co-ordinator, says that while a golfer could continue to participate in the sport during pregnancy, it would likely be too risky for a soccer or hockey player.

"Athletes should not continue to participate in the sport if there is a risk or danger of falling, or any type of potential trauma to the fetus or the mother," says Mottola.

According to the Clinical Guide, the best time to start an exercise program would be in the second trimester, when the discomfort of the first trimester has passed, and before the physical limitations of the third begin. Reasonable goals of aerobic fitness during pregnancy would be to maintain a good fitness level without trying to reach peak conditions or train for an athletic competition.

Athletes who continue to train during pregnancy are advised to get help from an obstetric care provider with knowledge of the impact strenuous exercise can have on maternal and fetal outcomes.

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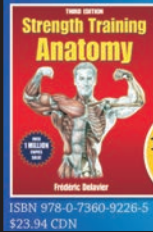
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MAKE SOME NOISE



THE POWER OF THE BOOM FROM THE BLEACHERS BY MIGUEL AGAWIN

YOU WALK INTO THE STADIUM AND SEE YOUR opposition waiting for you. There are 15 of them and 15 of you. The sights and smells are the same as any other venue, but instead, there's a distinct choral quality to the air – the sound of 70,000 fans singing in unison.

At home games, fans of the Welsh Rugby Union greet their team in Cardiff by singing old Welsh hymns.

"It's one hell of a sound. It just lifts the crowd and that rubs off onto the team, and that's the idea," says Dr. Haydn James, the team's musical director.

James, who's conducted choirs around the world for 30 years, says choral singing is a long-standing part of Welsh culture that's closely linked to its rugby tradition. For about half an hour before each home game, he stands on a box in the middle of the field, leading an all-male choir group of up to 100 people, and with help from a military band, they get the crowd fired up for the match.

It drowns out the PA. All those voices singing as one is an attempt to instill fear in the oppo-

sition. When the Welsh team is falling behind, he says singing will spontaneously sprout from spots throughout the crowd.

"It starts somewhere, and within 15, 20 seconds, 70,000 people are singing," James says. "If that doesn't lift the team, I don't know what else [could]."

On the other side of the pond, sports games in Canada are also pumped up by crowds. Not in quite the same graceful fashion a choir brings, but with sheer volume.

In the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association, one school stands high above the crowd when it comes to being the loudest of them all – Redeemer University College.

The Redeemer Royals men's volleyball team jogs onto its home court to a sea of red-face-painted, flag-waving, drum-thrashing fans, packed all

the way to the top of the bleachers.

"It's awesome," describes Redeemer's star right-side player, Ryan Talsma. "It's one of my favourite things about playing at Redeemer."

The three-time CCAA All-Canadian and his teammates play in a gym that, at its peak, reaches 115.3 decibels. To put it in perspective, a jet plane taking off weighs in at 120 dB.

"You get excited when they get excited and it's a small school so you personally know most of the crowd," Talsma says. "That really affects the game because you're not just playing for people at your school, you're playing for your friends."

Nearly half of Redeemer's 900 students live in and around its Hamilton-area campus. Redeemer sports information director Peter Reid says while the school does promote its teams'



Redeemer fans cheered on the Royals to a first-round win at the 2010 provincials
Miguel Agawin

left:
Dr. Haydn James at a home game in Cardiff, UK
Courtesy of Haydn James

games, for the most part fans initiate the hype themselves.

Another school ranked as one of the loudest is Nipissing University, where games can peak at 107.1 dB. Located in North Bay, Ont., the Nipissing Lakers' games are a sight to behold. Clamorous students and parents use everything from clappers to tambourines. There's even pots and pans night!

"Yeah, that's us," says men's volleyball head coach Gran Ross. He says the idea started two years ago for a match against rival Humber College.

Gerry Dupelle, another volleyball right side, can relate to Talsma's experience from the court, playing in front of Lakers fans.

Dupelle, in his fourth year, admits he was overwhelmed by the rowdy crowd at first, but now says the noise gives his game a boost.

"My first year playing we were at home against Trent," Dupelle recalls. "The gym atmosphere — it was just electric. It was so loud. So loud. I thought the walls were going to cave in."

Spectators are often referred to as the sixth man, or the 12th man, depending on the sport. They can act as an uplifting force, but as James reminds us, crowd noise can also disrupt a team's cadence.

Dr. Chris Gee, a sports psychologist at University of Toronto, says in American football, crowds raise and lower their volume at different points in the game.

He says crowds get extra-loud when the opposing team's defence is on the field, hoping to disrupt its communication, but the home crowd quiets down so its quarterback can communicate with his offensive line and receivers.

Redeemer's Talsma says hearing his teammates over the crowd noise is at times impossible. But his coaches have learned to adapt by using the middle player to pass along messages.

Nipissing's Ross says he simply tells his team to try their best to shut out the noise.

"It's a factor we can't really control and our focus is on trying to weed out distractions outside the game situation," Ross explains. "So when those guys from Redeemer are banging those drums as you're trying to serve, we talk about trying to ignore that or putting that as far away from your mind as possible."

Noise levels can also affect an athlete's performance by heightening his or her level of excitement.

Gee says most athletes experience heightened anxiety before a competition, and that can



Royals fans proved they are the loudest crowd in the OCAA during a provincial playoff game against Mohawk College. They cheered, sang, chanted and beat drums to a roaring 115.3 dB. *Miguel Agawin*

combine with the swell of crowd noise to cause a player to lose focus.

Gee says there are four dimensions to attention — combinations of broad and narrow, internal and external.

Internal-broad is a quarterback's mindset when he's thinking about a play. External-broad is when he takes the snap and the play starts. Broad-external occurs when he's looking at the charging defence and looking for open receivers. And finally, narrow-external is when the quarterback chooses his receiver and throws.

"What happens when you get really excited is you get locked into narrow-external, so you get what's called tunnel vision," Gee says. "So you'll see quarterbacks miss wide-open receivers or, in basketball, players make bad passes — because they're just focused on one thing and they're not seeing the whole court or the whole picture."

An athlete's ability to shift attention becomes very impaired and in a dynamic sport it's obviously counterproductive, he says.

Gee notes, though, more experienced players are usually better equipped to handle pressure from spectators.

For Wayne Andrejek, who's played the quarterback position for many years and is currently playing for the University of Ottawa, crowd noise

doesn't affect his focus. But he concedes it sometimes affects communication.

Andrejek explains while calling out the cadence — a series of vocal calls to co-ordinate the timing of a play — it's imperative receivers hear in order to be in the right place at the right time when he delivers the pass.

"If the receivers can't hear the QB calling out the cadence, when the ball snaps they're going to be behind," he says.

For Redeemer's Talsma, the ability to handle noisy spectators is something he's honed over the years.

"It's just noise. Heckles — you have to ignore that. That's part of the game," Talsma says. "Personally, if I'm not doing well, that'll affect me more than the crowd."

Dupelle recalls a particular game at Mohawk College last year where the crowd overwhelmed him.

"The energy in that gym — it was just amazing. Every time they scored a point the walls were shaking and it threw me off," Dupelle says. "I've never experienced intensity like that."

Now in his fourth year, however, he says he's able to block out crowd noise and just concentrate on what's happening in the court. He adds he actually prefers it even at away games

because it gives him motivation, and when his team experiences lulls at quiet games, the bench will start cheering themselves.

Although blocking out crowd noise is a key strategy to focusing on the game, few players would want the crowds to remain silent.

Dave Templar, Loyalist College (Belleville, Ont.) men's volleyball coach and former player, remembers playing in his final year, in 2002, when the team made it to the provincial finals held at Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ont.

"The school sent two school buses full of students to support us there. They grabbed a bunch of old jerseys in the back room here and a bunch of noisemakers. We had loads of alumni and friends and families.

"It lets (athletes) know that there are people supporting them who are excited to be there to cheer them on," he says.

Fans "add to the atmosphere of the gym," says Nipissing's Ross. "We talk [to the team] about trying to put forth a good effort because we know we're getting a good crowd and we try to reward them for coming out and spending the afternoon liking us. We feel an obligation."

For Welsh rugby fan and noisemaker extraordinaire Haydn James, the thrill of 70,000 fans singing together still overwhelms him each time he steps onto the box.

"I genuinely pinch myself every time I go into the stadium," he says. "It's an immense honour to stand in the middle of the field and conduct 70,000 people . . . it's an immense pride." ©

bottom left:

You can expect a full house and a roaring 107.6 dB at Humber College when the Hawks basketball teams host their rival Sheridan Bruins.

Miguel Agawin

bottom middle and right:

At 107.1 dB, Nipissing Lakers fans bring everything from clappers to cowbells to pots and pans to support their teams.

