



ULU NEWS

ARCTIC WINTER GAMES
YELLOWKNIFE 2008

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 2008

*In today's
ULU news...*

Thrills and spills

Contingents in fight
for final medals ...
See pages 3, 7, 10

Eyes to 2010

Grande Prairie on deck
to host ...
See page 14

Yukon success

Team excels on
snow and ice ...
See page 12

MEDAL COUNT










Team	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
 Alaska	64	49	66	179
 NWT	33	35	32	100
 Yamal	44	32	15	91
 N. Alberta	24	31	19	74
 Yukon	24	20	29	73
 Nunavut	13	24	22	59
 Greenland	3	10	8	21
 Nunavik	6	5	7	18
 Saami	5	5	6	16



photo Marie Robillard

Logan Frederick Roots catches his breath after taking first place in the five-kilometre snowshoe race at the Yellowknife Golf Club.

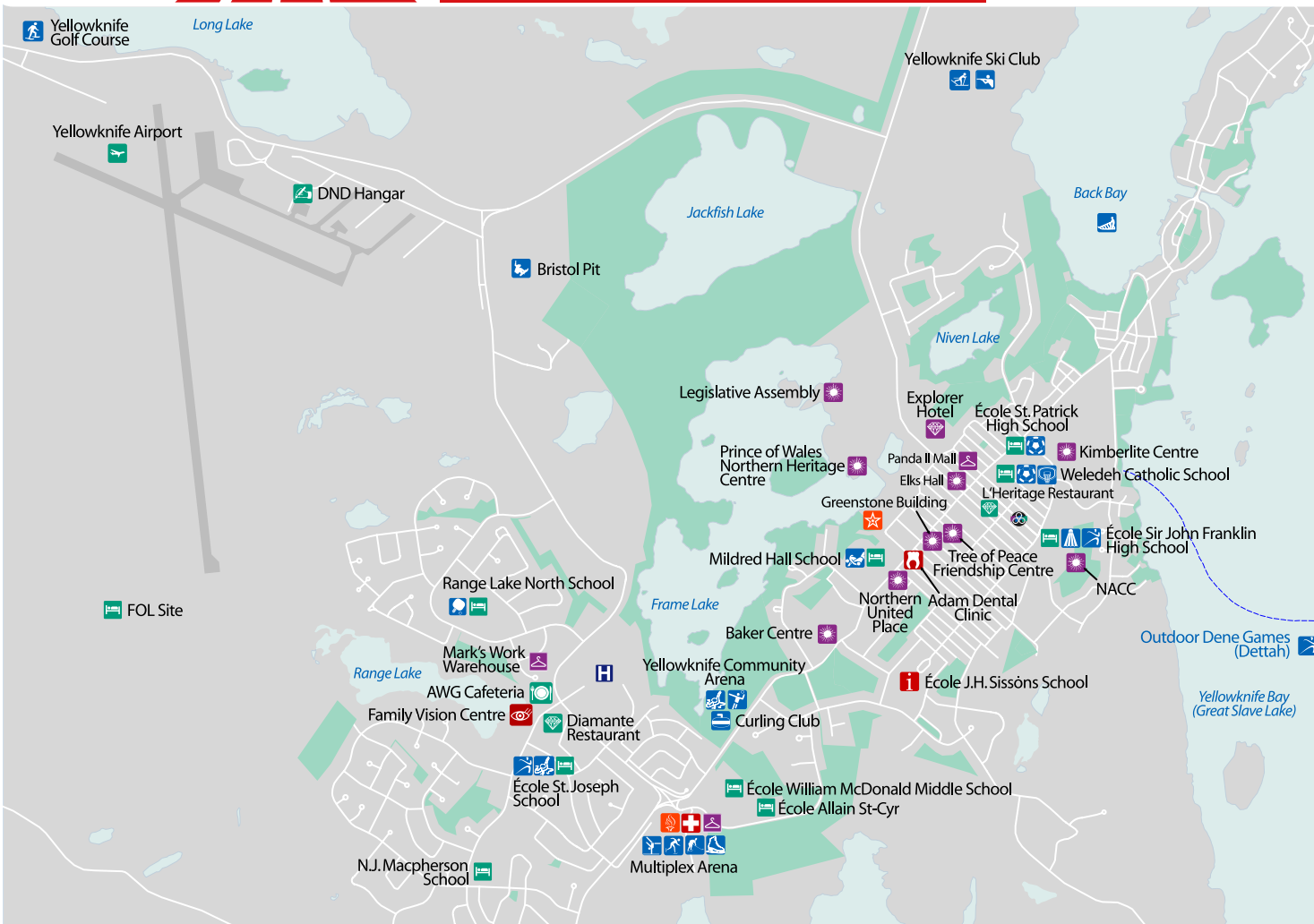
Also inside: day in pictures • games talk • official response

ARCTIC WINTER GAMES VENUE MAP

Map Sponsored By:



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Arctic Winter Games Venues and Events