(middle photo courtesy of Nipissing Athletics)

right: Miguel Agawin



THE 'DOUG' FACTOR

TAKING COACHING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

BY ALANA GAUTREAU

THE CROWD WAS BIG. PLAYERS ESTIMATE maybe 150 people. There was a lot of energy in the air. Players weren't even thinking about the Olympic Games' opening ceremonies they were missing as they stood on the court. The Algonquin Thunder men's volleyball team was relaxed. It had nothing to lose or prove.

Head coach Doug Anton tried to stay in the moment, seeing only the task at hand. He tried not to be so outcome-focused and just let the plays come. The Thunder was the underdog. Seneca, its opponent, was in the midst of an undefeated season.

The streak ended that night.

Algonquin 3, Seneca 1. A combination of applying the right amount of pressure on the court, speed receiving the ball, a lot of pre-game preparation, and maybe some of what left side player Josh Harris, 22, calls, "the Doug factor."

Doug Anton is a volleyball professional with more than 20 years of playing under his belt. Besides guiding the Algonquin Thunder to play its best volleyball, Anton is a consultant with Volleyball Canada for coach development. He, along with a committee, develops the National Coaching Certification Program.

Talking to Anton on the phone from his Ottawa office, it becomes clear that whatever criteria defines a good coach, Anton fits the bill.

A good coach leads by example.

"I think the first thing we sort of do as coaches is model the behaviour we want the athletes to have. So if I'm coaching in a super activated intense way, very animated way — as quite often a lot of coaches will do — then athletes will try to emulate that behaviour. That's exactly what we don't want," says Anton.

A good coach respects each player's unique ability to perform.

Anton talks about his sport with a lot of respect, discussing the skill involved in playing a good game. Volleyball has finesse. Volleyball is complex. And so, says Anton, are the players.

"The one thing I learned [through] time and coaching experience is that all athletes respond differently."

Some players need to have their egos stroked, some need to have success demanded of them, and the more things Anton has in his coaching tool kit, the better, he says.

Harris knows that every day on the court is a chance to prove himself. He says there is a constant challenge set by both coaches and other players to perform at a higher level.

"The line up's rarely set [in advance] and we have to push each other or else those of us who play one day may not play the next because we've been passed by one of the guys who was on the bench," Harris says.

Jim Denison, director of the Canadian Athletics Coaching Centre in Alberta, knows that is an integral piece of any coach's success. Though Denison's personal experience is with track and field, he says research shows that coaches across all avenues are up against some difficult criteria.

Coaching an athlete is not only about the sport, but about all the things going on in his or her life.

"The athletes you're coaching aren't robots or machines," says Denison. "You have to be able to be flexible and adjust to what's happening in their lives too. And good coaches are able to roll with those complex dynamics."

A good coach gives each player the benefit of the doubt.

In the heat of the moment, Anton reminds himself players are not out there to lose. He gives this message to other coaches he mentors. If a player misses a pass or doesn't return the ball, it's not personal. No one wants to fail. So, in a loss, Anton says you've just got to carry on.

"Only one team is going to be provincial champions. Only one team is going to end with that



courtesy of Michael Cioffi

win," he says.

"It's sport. You need to learn how to win. You need to learn how to lose. You need to learn how to persevere."

Because not every team comes home with the win, Anton says a team needs to look at how far it has come. It's critical for both players and coaches not to let a match define a season. The goal should always be to get better and progress with every game, so by the end of season a team is playing its best volleyball of the year.

Recognizing personal improvement is key.

"We've developed a lot of ways in which coaches and athletes talk about success being more than winning and losing," says Denison. An athlete should acknowledge personal improvements, every day.

Ed Modell, a life coach based out of Maryland and president elect of the International Coach Federation — an organization with over 16,000 members worldwide — says clients have the ability to change and to succeed on their own and coaches are a conduit through which solutions and improvements are realized.

"We come from a place that our clients really have all the answers they need locked up inside of them," he says.

The ICF believes asking the right questions of clients will lead them to the right answers.

A good coach never stops learning.

Anton knows that every player has something special to offer not only the team, but himself too.

"I think every player has something to teach the coach," he says. And Anton knows that throughout

a season a coach should be constantly assessing how athletes are responding to the feedback and guidance they're being given.

Modell says that's one of the most rewarding things about his job. He says clients are often successful, healthy people just wanting to take their personal lives up a notch.

"There's a lot to be learned from them," Modell says.

Coaches like Anton and Harris' father — head coach of Redeemer College's men's volleyball team — have inspired Harris to go into the coaching field. He says finding weaknesses and searching for ways to improve are what help make sport so exciting. There isn't a blueprint for the right way to coach, says Denison. "You don't have to worry about finding the ultimate answer," he says. No one solution. No definitive resolution. Each coach will develop nuances with every new challenge and athlete he or she meets.

"I think Doug has a master's in being awesome," says Harris.

And actually, Anton is earning his masters in sport management, always looking to improve his skills.

A good coach recognizes his weaknesses.

"I think the old adage 'failing to plan is planning to fail' is a good motto to live a lot of your life by," says Anton.

But having said that, Anton says sometimes you have to recognize when the plan is not the best option anymore. Changes need to be made and sometimes he has problems recognizing those moments and implementing the changes.

Say the plan is to beat the opposition by serving aggressively, but your team is missing serves. What do you do?

It's sport. You need to learn how to win. You need to learn how to lose. You need to learn how to persevere.

*Doug Anton
men's volleyball head coach
Algonquin Thunder*

"If we back off our serve pressure, we could lose anyway," says Anton. "But if we miss all our serves, we can't win anyway. You sometimes get into these Catch-22s."

A good coach knows when to let go.

Anton knows that in the end the best thing a coach can do for any player, and himself, is to acknowledge each person's natural performance plateau. He says education comes first at Algonquin and athletes and coaches need to

recognize when it's time for a player to move on.

It's not about someone coming back for a year to do a bartending course just so they can play, he says.

After a few years he fears he might sound like a broken record, and even though an athlete feels they have much more to learn, Anton acknowledges those lessons may not be from him.

"You have them for a certain period of time. You need to take them from point A to B, but the idea is to pass them on to someone else who maybe takes them from B to C," he says.

Denison agrees. In school, he says, we see children being passed from teacher to teacher, moving along as they mentally and physically grow. "There's not a sense that one educator needs to be responsible for this person's development through their whole career," he says. In coaching there is a tendency to find a star athlete and hang on to him or her, but sometimes change is just necessary.

Anton doesn't exactly know what next year will hold for him. He says there is a wealth of coaches in the Ottawa area who would love the chance to lead the Thunder through its next season.

For Harris and other players, Anton's possibilities are endless. "There's always a lot of jokes that fly around like Doug should take a day off of volleyball and go cure cancer," Harris says. ©



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A NEW WAY TO SKATE

THE SHINNY ON FAKE ICE

STORY AND PHOTO
BY DAVID PERRI

The sound of slapping sticks echoes around the boards as jersey-clad players chase after the puck. It's a game of shinny, but this one's a little different. Steel blades still scrape against the surface, but it's not ice they're cutting into – this game is being played on a sheet of plastic, or synthetic ice.

They're playing on the first public rink of its kind in Canada, says Helder Melo, director of site operations and services for Toronto's Harbourfront Centre. After going hard for two hours, the players' post-game verdicts on the plastic were mixed.

"It took some time to get used to for the first time," says Howie Andrews, who plays amateur hockey. But "downtown in the city, it's difficult to get ice . . . this was perfect," he says.

Ryan Painter, who played five years of university hockey in Ontario, was less convinced as he stepped off the plastic. "It's not real ice, so it doesn't have the same feel," he says.

Synthetic ice offers cost savings and manufacturers claim it provides an experience similar to real ice. The plastic product could change how Canadians skate, but in a country where ice sports are a traditional pastime, it could be a tough sell.

The Harbourfront rink is made of Xtraice, just one of many brands on the market. "It's the closest thing to real ice that you can get," Melo says. And just like real ice, they've been using it for shinny, skating lessons and recreational skating. Even better, he goes on, it costs less to build and next to nothing to maintain.

Robert Hodichak, sales manager for Xtraice's Canadian distributor, says the product is just what Ontario municipalities need as they struggle to deal with ice shortages and the steep operational costs of real ice rinks. "Toronto has 49 rinks that it tries to maintain yearly, and maintenance costs are through the roof."

A typical real ice surface in a community arena (about 56 m by 26 m) requires a refrigeration system, piping, concrete pad and an ice resurfacer – all of which have a price tag starting at about \$500,000, says Terry Piche, tech-

nical director of the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association. Ongoing costs include energy expenses to cool the ice, which can range from \$5,000 to \$20,000 per month depending on the facility, plus the cost of ice maintenance staff, a position Piche held for 21 years.

Compare that to a rink of the same size made of Xtraice with material costs of about \$450,000 with significantly lower operational costs, says Hodichak. Maintenance consists of only applying a glide-enhancing liquid to the surface every week or so.

Various synthetic ice products have been around for decades but they haven't been widely adopted in Canada, mainly because they've been too sluggish when compared to the real thing.

Piche recalls some test sites for synthetic rinks in the 1980s in Ontario. He says while "the concept was good," after skaters tried the plastic, they didn't like it and it died "a slow, natural death."

Xtraice, headquartered in Spain, has only been available to Canadians for about a year and a half, and is being sold all over the world. The company claims it has a 98 per cent resemblance to real ice, based on a test comparing the average speed of hockey players on conventional and synthetic ice, says Viktor Meier, director of sales and marketing for the company.

Meier says while the product has been well-received in places such as India and Thailand where skating is still a novelty, Canada – where gliding on a smooth sheet of frozen water is a birthright – will likely be a tougher nut to crack.

"I think people who know how to skate are much more demanding. So if it doesn't feel like ice, they will reject it," Meier says.

Some Canadian hockey trainers have adopted synthetic ice and made use of the tradition-

ally sluggish product for resistance training. But installing even the newest, slickest synthetic ice in municipal parks is a different story.

Piche, once a northern Ontario municipal recreation director, says skaters are too entrenched in traditional skating practices: for them, it's real ice or nothing.

The potential cost savings may spark some interest from "the bean counters and decision makers," Piche says. But it will take more than that to convince Canadians to skate on it. "When the rubber hits the road, that'll be the end of it," he says.

Synthetic ice can't replace the real thing for competitive athletes, says Glenn Winder, who sells both real and synthetic ice as vice-president of sales and marketing at Burlington-based Custom Ice Inc. Athletes will stay true to conventional ice because that's what is used in competitive sports, he says. "At the end of the day, you want to practice on the surface you play on."

Rick Chisholme, owner of Ultimate Hockey Training in Georgetown, Ont., is looking to add an ice surface to his facility. He says he is trying to decide whether to go with real or synthetic ice. The prospect of a low-maintenance plastic sheet is appealing, he says, but it can discourage some customers. Many people look down on synthetic ice, so "you've got to educate the consumer on it," Chisholme says, whereas with real ice there are no questions asked. He says he's leaning towards the real stuff.

Still, Hodichak is confident Canadians can be convinced to play their shinny atop a sheet of plastic. He concedes that seeing synthetic ice in competitive sports is unlikely "for a very, very long time," but points out that people were similarly skeptical of artificial turf, which is now used at the professional level for field sports. ☉

WINNING THE TURF WAR

THE RISE OF ARTIFICIAL GRASS IN THE OCAA **BY ALISON BROWNLEE**

THE SYNTHETIC TURF OF THE PAST MAY have been greener than its natural predecessor, but it sure wasn't kinder. Once the pariah of all athletic surfaces, the first-generation 'carpet-on-cement' turf developed in the 1960s chewed up athletes and spat them out. Sprains, tears, concussions and turf burns were the fate of soccer, rugby, baseball, football and field hockey players who dared to take on these plastic playing fields.

But since its first appearance in the Houston Astrodome in 1965, synthetic turf has come a long way. Now, even some multimillion-dollar varsity stadiums popping up across Ontario aren't being built around natural grass.

Of the 30 OCAA colleges and universities, Trent, Redeemer and Algonquin have switched to synthetic. While the remaining colleges have natural sports fields, both Cambrian and Centennial colleges say they are considering artificial turf in the near future.

These fields are nothing like their first-generation predecessors. Professional teams such as the Toronto Blue Jays, New England Patriots and Tampa Bay Rays use similar fourth-generation synthetics.

In 2005, Trent University took a risk and installed an artificial field, a move athletic director Bill Byrick says was the best choice he could have made for his athletes.

"Our natural grass field was pretty rough," says Byrick from his office in Peterborough. He says

the worn and tired field became a safety issue. "A lot of cleats were getting stuck in the mud and after every fall late in the season, players would have cuts from the frozen dirt."

After extensive research and long conversations with the University of Ottawa and Algonquin College — two schools that already had synthetics — Trent installed a state-of-the-art plastic fiber field filled with tiny rubber pellets.

Jason Smollett, marketing manager for international artificial turf supplier FieldTurf Tarkett, says the newest versions' artificial fibers are more durable than grass, and the pellets, which are bits of cryogenically frozen tire, provide a cushion of support for athletes, lessening joint pain caused by running and falling.

Smollett says this fourth-generation synthetic turf has surpassed natural grass in safety, durability, performance and consistency.

A recent study, funded by FieldTurf and conducted by Dr. Michael C. Meyers at Montana State University, tracked 465 college-level

games played on both natural and artificial fields. The study found seven per cent fewer injuries occurred on FieldTurf's surface, with 12 per cent fewer concussions, six per cent less lower joint trauma and 16 per cent less ACL and associated tissue trauma.

Overall, the study found 19 per cent fewer substantial injuries and 22 per cent fewer severe injuries occurred when playing on the company's newest artificial turf.

Nonetheless, some athletes still prefer natural grass.

During the 2010 Ontario Turfgrass Symposium at the University of Guelph, Bob Hunter of Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment says Toronto FC's previously synthetic BMO Field will be completely refitted with natural grass for the 2010 soccer season.

"Players were complaining about it," says Hunter. "There is this perceived issue relative to wear-and-tear on the body. I think there's a recent study that came out that says it's abso-



Grass fields have always been seen as the best to play on . . . Unfortunately, as more people play on them, the field will thin out and technically self-destruct when it gets really wet at the end of the season.

*Jim Galgrath
Sports Turf Association Ontario*

lutely a bunch of bull . . . [But] we wanted to put in [natural grass] to bring a higher level of professionalism and credibility to our team.”

He noted 13 of the 16 North American professional soccer stadiums have natural grass and several European teams, including AC Milan, refuse to play on artificial turf. The BMO field project cost about \$62.9 million and involves 82,000 square feet of natural grass.

Some OCAA players have their own reasons for choosing natural grass.

David Lambden, captain of the Humber Hawks rugby team, says the variability of natural turf makes it more fun.

“Every once in a while you get those rainy, stormy days when the field’s just completely muddy, and in my experience, those have been some of the [most exciting] games we’ve ever

Laframboise adds the smooth surface of artificial turf can cause rolled ankles and slips when pivoting, while grass creates enough friction to pivot freely and control slides.

“And you don’t get rubber in your underwear,” says forward Sarah Tyrell, to a wave of laughter from her teammates.

But regardless of preconceived notions, synthetic fields are becoming more appealing for their low maintenance. The biggest barrier for OCAA facilities is cost.

Jim Galgrath, a founding member of Ontario’s Sports Turf Association and the supervisor of grounds maintenance for the University of Western Ontario, says natural grass fields cost \$100,000 to \$150,000 for a soil-based field and \$250,000 to \$300,000 for a high-maintenance sand-based field.

According to Frank Erle, Ontario Recreation and Facilities Association member and stadium manager at Western, building an artificial field “from scratch” costs about \$1.5 million. Resurfacing can cost around \$750,000. Erle says synthetic fields are expected to last 10 years, while Galgrath says natural fields are theoretically permanent.

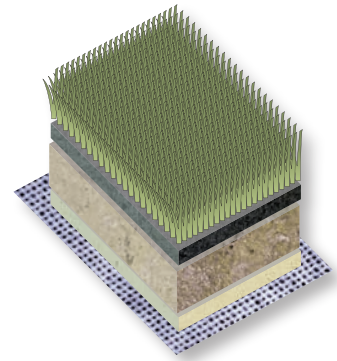
“Grass fields have always been seen as the best to play on,” says Galgrath. “Unfortunately, as more people play on them, they thin out and technically self-destruct when it gets really wet at the end of the season.”

But both Galgrath and Erle say they appreciate a beautifully maintained natural field. “If it was pristine, there’s no question you’d want to play on grass,” says Erle. “But there’s no guarantee you’re going to get that 365 days a year.”

As for Trent’s field, director of athletics Byrick says he expects to get 12 years out of his turf. He says it’s used for varsity, campus rec and community sports and has held up through it all.

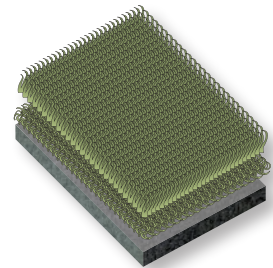
Because of Ontario’s debilitating winters, the comparative maintenance costs and an increasing interest in sports, Smollett holds that artificial turf is the future — for all levels of sport.