- Arctic Sports
- Host Society Office
- Badminton
- Ceremonies
- Basketball
- Athletes Centre
- Biathlon
- Arrivals/Departures
- X-Country Skiing
- Registration
- Curling
- Accommodations
- Dene Games
- Cafeteria
- Dog Mushing
- VIP Lounge
- Figure Skating
- Cultural
- Gymnastics
- Games Gear
- Hockey
- VIP Centre
- Indoor Soccer
- Operations Centre
- Snowboarding
- Polyclinic
- Snowshoeing
- Emergency Dental Clinic
- Speed Skating
- Emergency Eye Clinic
- Table Tennis
- Volleyball
- Wrestling



ARCTIC WINTER GAMES
YELLOWKNIFE 2008

SCHEDULE OF SPORTING EVENTS – SATURDAY, MARCH 15

ARCTIC SPORTS - St. Joe's Gymnasium

Head Pull

10:00a.m.-1:00p.m. Open Male

Knuckle Hop

1:00p.m.-3:00p.m. Open Male

BADMINTON - Sir John Gymnasium

Gold, Silver and Bronze Finals

8:00a.m.-4:00p.m. Jr. Male/Female, Juvenile Male/Female

Singles, Doubles, Mixed, Courts 1-4

INDOOR SOCCER - St. Patrick's Gymnasium

Gold Medal Games

9:00a.m.-10:00a.m. Jr. Female

10:00a.m.-11:00a.m. Jr. Male

11:00a.m.-12:00p.m. Juvenile Female

12:00p.m.-1:00p.m. Juvenile Male

1:00p.m.-2:00p.m. Intermediate Female

CULTURAL SCHEDULE

Visual Arts "Creartik"

Elks Hall 10:00a.m.-6:00 p.m.

CLOSING CEREMONIES

Closing ceremony

Multiplex 7:00p.m.

Fireworks display

Frame Lake (behind Yk Arena) 8:15p.m.

Full schedule and results can be found at the Arctic Winter Games website awg2008.ca

Screaming to the finish



photo: Marie Robillard

DAILY WRAP-UP

Games reach fever pitch

Medal rounds draw big crowds around Yellowknife

by Lisa Scott

The bleachers were full all day Friday as medal round after medal round was held at sport venues across the city. After a week placed second in the medals to Alaska, Team NWT seemed poised to stay there into the last day of competition, despite Team Yamal nipping at its feet. If they manage to hold onto second following Saturday's medal rounds they'll best their third place finish at the Kenai Games in 2006.

It was hard to keep track of the team, with action happening constantly. Down on Back Bay Friday NWT dog mushers had no trouble garnering medals. As races wrapped up Friday NWT emerged as the top team. Stephanie Charlie won silver in the four dog 7.5-kilometre race, while Trista Beck won bronze. Beck also took a bronze in the five dog 10-kilometre race. Junior musher Alexis Campbell won gold in the six dog 10-kilometre race, while NWT teammate Jason Baxter won silver. For the last and longest run, the seven dog 13-kilometre race, Campbell took her second gold of the day and Baxter banked another silver. In the team competitions NWT took gold in both the four dog 7.5-kilometre and six dog 10-kilometre.

On the curling sheets the NWT boys team had a good run all week, making it into the semi-finals with the Yukon before losing 5-6. The team took a hard-fought bronze medal home from the Games.

The soccer pitch was the place to be Friday as the NWT junior boys and Yamal played an exciting playoff game to determine who went on to Saturday's final. After losing to Yamal the day before 3-4, the boys bounced back and striker Jan Barbier led them to a 3-2 win in

front of a roaring crowd.

Barbier called the match "really intense," crediting his winning goal to reading the moves of the Russian players and having the support of the hometown crowd.

The gold medal match goes today at 10 a.m. against Greenland.

"We're just going to do what we do and play very defensively," says the 16-year-old.

On the soccer court, NWT is on fire as the juvenile boys also made it into Saturday's gold medal match against Alberta, while the junior girls play for gold against Alaska.

As Friday night games continued, the girls hockey gold medal match started at the Multiplex arena to a packed and enthusiastic crowd of spectators.

The girls gave it their all, but couldn't come back against powerhouse Alaska, who went into the playoffs undefeated. In the end Alaska captured the golden ulu 3-1, after a scoreless third period. NWT Goaltender Tehnille Gard won the cheers of the hometown crowd as she made some incredible saves, but it wasn't enough to fend off Alaska's offense.

Nunavut

Over with Team Nunavut, Friday was also an exciting day as the junior boys volleyball team came up against Alberta in the gold medal match. This team was an exciting one to watch all week, pumping up the crowds and each other with loud cheers and lots of flag waving. They just couldn't pull it out when they needed to Friday night, losing to Alberta in three straight games.

At the curling rink earlier in the day, a week of curling wrapped up with the Nunavut boys team vying for the bronze medal with the NWT. Coach Peter Geikie said his team came a long way to get into the playoffs.

"We struggled in the beginning, but met as a team and refocused," he said.

Under the leadership of skip George Mackay the team placed fourth, just out of the medals after losing to NWT in a close match-up 4-6.