“Whether it’s here, or the other side of the world, there’s no question synthetic turf is the best choice.” ☺



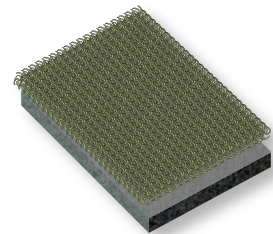
fourth generation

Considered 'safer than natural grass' by some studies, this turf's pile is up to 70 mm high, and it's used in professional stadiums



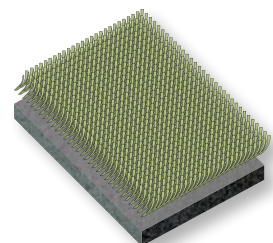
third generation

By early 2000, turf advancements led to the addition of rubber infill, thicker padding and a pile height of about 40 mm.



second generation

This incarnation, used throughout the '80s and '90s, had slightly thicker blades of plastic grass, but injuries still ran rampant



first generation

Developed in 1965, the turf of spongy carpet on hard backing was less than ideal



St. Lawrence Cornwall midfielder Joanna Booyink (above) was sidelined after an artificial turf-related ankle sprain during the George Brown indoor soccer invitational at the Scarborough Soccer Centre Feb. 13. Cornwall’s Kim Lebrun (left) and many of her teammates were left with bruised and bloodied knees after the same tournament.

had,” says Lambden. “Part of the fun of it is the different possibilities.”

Lambden also says games can be more strategic, with teams using the quirks of their natural grass home field to their advantage.

With synthetic turf, though, he says a field’s character disappears.

“There are no variables,” says Lambden. “You don’t get the dips and bounces, it’s just the same.”

And members of the St. Lawrence Cornwall women’s soccer team say artificial turf infill can wreak havoc on performance.

As defender Joanna Buhr recalls: “Sometimes there are too many pellets in an area and your foot slips back.” Fellow defender Kayla

Photos by Alison Brownlee
Graphic by Miguel Agawin

FOLLOW THE MONEY

STUDENT ATHLETES MISS OUT ON
A PIECE OF THE PODIUM

BY PHILIPPA CROOME



IN the final moment of the last event of the Vancouver Games, 22-year-old Sidney Crosby brought a nation to its feet by scoring the overtime goal, winning Canada its crowning 14th gold medal — and simultaneously clinching millions in government funding for future athletes.

Up until its last legs, the Olympics were surrounded by a flurry of heated debate on the merit of the government-funded Own the Podium program. The \$117-million initiative saw Canada funnel an unprecedented amount into the development of its athletes, with one purpose — outperforming the rest of the world and placing first in the medal race. But the glare from the Games' stage shone a harsh light on what has traditionally been a startling lack of support for Canadian athletes — especially for those at the college level.

Amateurs need not apply

OTP manager Todd Allinger says the Olympic medal mandate for OTP's research wing — the aptly named 'Top Secret' project — meant most of its research could only be used at the elite level.

"If you take the really good equipment at the top and give it to a developing athlete, it won't really make a difference, it's only when you're at the very top and talking about hundredths of a second that it has an impact," he says.

Ed Mark, George Brown College athletic direc-

I've known national athletes that have had to pay for their own flights — who would get a track suit, and that's it. But for them, representing their country is worth it."

*Ed Mark
athletic director, George Brown*

tor, says Canada's unwillingness to foster talented athletes from an early stage is nothing new.

Some practices can trickle down through the likes of centres of excellence and national training hubs. But unless a player is world-class, government funding has until now been just another hurdle to vault over.

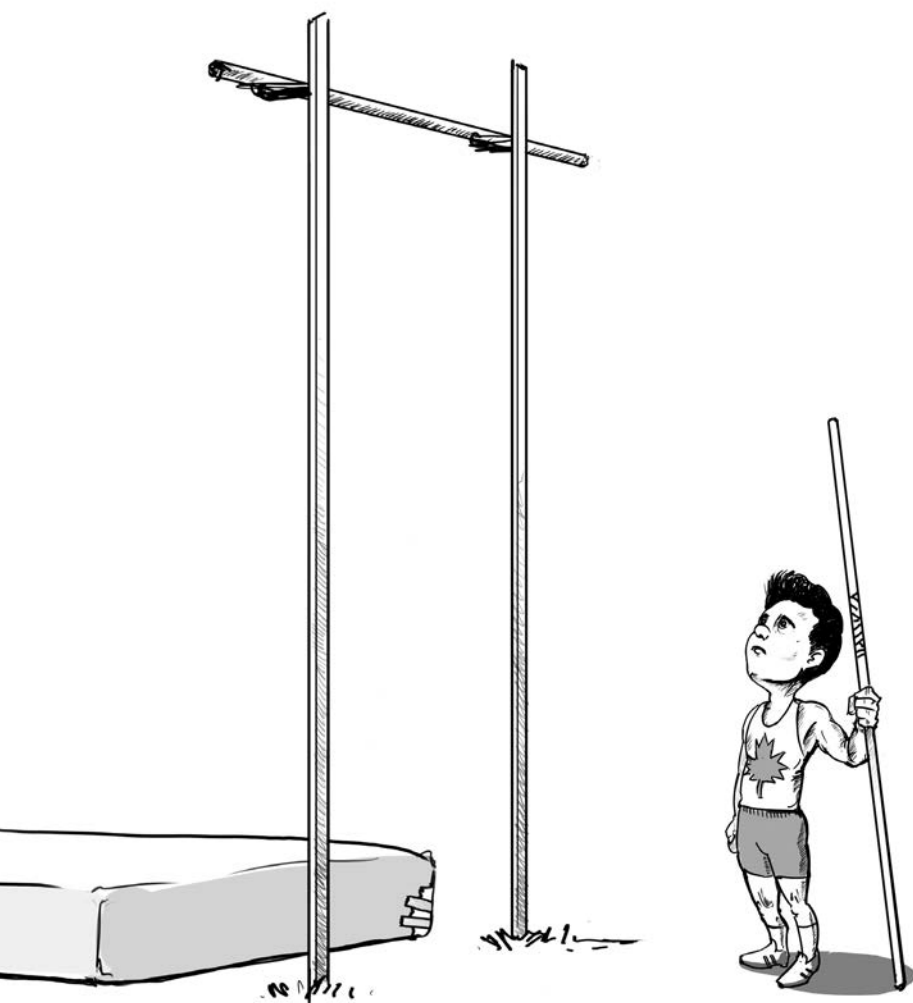
"I've known national athletes that have had to pay for their own flights, who would get a track suit, and that's it," he says in disbelief. "But for

them, representing their country is worth it."

Following the success of the Games, the federal government doubled its previous commitment to the Own the Podium program by \$11 million — for a total of \$22 million annual funding to winter sports. A further \$10 million will now go to the

identification and development of elite athletes — an unexpected coup for athletes after weeks of speculation that the end of the Games would mean the end of supporting Canadian sport.

Colleges are accustomed to getting the short end of the money stick — a result of being stuck in an obsolete trade-school brand for years, says Mark. If a college sports team was to get a higher level of equipment or resources to improve its game, it was likely coming from student fee hikes.



Juno Design © 2010

But Mark's hoping the surge of government funding, coupled with the greater academic muscle of colleges, will translate to improved athlete research and development.

Into the research

OTP's Top Secret used its \$8 million piece of the government pie to come up with high-end inventions like composite plates for Canadian snowboarders that would shave off precious thousandths of a second in Vancouver. One sport researcher to reap the benefits of the program's funding, Dr. Pierre Baudin, says OTP was the moment for which his "subtle sport" was waiting.

As head researcher for the National Training Centre and biomechanist at the University of Alberta, Baudin was thrilled when just over three years ago, the Canadian Curling Association asked him to lead the effort on testing the curling deliveries of national-caliber athletes. And thanks to OTP, he had an innovative \$100,000 facility to do it in.

"For a long period of time, there was very little money available for sports research, so the Own the Podium program was a godsend,"

Baudin recalls.

The researchers went back to basics: if the set up of the stone is wrong, then so are the athlete's mechanics. Bad habit can lead the curler's foot to sweep in a curved motion where it should be straight, Baudin says. But sharing discoveries like these could establish a clear set of practices that could change the game of Canadian athletes at every level.

"Research will mean that younger curlers won't have these idiosyncrasies, as a result, overall they will be better, more consistent," he says. "They will be able to deliver the rock under high stress situations, like throwing a shot draw for an Olympic goal medal."

A new hope

Athletes and their parents have habitually had to make a choice from an early age if they're able to commit the immense amount of time and energy it requires to become a professional athlete. But a specialty public high school in Markham has been training a new generation of Olympians for the past two years, "to help Canada get more kids on the podium," says Jason Sealy, athletic

director for Bill Crothers Secondary School.

Named for its co-founder and Olympic silver medalist of the 800-metre track at the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, Bill Crothers, the school touts its ability to engage students without forcing them to choose between sports or academics.