"The game went well, but we missed some key shots in the end," said third Ryan Geikie.

At the speed skating oval David Coulombe continued his record-breaking week with a gold in the 1,000-metre race. Teammate Sarah Ali took the silver medal in the junior girls 1,000-metre. Earlier in the week coach John Maurice could be seen training his athletes in relays, the events where he was really looking for Nunavut to place. Maurice got his wish with a silver in the boys 3,000-metre relay and



Alaska's Madeline Woodard and NWT's Paulina Ross battle it out in juvenile girls soccer Friday. Alaska won 2-1 to head into the gold medal game today.

a bronze in the girls 3,000-metre relay.

Table tennis playoffs were also held Friday and Nunavut's junior female doubles team of Mahik Havioyak and Pia Tikivik won an impressive bronze medal in a tough field. Pia came fourth in the junior singles division as well, while teammate Suzi Power took fourth for juvenile girls.

Arctic sports results were hard to come by Thursday and Friday and weren't available at press time.

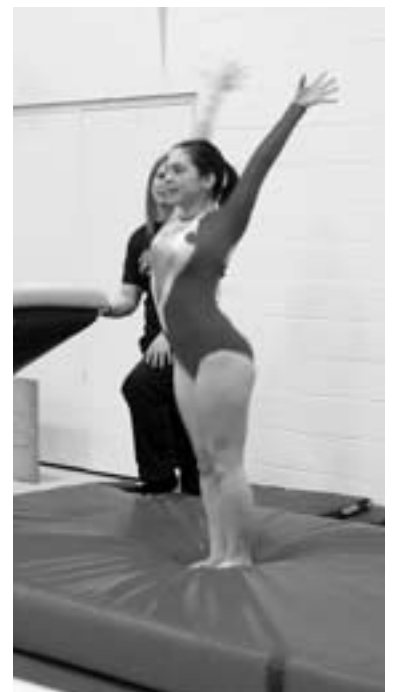
Nunavik

Team Nunavik entered the second last day of competition with just 16 medals. The Nunavik snowshoers finished up their week at the Yellowknife Golf Course with the long distance races. This was their first competition on snowshoes ever, so a seventh place finish by William Annanack in the five-kilo-

metre juvenile division and a fifth by Minnie Snowball were pretty good. Mary Tukulak wasn't able to finish her distance race, while Norman Angnatuk did not start due to a calf injury sustained in the sprint races.

Dene Games results trickled in on Friday from the venue. The overall scores showed some great results for Nunavik as Madeline Annanack won the junior female bronze medal. Teammate Sandy Annanack won junior male gold after dominating the week's competition. Ned Gordon also scored a silver in the open male category.

On the badminton court Noah Annanack entered the semi-finals strongly for Nunavik, but results were not available at press time. Badminton finals will be held today. Annanack and doubles partner Jari Leduc made it all the way to the semi-finals before losing to Alberta.



Nunavut gymnast Tera Yarema competes in the vault Thursday.



Team NWT's Lacey Taylor-Payne chases the puck past Team Alaska's Amanda Rae Pett during the gold-ulu match against Team Alaska.

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Monday, March 10 at 5:30 pm MT
hosted by Rassi Nashalik and Nadira Begg

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Weekdays at 4 and 5:30 pm MT
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CBC News: Northbeat
Weekdays at 6 pm MT
hosted by Nadira Begg



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hosted by Betty Autut

Daily broadcasts to the **Yukon**, 4 pm PT
hosted by Patti-Kay Hamilton



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Visit our site to see pages devoted to coverage of the games, a broadcast schedule and photo gallery including the hot pins of the day!

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EDITOR'S COMMENT

2008 Games a shining success

Competition, culture and friendship
all meet under the northern lights

with Chris Puglia



ber of teams attending has increased from three to nine, each with its own strengths, making for exciting and passionate competition.

Teams like Yamal and Saami have expanded their participation for these Games. Both competed in team sports for the first time. The Saami's intermediate soccer team and Yamal's junior boys soccer team entered competition as unknowns.

Despite playing under rules they were unaccustomed to and playing against some very experience soccer squads, the Games were a tremendous success for both teams, with both making the medal rounds.

Team Yamal played for bronze after a heartbreaking late goal in the second half of the semi finals saw them fall to Team NWT. Team Saami wowed crowds with their technical skill, which carried them to the gold medal round after only one loss in the round robin.

In Basketball, Yamal's junior girls team

surprised the competition, blazing through the tournament and going undefeated into the gold medal game. The young team put up 377 points in four games, outscoring the second place Team NWT by more than 100 points. By the end of Friday team Yamal had accumulated more ulus than in their previous two Games appearances combined.

Nunavut saw sweeping improvements this year. They played for gold in both mens volleyball and basketball, their best result in both team sports. The team also had improvements in speed skating, table tennis and Arctic sports.