If Canada is to achieve its long-term goals for sports, Sealy says it needs to encourage the same. Schools, he says, have already recognized the importance of catering to the athlete. Heightened competition for students will make it so that soon, strength and conditioning coaches and state of the art facilities will be the norm at colleges, because students demand it. "The goal might be different, but sometimes the means can be the same," Sealy says.

Mark can attest to Bill Crothers' early success — in only their second year of competition, sports teams from the school have dominated the region and have already begun to discuss competing at a higher level.

"Generally, once a kid gets into high school, you can earmark them — see what their talent is and nurture them and by the time they finish high school they should be at their peak," says Mark. "That's how you grow the sport."

Colleges to the rescue?

Peter Donnelly, a University of Toronto professor of sports policy and politics, says Canada's model of relying on government funding cannot compete with the heavy corporate funding seen in countries like the United States, or with the aggressive recruitment of young athletes as in China. But he's critical of China's approach as well, saying Canada needs to distance itself from an elitist approach to providing funding.

"That doesn't help the rest of the society — the health and well-being of all Canadians should be of concern if there's public funds going into this," he says.

If Canada's poor funding model continues to be the case, we run the risk of alienating potential athletes that develop later in life or those without the resources to support their goals, Donnelly says. Colleges would be prime candidates for the kinds of "community sport development" research that could actively change the exclusivity that surrounds professional sports.

"We really need that kind of research," he says. "There could clearly be a place for colleges in this."

While elite athletes, though sporadically, receive bursts of funding from the government when the spotlight is friendly, the consensus among sports experts as to the future of sports research in Canada is clear. The pyramid of sport in this country needs to invert itself and foster a new generation from the bottom-up. Only then can we hope to own the podium. ☉

FACILITY FACELIFT

COLLEGES BAIT STUDENTS WITH NEW WORKOUT SPACES

BY ERIN DECOSTE



AS MATHIEU YUILL AND VISH AMIN MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH Centennial College's Athletic and Wellness Centre, they're met with snow crunching under heavy safety boots, yellow ladders leading to floors not yet built, broken tiles exposing the dirt below and the hum of equipment. And they couldn't be happier about it.

Yuill and Amin, employees for Centennial College's Student Association Inc. (CCSAI) are smiling as they survey the skeleton of the old athletic building.

Like Centennial, eight other Ontario colleges are upgrading and improving their athletic facilities with an eye on one prize — student recruitment.

"It will bring a desperately needed, beautiful athletic and wellness facility," says Penny Kirlik, executive director and CEO of the CCSAI. Built in 1974, Centennial's old facility was outdated and out of style — a relic compared to the new building. It's a story familiar to many post-secondary institutions.

The facility is completely funded by students, the result of a referendum that saw unprecedented turnout in 2006 asking all full-time students to pay \$75 a semester.

"Students don't normally get pumped up over anything. If you hold an election on campus, you'll get a five per cent voter turnout," says Yuill, communications manager for the CCSAI. "But (in) this referendum, 87 per cent voted yes for it, across

all campuses, and 18 per cent of the population came out. So that's pretty clear to us."

Centennial and others, including St. Clair in Windsor, Algonquin in Ottawa, Redeemer in Ancaster, Durham in Oshawa and Humber in Etobicoke, are renovating in hopes of widening the student recruitment net.

At Humber College, the sounds of band saws float up the staircase in the construction zone of the North campus' athletic centre. Students are met by the churning machines of a gym in limbo. Gym-goers sweat on treadmills and stationary bikes while basking in the sunlight that streams through the high windows accentuating the newly whitewashed walls. A blast of cold air from the adjoining room under construction cools down the runners who seem to be moving to the beat of hammers.

Rick Bot, assistant facility and program coordinator, walks through the revamped cardio space pointing out the renovations. Bot says he has already received positive feedback from prospective students and parents.



The new athletics & wellness centre at Centennial College will be completed by March 2011.

All concept art courtesy of CCSAI

A lot of kids check out what colleges have to offer in terms of athletic facilities and want to get their bang for the buck.

Jim Buck
athletic director, Loyalist College

"I've talked to a few people, parents whose kids are thinking of coming here," he says. "They went upstairs for a tour and they were very impressed by what we've expanded to."

Although the Humber renovations began in May 2009 and were originally scheduled to end in January 2010, delays arose due to problems with the steel girders and windows, says Doug Fox, athletic director.

But, however, says it's worth the wait.

"We've blown out walls and almost doubled it in size," he says. "We've got new equipment. Our old fitness studio is now going to be a high performance lab where our varsity athletes will be able to use that exclusively."

He says while all students will enjoy the benefits, kinesiology and hospitality, recreation and tourism students will now be able to enjoy the same level of equipment as some professionals.

The project at Humber is a \$5.5-million investment, with the college kicking in \$1-million of the tab. The other \$4.5-million is from students — resulting in a 14-year mortgage with no fee increases, Fox says.

At Niagara College, \$90-million is being spent for campus upgrades, \$40-million of which will fund the new athletic facilities, says athletic director Ray Sarkis.

The centre is due to open in August 2010 and will be twice as big as it is now, says Sarkis.

Other college programs will benefit directly from the upgrades, too. Like Humber, Centennial is using its spa management and physiotherapy students to incorporate wellness into fitness.

"This is not a muscle gym, it's not going to be all Lululemon," says CCSAI's Yuill. "Wellness is definitely the key to this building. We want as few barriers as possible to get students here."

Amin, special projects assistant for CCSAI, says while varsity athletes and police foundation students will always find the gym, "the point is to get everyone active."

Both Yuill and Amin are former students at Centennial. Amin was the student president when the referendum to renovate the centre was held. Both say their constituents demanded a higher standard.

"Students say 'we don't want an 'econo' gym, make it beautiful,'" says Yuill. "When it came time to make decisions, they're the ones who told us that 'yes, this is what we want.'"

And recruiters across the province say

customer demands are paramount in today's fiercely competitive college environment. For many, the way to success in academic recruitment was blazed when Belleville's Loyalist College renovated its fitness centre five years ago, prompting a swell of enrolment.

"Potential students are really astute these days," says Jim Buck, athletic director at Loyalist. "We'd be naïve to think that students strictly look at what the academic program is in terms of a campus visit.

"A lot of kids check out what colleges have to offer in terms of athletic facilities and want to get their bang for the buck. I'm sure that it's had a big effect."

The Loyalist centre now has the feel of a club, to which people are drawn. "There's hardly a quiet time in there, it's busy all the time. So that's great to see, it's great to see your students using it.

"In the past we just had a little room with free weights and a universal machine and no supervision — it was sort of come and go as you

please. Now the kids have to sign in and everything is monitored."

But there's still room for improvement.

Buck says he's been told the gymnasium was built as a temporary facility with plans to build something bigger and better down the road. "But here we are, all these years later, still in the same old gym and nothing in sight in terms of a new facility in the near future that I'm aware of."

Both Loyalist and neighbouring St. Lawrence College currently use "temporary" gyms.

Barry Smith, head coach of the men's basketball team at St. Lawrence Kingston, has wanted a new gym for the 17 years he has been there.

He says it is crucial to the success of his competitive athletes. "We try not to focus on where we're playing, but how we're playing," he says. "But if we could get something, that would help."

Smith has high praise for the school's new fitness centre, built in partnership with the YMCA about five years ago, but says the lack of floor space in the gymnasium is a concern.

At Loyalist, the varsity teams also play in a small space. Buck says even though the college's gym is cramped, athletes buoy their spirits by sprucing up the decor, with banners and lots of light.

And there's always the prospect of stretching their horizons at the campus fitness centre. ☺



Centennial's gym is a LEEDs gold standard building. The college is incorporating existing material from the old building into the new space.

Erin DeCoste

Artist rendering of Centennial's gym. The glass panels are imported from Spain and will fill the space with natural light.



HOCKEY NIGHT UNDER WATER

BY ADRIENNE MIDDLEBROOK



Miguel Agawin

THE PUCK HITS MY FLIPPERS AND MY SNORKEL FILLS with water. I float up to the surface of the pool just as the puck reaches the blade of my stick, but then a school of shark-speed players tangle around me and are fighting for the puck at my feet. I fix my mask, take a deep breath and dive back under the water, but the action is now 20 feet away . . .

I've been playing ice hockey since I was six. I consider myself an above average player. I'm strong on my skates and I've scored a few goals in my life. So when I read about underwater hockey, I was intrigued enough to try it out. I thought some of my hockey skills would apply to the underwater league but oh, was I ever wrong.



Miguel Agawin

PRE-GAME

I arrive at the Brampton Balmoral Community Centre at 8 p.m. on a chilly February evening. The thought of jumping into a pool isn't appealing when the thermometer is nudging -10 C outside. I haven't been swimming in a while but how hard can this be? I have 15 years of hockey experience — and I can hold my breath while driving past cemeteries.