This being the fifth time Yellowknife has hosted the Games, the organizing committee went all out to make it as memorable as possible. Alumni from previous Games dating to the original 1970 Games were in attendance. At the opening ceremonies these athletes passed the torch to one of the Games' founding fathers, former NWT commissioner Stuart Hodgson, who lit the giant cauldron.

Pieces of these Games will also be carried well into the future. The first-ever commemorative book with photos and information from the past 20 Games was produced. As well, the Games torch, designed by Yellowknife's Janet Pacey, will go on to be used during future Games.

Once again the Arctic Winter Games have embodied and epitomized the true spirit of the North. Legions of dedicated volunteers, fierce yet friendly competition, colourful cultural displays and meeting friends new and old will be among just a few of the lasting memories of 2008.

This is the third Games I have been involved in as a journalist and editor and I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of in such a momentous and amazing event.

Congratulations to all the athletes and performers who gave their all this year and have a safe journey home.

See you at the 2010 Games in Grande Prairie, Alta.



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DAILY WRAP-UP

Yamal battles for second

Saami and Greenland face off in golden soccer showdown

by Jennifer McPhee

In the last two Arctic Games combined, Team Yamal brought home 79 medals. This year, Yamal tripled the size of its contingent, and racked up 91 medals by press time yesterday.

Ninety-one seems to be a lucky number for Team Yamal. Its junior girls blazed through their final basketball game yesterday winning the gold ulu with a score of 91-60 against Team Yukon.

After the game, the girls said they were disappointed that they'll be too old to return to the 2010 Games, and hope their younger sisters will take their places. Speaking through a translator, they said they were impressed by how none of the athletes at the Games held grudges – something that's quite different from what happens at home.

Yamal's junior boys soccer team was shut out of the gold medal round by Team NWT yesterday. Jan Barbier of Team NWT scored a late game goal, breaking a 2-2 tie. The Yamal boys were "frustrated" by this turn of events, but after an inspirational speech from their coach, the players turned their frustration into motivation and won the bronze medal round 3-2 against Team Yukon.

Yamal led 2-0 for most of this intense game, but Team Yukon suddenly scored two quick goals during the final few minutes. The game went into overtime, and Ivan Timofeev scored the final goal. The last few minutes of the game defined both games, said Timofeev.

Also yesterday, Yamal swept the open male sledge jump category in Arctic sports. Already a two-time sledge jump champion, Rodion Taligin now exits the 2008 Games with a third gold ulu, leaping 530 sledges. Oleg Ivantsiv took the silver ulu; Aleksandr Longortov won bronze; and Pavel Laptander placed fourth.

Team Yamal entered the 2008 Games not expecting to win any medals in snowboarding. But Yamal snowboarder Evgeniy Ivanov won his third snowboarding medal today – the bronze ulu in the quarter-pipe



photo: Jennifer McPhee

Yamal's junior girls celebrate winning gold in basketball yesterday afternoon. From left to right: Ekaterina Borovikova, Anna Glukhoverya and Aleksandra Mirzaeva.

juvenile male category.

Yamal's confidence in table tennis wasn't unfounded as the team took eleven medals in the table tennis finals on Friday, six of them gold.

Saami chef de mission Aslak Paltto was finally able to breathe yesterday because all the cross-country ski events were over. Team Saami's 24-member cross country ski crew won 16 medals over the course of the games: five gold, five silver and six bronze. "We're

all happy now," said Paltto. "It's all over and it's gone very well."

Yesterday was a memorable day for the Saami intermediate girls soccer team, which heads into the gold medal round after defeating Team Alaska 2-0 in overtime in the semi-finals.

Coach Bengt Are Jensen was so nervous he felt sick during the hours leading up to yesterday's game. Jensen told the girls they would win as long as they stayed

calm, and that's exactly what they did, he said.

Winning yesterday's game "was the best feeling ever," said Saami soccer player Kare Brita Eire. Heidi Andreassen played hard throughout the game, but couldn't play in the final few minutes because she was so nervous, she said. Winning was a tremendous relief, said the tired Saami.

The Saami girls will now face off against Team Greenland for

the gold ulu. Greenland's girls beat Team Yukon 2-1 yesterday after a close game that ended in a shoot-out. The team has now corrected minor mistakes made in earlier matches, and had control of the ball for almost the whole match yesterday, said chaperone Arina Kleist.

Greenland padded their ulu count on Friday following the table tennis finals. The team added five medals to its count, including two silver and three bronze.



Yesterday's winners

- Aurora Nind and Anika Affleck, *Yellowknife*
- Donovan Worsley, *Yellowknife*
- Emily Smith, *Yellowknife*
- Tyler Pilling, *Fort Simpson*

There will not be a scavenger hunt on Saturday. Congratulations to all the super sleuths who solved the riddles and earned themselves a pin.

SCAVENGER Hunt

*Spring has sprung- there are RAVENS about,
Each day there will be TEN for you to scout out.
Not those feathered black birds you see about town,
These large COLOURED raven statues don't fly around.*

*Why HUNT for these birds you all want to know?
Why subject yourself to RUN through the snow?
Because on FOUR of the ravens a ribbon you will find,
That you can exchange for an Arctic Winter Games PIN -
one of a kind.*

*For only FIVE DAYS you will have a chance to seek,
These big Northern birds decorated like FLAGS from tail to beak.*

*You will find the hints in the ULU NEWS,
You will have from TEN to FIVE daily to solve all the CLUES.*

*This is the Arctic Winter Games - get out and have FUN!
The PINS are all unique; you get the only one,
To find a hidden raven and collect a priceless pin.
Remember there are only TWENTY pins available to win.*

*If you find a prized ribbon you'll be the envy of the town,
Claim your prize at the Pin Table in the Athletes Centre located
downtown.*

*Lucky Winners will be named in the Ulu News,
As the sharpest and the fastest to solve all the clues.*

Raven artists

- Donna Shreiner
- Ann Timmins
- Shawna Lampii-Legaree
- Rose Scott
- Shawn Mackenzie
- Bonnie Madsen
- Astrid Kruse
- Terry Pamplin
- Vivian Gustafson
- Jordan Martin (Carver)

THE DAY IN PICTURES



Team Alaska celebrates after receiving their gold ulus after their win against Team NWT Friday night.



Zack Bursell of Team Alaska crosses the finish line in the five-Kilometre snowshoe race at the Yellowknife Golf Club Friday.



photos Merle Robillard

Ryan Bachli of Team Yukon competes against Anders Jensen of Team Greenland (not Pictured) in the junior male table tennis semi-final at Range Lake North school during the Arctic Winter Games.



photo Lisa Scott

Team Nunavut enters the court for the junior boys gold medal volleyball match.

THE DAY IN PICTURES



Logan Andrew of Team NWT competes in the snowboard quarter-pipe at Bristol Pit yesterday.



Lonny Mitchell Booshu of Team Alaska competes in the sledge jump competition at Ecole St. Joseph.



Trista Beck of Team NWT starts the five dog, 10-Kilometre juvenile dog sled race on Back Bay.

AROUND THE GAMES

Alaska dominates Games

Alberta and Yukon duke it out for fourth place

by Daniel T'seleie

Yesterday was the last day for most events, and the competition was fierce. Landon Schoorlemmer of Team Alberta North stepped up for his last speed skating races, and with his time of one-minute 46.68 seconds he broke the AWG record time in the juvenile male 1,000-metre event.

There's a catch, though. "I broke it, but David Coulombe from Nunavut, he beat the record, too," Schoorlemmer said. Coulombe's time of one-minute 44.2 seconds left Schoorlemmer with the silver, but he holds no grudges. "He beat me fair and square." Schoorlemmer is happy to leave the Games with three silver ulus, one gold and a new AWG juvenile male 500-metre record that he set on Tuesday.

Alberta's junior female curlers made it to the gold medal round yesterday, after a week of battling on the sheet. The medal final against Team Yukon was no less intense.

"You really couldn't miss a shot," said second Stephanie Powell. They hit the right shots and secured the gold with a final score of ten stones to nine. The team is happy with their performance throughout the week. "Every game we had was pretty good," said third Nicole Phillips.

Silver for the males

The Team's junior male curlers also made it to the gold final yesterday, but wily Yukoners stole the gold and left Alberta with the silver.

"They played really well," said skip Graham Powell. "They got the rocks in good places."

In other round robin news, Team Alberta North's bantam male hockey team won the gold ulu in the final against Team Yukon. "It was a lot of hustle out there, we needed to work hard for it," said team captain and game MVP Tyrin Wiebe. It was 3-2 for the Albertans after the end of the second period. "After that we basically took it," Wiebe said. The final score was 6-3. It's an impressive win for a team with no prior experience playing together. "Monday was the first game we ever played together," Wiebe said.

Team Yukon's curlers took some time to adjust to the sheets here in Yellowknife. According to Yukon curlers Whitehorse has



Team Yukon's junior male curlers check their gold ulus for authenticity at yesterday's medal ceremony. The team defeated Alberta North in the final yesterday after a week of competition. The team, from the left, is: Will Mahoney, Nicholas Koltun, Thomas Scoffin and Mitch Young.

some of the best ice in Canada, but after some practice both the junior males and females made it to the gold finals yesterday. "It was tough. The first half was pretty tight," said Thomas Scoffin, junior male skip.

They pulled it all together for a final score of 11-6 and a gold ulu. The junior females also had a tough game in their final against Alberta. "It was really close," said third Chelsea Duncan. "[Alberta] had to make their last shot, otherwise we would win," said skip Sarah Koltun. Alberta made the shot and took the gold with a final score of 10-9.

Team Yukon also had a good day in dog mushing. Racers Rachel and Benjamin Kinvig won gold and silver, respectively, in the five dog 10-kilometre juvenile co-ed event.

It was a long week for Alaska's female hockey team. But after

keeping the pressure on Team NWT last night they managed a 3-1 win and will bring home a gold ulu.