After changing into a bathing suit, I make my way into the pool area and spot a tall, thin man unloading flippers from his bag.

"Are you with underwater hockey?" I ask.

He nods, smiles and introduces himself as Joe.

"I'm here to play with you guys," I tell him.

Joe sets me up with some flippers, a snorkel and a miniature, flat version of a hockey stick.

Joe is part of a Brampton-based group that plays underwater hockey every Tuesday and



Philippa Croome

Thursday — and now I'm going to try my best to play with them.

As I try on my gear, a man in a bathing suit places two metal planks about five feet in length at opposite ends of the pool for nets.

As Joe sets up, I notice he's sport-

ing a bathing cap with hard plastic ears. "Do I need one of those?"

"It's probably a good idea," he says as he hands me one of my own. "It protects your ears. You could potentially rupture an ear drum from the water pressure."

THE GAME



Miguel Agawin

Two teams of about five people each line up on opposite ends of the pool. I'm one of only two women playing.

"Ready . . . GO!" one of my teammates shouts. Before I know it my teammates shoot off the wall and both teams are halfway to the centre of the pool where the puck lies at the bottom.

I'm not prepared for the pure speed and oddness of this game. I find myself more often laughing than chasing the puck. Getting to the bottom of the pool is a challenge, especially when I'm being pushed out of the way by puck-hungry swimmers.

My team scores. I continue to struggle with my mask. We slowly make our way back to the opposite end of the pool and one of my teammates wheezes from being out of breath.

"Snorkeling is the biggest challenge for newcomers to the sport. Getting used to being underwater, getting to the bottom of the pool is also difficult," warns Joe.

Joseph Antonazzi has been playing underwater hockey for 20 years, even participating in a few national championships. My relative newness to this sport makes me feel less embarrassed about my lack of skill.

"Ready . . . GO!" It's another race to the

centre of the pool. I can see nothing but white water and flippers coming too close to my face for comfort.

"The things we do for beer," laughs Doug Sitter, another teammate. I knew alcohol had to be involved in this bizarre game somehow.

I learn that Doug is a deep-water diver and once held his breath for more than six minutes. That's one minute less than the deadline for brain damage.

I gasp for breath on the surface and feel like a fragile old lady.

"It took me about six months to get coordinated down there," says Jeff Stanhope, a student at Hamilton's Mohawk College who has represented Canada in underwater hockey championships.

"Men and women of all ages come out to play. We've had a 75-year-old man and a 14-year-old," says Antonazzi.

Seventy-five? I'm only 22 and I'm having major trouble.

Age isn't the only varying factor in the sport. The level of competition ranges too. The game is played recreationally as well as on the international stage.

"There's lots of little tournaments around southern Ontario and then we play pick up games once or twice a week," adds player Bonnie Chan, who has just returned to the game after having her second child. "My husband got me into playing about 10 years ago," says Chan, who has also played at a national level in the National Underwater Hockey Championship.

After almost an hour of fidgeting with my mask, trying to get to the bottom of the pool and staying there, it's time to hit the showers — and the pub.

POST-GAME

"I knew alcohol had to be involved in this bizarre game somehow."

A blister is forming on my big right toe from rubbing against the flippers and I'm exhausted, but otherwise unharmed.

Joe tells me to meet them at the pub around the corner where the group hangs out after games. I walk in to find the team sitting in a fairly empty pub around one big table, laughing and talking over pints.

"That was the craziest game I've ever played. You guys are amazing," I tell them. "What a quirky sport."

"We hate being characterized as a quirky sport," Joe laughs good-naturedly. "It would

be great for the sport to gain popularity so we could gather teams and eventually have whole leagues."

But Jeff Stanhope, who has been playing underwater hockey for 18 years, likes the fact the sport is not well known. "Some people think it should be in the Olympics, but I think it would just ruin it."

I leave the bar and walk into the cold air, my hair still damp and my body exhausted. Thinking about what I had just done, I shake

my head and laugh.

It was fun, challenging and definitely different but I don't think I'm ready to dedicate myself to being an underwater hockey champion anytime soon. Like most Canadians, I'll take ice over water, helmets over snorkels and skates over flippers, any day. ☺



Philippa Croome



A HEART STOPPING TALE

DEFIBRILLATORS SAVING ATHLETES' LIVES IN UNUSUAL PLACES

BY NICOLE MCISAAC

WHEN JOEL SCOTT'S HEART STOPPED, he found himself face down in a river in Mexico. He's alive today thanks to a defibrillator.

I never thought I had any problems before, afterwards I started to put things together. Getting dizzy while working out isn't normal.

*Joel Scott
cardiac arrest survivor*

The near-death experience came out of the blue. Scott has no family history of heart conditions and is in great physical shape — he had even been training for a half marathon, teaching snowboarding as well as interning at an outdoor adventure school, Summit College, in Huntsville, Ont.

The incident took place in Summer 2008, on day 86 of a 90-day whitewater training adventure through Canada and Mexico. Scott, then 24, and his fellow travelers had just finished paddling through some violent rapids.

"We were done all the hard stuff and [were] just kind of floating along and my heart decided to give out. My brother, who was kayaking with me, saw me freeze up and flip over."

The next moments Scott recalls only from stories that have been told to him by his brother and others who helped save his life.

His brother was able to quickly alarm the first aid raft, which by chance had fallen to the back of the group.

Also by chance, they were on a trip with the only adventure company in Canada that carries an automated external defibrillator (AED). Five years before, a five-year-old girl died of a heart attack during a family trip with the company.

"The owner [of the company, Esprit Whitewater Worldwide] felt so bad, but he became aware of the risks and never wanted something like that to happen again, so he bought a defibrillator and carried it with him on all the trips. It ended up saving my life," Scott says.

A dental surgeon had recognized Scott's

unstable heart beat in 2006 and brought attention to an enlarged muscle in his heart. After a multitude of tests, Scott's doctors gave him a letter saying that he was fine to resume his normal activities, which is just what he did.

According to the online medical reference site medicinenet.com, Scott's disease, Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy, is an inherited condition that often presents as an enlarged heart muscle and is the leading cause of sudden death in athletes. In a normal heart, the septum muscle is 15 millimetres, says Scott. His was double that.

Joanne Côté, manager of resuscitation and CPR instruction and training with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, explains that Scott's heart had gone into spasmodic mode, "fibrillating like a bowl full of jelly."

An AED helps to shock the heart back to its normal rhythm, says Côté. "The machine stops that bowl of jelly quivering — that ventricular fibrillation — it stops it and allows the natural cardiac cells, or natural pacemaker cells, to stop the chaotic activity and restart to a normal heart rhythm. You're actually doing the same thing as when your computer gets messed up. You're rebooting it."

For Scott, it was the intense physical activity that brought on his near-death experience. Blake Hurst, public safety education co-ordinator with Halton Emergency Medical Services, says most of the cardiac arrests that happen in Canada are related to physical activity, but that in children and youth, it can be spotted before it becomes fatal or near-fatal.

above:

Joel Scott has always been interested in extreme sports and had no reason to believe his heart would give out.

Courtesy Joel Scott

next page:

As part of the extreme trip with Esprit, all adventurers were taught proper first aid and life-saving skills, including Joel.

Courtesy Joel Scott

What happens during cardiac arrest?

- The heart starts beating **IRREGULARLY**, either **FASTER** or **SLOWER** and without immediate attention it cannot survive for more than **FOUR MINUTES** without CPR attention.