The fourth day of competition brought Alaskan snowboarder Sparky Kesler her fourth ulu. Her solid score of 21.6 in yesterday's quarter-pipe event was more than enough to shut out the competition, with silver going to Alberta North's Nicole Borle and her score of 16.5. It's Kesler's fourth ulu, and third gold, of these Arctic Winter Games.

The American riders secured a total of five ulus in the quarter-pipe, bringing their snowboarding ulu count to 16.

The junior female volleyball team had an exceptionally strong week, and entered the gold final undefeated in the 20 sets they played prior. They lost their first set in the final, but managed to



photos: Daniel T'seleie

Chris Stone of Alberta North gets into position for a 1,500-metre race yesterday.

beat Alberta North 3-1. "It was great. [Alberta] played really awesome," said outside hitter Lauren Fulton. She entered the game confidently due to the teams

performance. Fulton credits the victory to the teams strong defense, blocking and, of course, their coach.

— with files from Lisa Scott

GAMES Talk

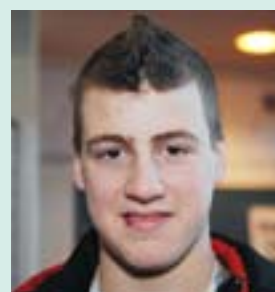
What was the highlight of your Arctic Winter Games 2008?



Rachael Pope, 18, speedskater, Alaska
Competing in speedskating because I dropped 22 seconds off the 1,500-Metre race this year.



Alexis Campbell, 15, dog mushing, NWT
Winning 3 gold medals in dog mushing.



Burt Stephens, 16, hockey, Yukon
Playing in the gold medal midget hockey game.



Madeline Annanack, 18, Dene games, Nunavik
Getting the bronze medal in stick pull.



Christina Glenzel, 12, Dene games, Alaska
Having fun and enjoying all the events.

DAILY WRAP-UP

Playing it by the book

Refereeing AWG 'once-in-a-lifetime opportunity'

by Jennifer McPhee

When the Arctic Winter Games Host Society asked Edmonton-based Stu Murray to referee soccer at the Arctic Winter Games, he wasn't even sure what the Games were.

Murray thought the Games were a tournament between the NWT and the Yukon, with the possibility that Nunavut would be there. He was blown away when he realized the Games brought together teams of athletes from around the circumpolar world for a large-scale event with a 38-year history.

"It's incredible," says the soccer referee-in-chief. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that's been fantastic."

Murray – who has been a referee in Edmonton for 26 years – says all the athletes desperately want to win, but still show a lot of respect for each other. Keeping the athletes in check was tougher early in the week because of their excitement level. They were feeling each other out, and were sometimes frustrated by other teams' different playing styles.

The Europeans – especially the

Greenland players – control the ball more, he says. "The Greenland [junior boys] team controls the ball 75 to 80 per cent of the time," he says. "It's incredible"

On Tuesday, a mid-game skirmish erupted between Team Yamal and Team Yukon junior boys players and the Yukon player involved ended up with a red card.

"There was a little bit of pushing," he says. "We dealt with it through cautions and ejections. There were more cautions and ejections during the first couple of days; then everyone seemed to settle down."

Hard, but fair

Murray was impressed by all the teams, but the Saami intermediate girl's soccer team stood out. "They are talented and play the game hard and fair," he says, adding that their coach was also really friendly.

Compared with other tournaments he's been to, the friendliness factor at these games was definitely above average. "The Games could be advertised as the friendly games," he says.

Officiating the competition was great, but it wasn't the highlight of his trip. The best part was hanging out with all the referees from

different contingents. Every night, they held a technical meeting over a soda, "if you know what I mean," he says. "I'm here for eight days, so I'm going to have some fun."

Badminton umpire Paul Gowdie from the Yukon also enjoyed meeting colleagues from the Yukon, NWT, Alberta and Greenland. There was also "one Newfie" officiating the badminton matches, he says.

This is Gowdie's second time officiating at a major sporting event, and so it helps to meet other officials he'll encounter again at other events in the future, he says. He's received good feedback from his peers, and he can tell the athletes are learning what professionalism means.

The Games provide everyone with a chance to "learn who we are, what our competition is like, what level we are at, and where we need to improve," he says. "It's been a great experience."

Sometimes it's tempting to coach players from his own contingent, but he knows it's his job to remain neutral. "Part of me wants to coach," he says. "You want to talk to the players and give them some pointers, but that's not your business."

Gowdie and Murray are just



photo Jennifer McPhee

Soccer referee-in-chief Stu Murray says the highlight of the Games for him was getting to know other officials.

two of many officials offering up their skills for free at this year's Games. Their contribution is critical, says host society president Cathie Bolstad.

"Running the Games needs volunteers," she says. "We also need people who understand the Games. It's really important for us."

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CONTINGENT PROFILE

Ice and snow bring the gold

Team Yukon praises 'world-class' coaches, facilities

by Daniel T'seleie

Take a look at the ulu tally for Team Yukon and you'll notice one thing; the vast majority of the team's wins are in snow and ice sports. Some would attribute this to the athletes' home climate.

"We have a longer training season," says quadruple gold cross-country ski uluist Dahria Beatty.

Cold weather is not the only factor at play in the success of the team. "We have really good facilities, and lots of coaches," Beatty says. "Our head coach is a former Olympian."

Ryan Burlingame, triple gold uluist in senior male ski-biathlon, agrees that the "amazing" training facilities in Whitehorse have helped prepare the team for competition in Yellowknife.

"Our trails, I would say, are world class. Our trails prepare us for just about anything," he says.

The combination of flat and hilly runs have left the seasoned Yukoners more than ready for the courses at the Yellowknife ski club. "The only thing that might have given me a scare was the short penalty lap," Burlingame says.

When biathletes miss shots they must ski around a penalty lap,

Our trails prepare us for just about anything

which adds to their total time. Burlingame says the "tight corners" on the 2008 AWG penalty lap were hard to negotiate at speed.

It's not just Yukon skiers and ski-biathletes who are excelling. The speed skaters have also benefited from their facilities, coaches and clever practice techniques.

"Being in the junior male division I'm always the last on [the ice]," says Troy Henry, quadruple gold speed skater. Competing later in the day means skating on ice that is, "beaten up and rutted up," Henry adds. He takes this into account during practice. "When you're training you don't always search out the best track and the good ice," Henry says. "It's good to train on bad ice."

Knowledge and skill doesn't come easily. "I wasn't much of a skater when I first started," Henry

says. "I just had lots of determination and wanted to win."

Determination is right. At his second Arctic Winter Games in 2004 Henry won four gold ulus, but it wasn't easy. "I did that with a broken arm," Henry says. The modest skater says the cast wasn't much of a handicap, but still had an effect. He says skating is similar to running, you need your arms for torque. "If you don't have the arm swing when you're running it doesn't work."

That wasn't the only competition in which Henry and the Yukon speed skating team had to overcome adversity. In the 2006 Games an unexpected pile-up during a race crippled the four-man relay team. "One of my teammates got a huge cut in his arm," Henry says. "It ended up being a three person relay team, and we ended up winning."

In the end it's not about the ulu count. These young athletes are happy to be here and engage in some friendly competition. Henry's attitude sums it up. He held four Arctic Winter Games speed skating records in the juvenile male division until this week. All four records were broken, but Henry is happy for the new record holders. "Hats off to them," he says.



photo Daniel T'seleie

Ryan Burlingame gets ready to wax up his skis for competition earlier in the week. He represents Team Yukon, who performed extremely well in ski, snowshoe, biathlon and skating events.



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Photo: Ron Rose

AROUND THE GAMES

International committee holds line on future changes

No upheavals expected for 2010 in Grande Prairie

by Daniel T'seleie

A lot has changed since the Arctic Winter Games started as the polar region's premier sporting event.

International Committee president Gerry Thick says he has seen "huge changes" since he took the top job in 1996. "We have more sports, more culture, more kids."

With a long list of events ranging from the traditional to the modern, sports have been added and removed to keep with the scope of the Games – decisions under the jurisdiction of the IC. A recent example is the 2006 Games where – to help reduce the growing number of athletes – the peewee division was eliminated from hockey competition.

However, plans for 2010 Games do not include any effort to reduce or add events to this year's competition schedule. "I don't anticipate any changes," Thick says.

Aside from deciding the fate of sports involved in the Games and

awarding the coveted event to bidding communities, the IC is also responsible for ensuring the Arctic Winter Games maintains its vision.

"The International Committee is the keeper of the Games," says Thick. "Our job is to ensure minimum standards, ensure that the Games are run according to our goals and objectives." By minimum standards, Thick means that food, lodgings and other things that affect quality of life for the athletes must be adequate.

The goals and objectives of the committee largely revolve around "mass participation" of Northern athletes in the Games.

Ensuring mass participation is not as easy as it sounds. Part of the IC's job is making sure teams don't bring athletes of too high a calibre – Olympians for example.

"We try to ensure that the competitions are competitive," Thick says. After all, the Arctic Winter Games were born out of the need for Northern athletes with limited training facilities to compete against others from similar back-



photo Daniel T'seleie

Marilyn Neily is a member of the Arctic Winter Games International Committee. Ten IC reps have been out watching the events this week and, among other things, are responsible for deciding who will receive the coveted Hodgson Award.

grounds and areas. "We're hoping that these kids have a major Games experience that they wouldn't have [without the AWG]."

There are ten IC reps and each is responsible for ensuring that the, "standards of the Games are upheld," says Marilyn Neily, an IC

member from Nunavut. To confirm that the minimum standards have been upheld the reps must speak frequently with the athletes themselves. "They're our best judges," Neily said. She has been discussing food, lodgings, transportation and other things with the athletes.

So how do these Games chalk up? "This host society has worked really hard getting ready for the 2008 Games," Thick says. The minimum standards have certainly been met, Thick said. Neily agrees that these Games are well done. "The volunteers are fabulous," she adds.