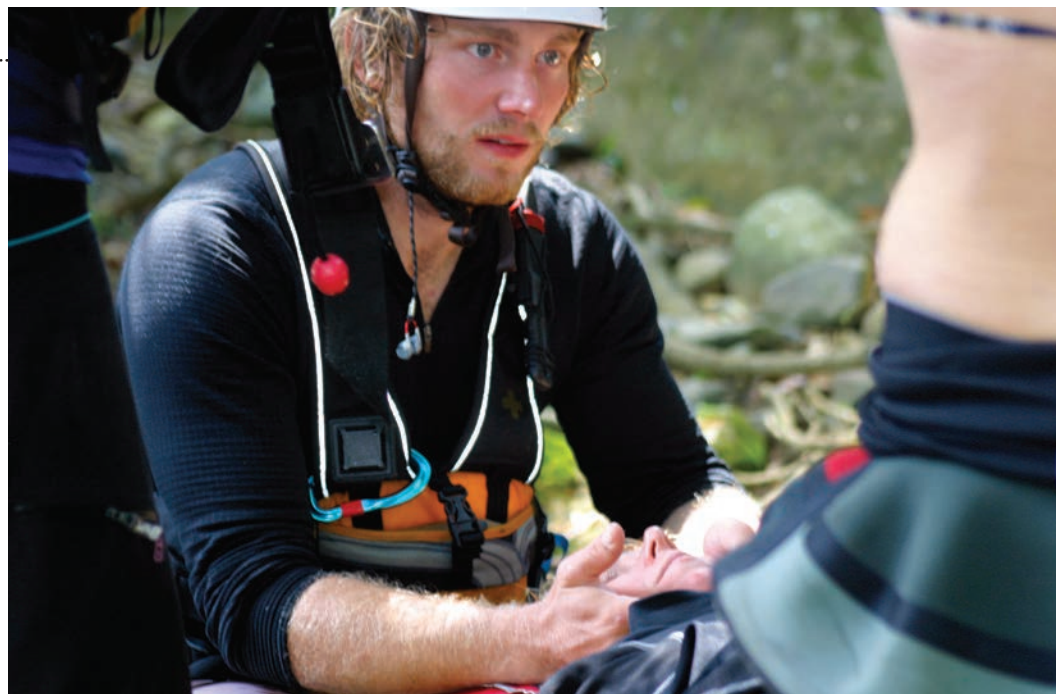
- During CPR, explains Joanne Côté, the oxygen in the blood is being pumped through the body to the heart, as well as the brain. **WITHOUT CPR**, someone only has a **THREE to FIVE PER CENT CHANCE** of surviving.

- For **EVERY MINUTE** without receiving CPR, or a restart to the heart's chaotic activity with an AED, a person's **CHANCE OF SURVIVAL** is **REDUCED BY 10 PER CENT**, and after ten minutes the chance of survival is minimal.

- In order to catch it before it gets to that point, teaching the **WARNING SIGNS** of inherited rhythm disorders **COULD PREVENT** cardiac arrest or **SUDDEN DEATH** in youth and teenagers.

Some symptoms of rhythm disorders:

- fainting due to physical activity or emotional distress
- dizziness during routine physical activity
- extreme shortness of breath – some say it feels like someone is sitting on their chest
- lightheadedness
- blurred vision



Recognizing this threat has led some schools in the OCAA to install AEDs in their facilities. But preparedness doesn't just come with having an AED installed. Proper CPR and First Aid training are included and mandatory for full-time athletics staff, says Mohawk athletics manager Laurie Cahill.

Any Mohawk College athlete or student who faints or shows signs of injury or illness is red-flagged and not allowed back into the facilities until they have a clean bill of health from a doctor, he says.

Halton EMS co-ordinator Hurst says for every 20 children or young adults who faint, one of those will have a serious heart condition that could lead to sudden death.

Hurst, who works closely with the Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes (SADS) Foundation, strongly believes that an AED is the last line of defence, and that awareness of symptoms saves lives. He is part of a campaign lobbying the Belgium-based International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation, which governs the way CPR is administered, to incorporate education of inherited rhythm disorders into all CPR training courses.

"When you use a defibrillator, the patient's dead, they're unconscious; not breathing, no pulse and we're hoping that the defibrillator can bring them back to life. Our goal is to not have the child dead in the first place," Hurst says.

While many institutions in the OCAA have an AED, and full-time staff and security are trained to use it, there's less training and education for preventing heart trauma before it strikes.

"When you take your First Aid, you're preparing yourself to respond to an emergency, you're not doing it for precautionary reasons," says Michelle McConney, athletic director at Georgian College.

Now Scott recognizes that before his ordeal, he was showing symptoms that something wasn't right.

"I never thought I had any problems before. Afterward, I started to put things together. Getting dizzy while working out isn't normal," he notes ruefully.

This is especially true in the case of athletes and children, warns SADS Foundation director Pam Husband. Complaining of dizziness or fainting is a warning sign of something more, but because athletic people are considered healthy, the signs generally go unacknowledged.

"They're at risk without knowing they're at risk."

Halton region is one of the first to have successfully installed AEDs in all of its public facilities, says Hurst. The Toronto EMS created a program Cardiac Safe City in 1998, which is responsible for installing AEDs in many public places such as arenas, recreation centres, shopping malls and theatres.

"We put a lot of emphasis on saving buildings," says Côté. "Why don't we put as much emphasis on saving the people who are in those buildings?"

"The education was never about how to use the fire extinguisher, it was about how to prevent the fire," says SADS director Husband, who hopes one day training to recognize the symptoms of sudden cardiac death will be as widespread as knowledge of fire prevention.

Today, Scott wears an implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (ICD) that detects the rhythm of his heart and can speed it up, slow it down, or shock it back to normal if it beats irregularly.

"I wouldn't let the fact that I have this problem stop me from doing anything . . . If I had the chance to go and climb Everest tomorrow, I wouldn't say no because of my heart." ©

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VINTAGE OCAA



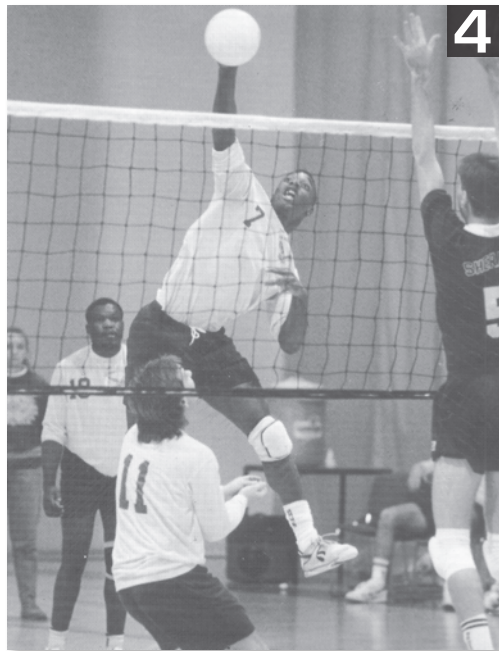
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3



4

1: Seneca Scout Karen Freund at the free throw line. Taken during the mid-'80s.

2: Durham Lord Glen Goodman takes a shot on goal. Taken during '92 - '93 season.

3: OCAA curlers Ron Marshall (left), Warren Rhude (middle), and Doug Deacon. Taken on Feb. 25, 1987.

4: Ken Phillips played for the Humber Hawks from '87 - '91.

all photos courtesy of OCAA

OCAA scoreboard '09 - '10



men's basketball

EAST	W	L	T	PTS
St. Lawrence (K)	17	3	0	34
Seneca	17	3	0	34
Fleming (P)	15	5	0	30
Algonquin	15	5	0	30
George Brown	13	7	0	26
Durham	9	11	0	18
Georgian	8	12	0	16
Cambrian	5	15	0	10
Centennial	5	15	0	10
Loyalist	4	16	0	8
La Cite	2	18	0	4

WEST	W	L	T	PTS
Humber	17	1	0	34
Fanshawe	14	4	0	28
Sheridan	13	5	0	26
Algoma	12	6	0	24
Mohawk	11	7	0	22
Niagara	9	9	0	18
St. Clair	6	12	0	12
Lambton	6	12	0	12
Redeemer	2	16	0	4
Sault	0	18	0	0

MVP



Hali Burns

courtesy of OCAA

women's basketball

EAST	W	L	T	PTS
Algonquin	15	1	0	30
George Brown	15	1	0	30
Seneca	12	4	0	24
Durham	9	7	0	18
St. Lawrence (K)	9	7	0	18
Georgian	6	10	0	12
Loyalist	3	13	0	6
Centennial	2	14	0	4
Fleming (P)	1	15	0	2

WEST	W	L	T	PTS
Sheridan	14	0	0	28
Humber	11	3	0	22
Fanshawe	9	5	0	18
St. Clair	8	6	0	16
Niagara	7	8	0	14
Algoma	5	9	0	10
Mohawk	2	12	0	4
Redeemer	0	14	0	0

2010 OCAA basketball champions:
Men's - Humber / Women's - Sheridan

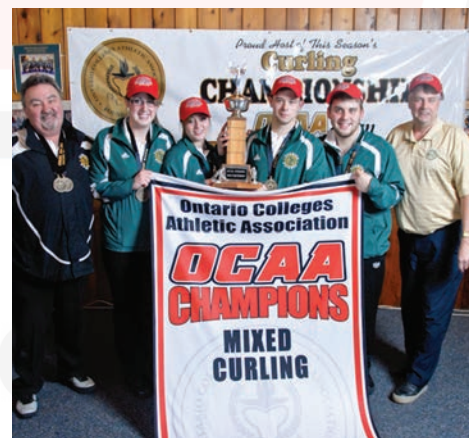
curling



Women's
Gold - Mohawk
Silver - Confederation
Bronze - Fleming (P)
*Vern Dow Fair Play Award - Fleming (L)



Men's
Gold - Fleming (P)
Silver - Niagara
Bronze - Fanshawe
*Jim Martin Fair Play Award - Mohawk



Mixed
Gold - Fleming (P)
Silver - Algoma
Bronze - St. Clair
*Hap Holman Fair Play Award - Fleming (P)



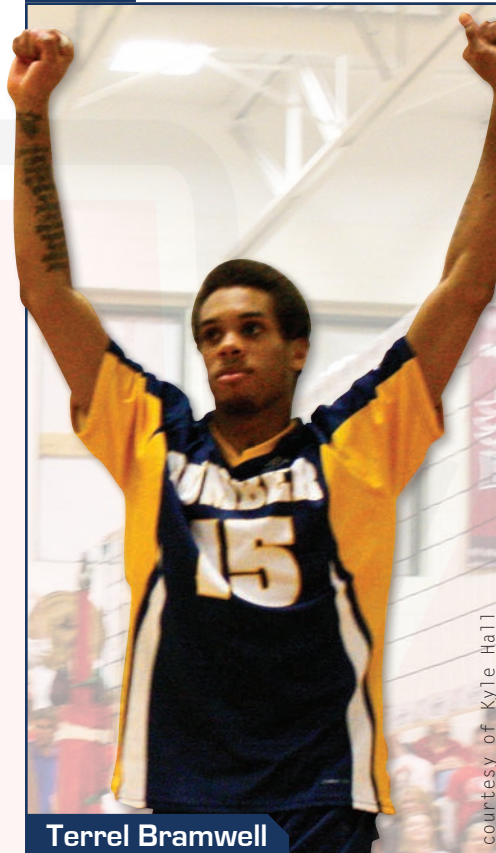


women's volleyball

EAST	W	L	PTS
Durham	17	3	34
Trent	16	4	32
Loyalist	15	5	30
Cambrian	14	6	28
Georgian	14	6	28
Seneca	12	8	24
La Cite	8	12	16
Algonquin	8	12	16
Fleming (P)	4	16	8
George Brown	2	18	4
Boreal	0	20	0

WEST	W	L	PTS
Humber	19	1	38
Nipissing	17	3	34
Mohawk	15	5	30
Fanshawe	12	8	24
Niagara	11	9	22
St. Clair	9	11	18
Candore	9	11	18
Sheridan	9	11	18
Redeemer	7	13	14
Sault	2	18	4
Lambton	0	20	0

MVP



Terrel Bramwell

courtesy of Kyle Hall

men's volleyball

EAST	W	L	PTS
Seneca	16	2	32
Durham	14	4	28
Loyalist	14	4	28
Algonquin	13	5	26
Trent	13	5	26
Fleming (P)	6	12	12
Cambrian	5	13	10
Boreal	4	14	8
Georgian	3	15	6
La Cite	2	16	4

WEST	W	L	PTS
Humber	14	2	28
Redeemer	13	3	26
Nipissing	12	4	24
Mohawk	10	6	20
Niagara	7	9	14
Fanshawe	7	9	14
Sheridan	7	9	14
St. Clair	2	14	4
Candore	0	16	0

2010 OCAA volleyball champions:
Men's & Women's - Humber

men's & women's indoor soccer

Men's 2010 provincial championship
and regular season results

Gold: Sheridan

Silver: Fleming

Bronze: Conestoga

EAST	CENTRAL EAST	CENTRAL WEST	WEST
1. Fleming (P) - 3-0	1. George Brown, 3-0-1	1. Sheridan, 3-0	1. Conestoga, 2-0-2
2. St. Lawrence (K) - 2-1	2. Seneca, 2-1-1	2. Confederation, 1-2	2. Fanshawe, 2-0-2
3. St. Lawrence (C) - 1-2	3. Centennial, 1-1-2	3. Humber, 1-2	3. Niagara, 2-1-1
4. St. Lawrence (B) - 0-3	4. Durham, 1-1-2	4. Georgian, 0-3	4. Redeemer, 1-3-0
	5. Canadore, 0-4-0		5. Algoma, 0-3-1

Women's 2010 provincial championship
and regular season results

Gold: Fanshawe

Silver: Humber

Bronze: Seneca

EAST	CENTRAL EAST	CENTRAL WEST	WEST
1. Fleming (P), 3-0	1. Seneca, 4-0	1. Humber, 3-0	1. Fanshawe, 3-0-1
2. St. Lawrence (C), 2-1	2. Durham, 3-1	2. Sheridan, 1-1-1	2. Conestoga, 2-1-1
3. St. Lawrence (K), 1-2	3. Centennial, 2-2	3. Georgian, 1-2	3. Niagara, 1-1-2
4. St. Lawrence (B), 0-3	4. George Brown, 1-3	4. Confederation, 0-2-1	4. Redeemer, 0-1-3
	5. Canadore, 0-4		5. Algoma, 0-3-1



coach's log

COACHING FOR THE RIGHT REASONS

I am proud to say I have been coaching women's basketball for over 20 years. I enjoy the roller coaster ride with every team I coach. I have the privilege of coaching many different levels of young women that love competition and to watch the friendships they acquire along the way grow.

We, as coaches, are tasked with producing the best team we can put forward. There are many factors that come into play when you are dealing with female student-athletes. What is in their heads depends on what they have experienced before they have become part of your team. Whether positive or negative, the influences can sway an athlete a certain way. These influences include family, friends and previous coaches.

As coaches know, each athlete has different traits, and team dynamics can make or break your team. You have to be able to talk, motivate, criticize and teach each athlete in a different manner. One of the biggest hurdles athletes have

to overcome at this level is the understanding that it is their responsibility to come motivated to compete. Playing sports is a privilege.

All athletes go through rough patches in their careers; but there are those that have to deal with grown up issues at a very young age. A young woman I was coaching lost her mom and I was truly amazed at how this athlete carried herself; she continued to play her sport and continued to take each day at a time.

As a coach, you wear many different hats. You are there for support and let your athletes know that if there is anything they need, you are just a phone call away. You need to know how your athletes react and deal with situations and use this to help them manage situations and continue to grow as people.

Your passion as a coach will shine if you are truly coaching for the right reasons. I know my passion for basketball was empowered by the coaches that have touched me as a player and have given me the support to continue



Kelly Dunham

Women's basketball head coach
Mohawk Mountaineers

to grow. Now as a coach, I hope I am able to provide the opportunity to other young women to grow and reach their potentials.



Cynthia Black

cross country runner
Humber College

IGNITING PASSION

I danced. I shouted. I notified family, friends, and Facebook. I thought to myself, this might be better than that marathon I did in Boston.

To say the least, I was honoured and thrilled when I found out I'd been selected to represent Humber College as a Coca-Cola sponsored torchbearer in the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Relay. What more could a runner ask for?

My excitement grew like wildfire over the next months – and Athens had not even lit the flame.

The knowledge of the event to come helped me through a personally challenging fourth season as an athlete and captain for Humber College's cross-country team.

I've been fortunate to have had a wonderful support system of teammates, coaches and athletic staff over the years, and this past season was no exception. We trained together, did our homework together, and pushed each other to do better. I'm proud of all we've accomplished

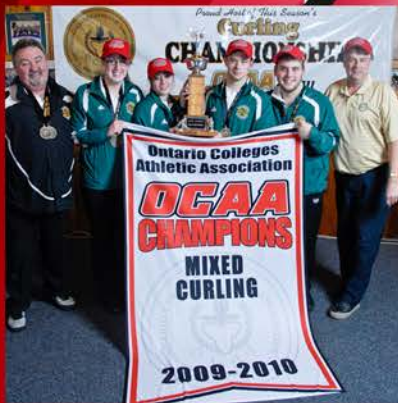
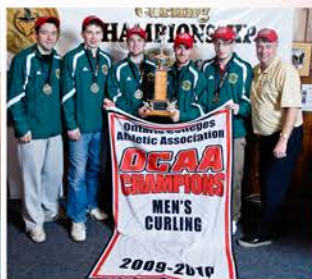
player's log

as a team. Yet on those extra tough days – and we've all had them – I had an extra light at the end of the tunnel, and the thought of that light travelling 45,000 km inspired me to keep giving a little extra each day.

By the end of the season, the team and I had grown stronger as a unit and as individual student-athletes. To top it all off, we even climbed a mountain in Banff, Alta. It was another fantastic season to remember.

Then it finally came at 8:53 a.m. Dec. 20, 2009 – the Olympic Flame. I stood on a road in Stoney Creek, Ont., with my torch ignited. This is where I fail to explain the feeling of peace, excitement, and the overwhelming emotion I felt. It's a feeling I intend to spread. With family, friends, relay officials and well-wishing strangers at my side, I ran 300 meters – flame held high. And it was better than Boston.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2010 OCAA WINTER SPORT CHAMPIONS



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Fanshawe
Fleming
George Brown
Humber
Mohawk
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