The big decision

The IC is not just some watchdog keeping tabs on the Games. The reps are also responsible for deciding which lucky contingent will receive the Hodgson Award, a prize for sportsmanship. Neily says the athletes at these Games have gone above and beyond the call for courtesy, both on and off the court. When leaving a venue earlier this week a random athlete stopped

and offered to help her carry a large box. "You don't always get that in everyday life," Neily said.

Just because things are going smoothly doesn't mean the IC will be sitting on their hands. Sometimes change is necessary, and The IC has been pushing for more culture since 1988, Thick says, and with designated cultural reps from each contingent the results are evident at these Games.

But the IC is not trying to bring culture to the organizational forefront. "It's a sporting event and a sharing of cultures, but it is a sporting event and not a cultural event," Thick says.

Neily agrees that the cultural aspect is important, adding an "extra dimension" to the Games, but says this isn't limited to organized performances and demonstrations. The "cultural interchange" between athletes in everyday competition and Games life is an integral way for the competitors to learn about each other. "The emphasis here is on fun in a competitive atmosphere," she says.



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AROUND THE GAMES

May the torch be passed

Athletes village, freestyle skiing in the cards for 2010 Games

by Lisa Scott

It seems like the 20th Arctic Winter Games just started, but it's already time to pass the torch to the next host society – Grande Prairie, Alta.

The 2010 Games were slated for Greenland, but the Danish province bowed out of hosting and the International Committee approached Alberta to bid for the Games. The city of 50,000, just north of the 55th parallel, beat out Peace River to become the most southerly host society in the history of the circum-polar event.

More than 40 volunteers from the Alberta city swarmed Yellowknife this week in an attempt to learn from these Games and take that knowledge into 2010. Once back at home, host society president Debbie Reid says the debriefing and lesson learning will begin.

Right from the start Reid has been impressed with the host society. President Cathie Bolstad was on the phone to Reid as soon as the city won its bid and the Grande Prairie delegates have been welcomed here with open arms.

The last time Alberta hosted wasn't long ago, as Fort McMurray opened its doors to Northern Athletes in 2004. Slave Lake held

the Games in 1994. These were the largest Games of the time, with 20 sports and 1,600 participants.

As the Games enter their third decade, worry about the increasing size has been an issue as a limiting factor in who can host them. The dual bid of Hay River and Fort Smith, NWT, lost out to Yellowknife for these Games due to the limited facilities and decision by the International Committee to no longer allow split host communities.

Looking for support

Reid hopes that by raising the profile of the Games in the eyes of the provincial and federal government, more support will be given to smaller communities wishing to host.

"It's about raising awareness in the governments that need to support them, trying to work with [smaller] communities to find ways to make it happen," she says.

She emphasizes the importance of each host making the games not "bigger and better, but different" and unique to their own community. She admits that the games really can't get any bigger.

"We pay homage to those that created these Games and more importantly we'll try to raise the profile of these Games to a stan-

dard so that we can give them back to a smaller community," says Reid.

That hope won't come to fruition for 2012, as Whitehorse has already won the bid for the Games following Alberta.

As athletes go home from these Games, preparation for the next will already be in motion. With a history of hosting the Canada Winter Games and various international sports events, Grande Prairie has all the infrastructure it needs, though there are plans to build a permanent half-pipe for the snowboard competition.

Dog mushing will still be held, Northern Alberta can get winter temperatures almost as nasty as Arctic contingents are used to, freezing up the lakes for the sport.

While Reid says the 2010 Games will be the same size as 2008, her society has been in talks with the International Committee to add freestyle skiing as a demonstration sport. Downhill skiing will also return to the Nitehawk Ski Area with 145 metres of vertical. With inflation and an extra sport, the cost of the Games is estimated to jump from \$6.5 million to between \$7 and \$8 million.

Athletes can also look forward to a single athletes village at the Grande Prairie Regional College.



photo Lisa Scott

Debbie Reid is stepping up as the president of the 2010 Grande Prairie host society.

Having all lodging and food services under one roof should eliminate some of the challenges faced this week by Yellowknife, such as transportation to and from dorms, the cafeteria and the sport venues.

As the 2008 Games torch is passed on Saturday, Yellowknife's Games officially come to a stellar end and Alberta steps in.

Reid commended the Territo-

ries for their outstanding attitude and knows it will be a tough act to follow.

"This host society has been really true to the collaboration and camaraderie of spirit that a Games like these brings," she says, adding that it will be a challenge for Grande Prairie to step up to that level, but they're certainly willing to try.



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CULTURAL FEATURE



Ground Work Sessions Funk Ensemble, the cultural contingent from the Yukon, demonstrated rhythm, creativity and flexibility in a crowd pleasing performance Thursday. From left: Jada Powell, Kaylee Freeman, Riley Simpson-Fowler, Alex Robinson, Jordan Reti and Ben Robinson.



Sasha Buslovskiy danced across the stage in colourful clothing during the performance of Yalymad, the cultural contingent from Yamal, Russia.



Rita Bezhenutsa was one of the performers with Yalymad, the cultural contingent from Yamal, Russia.



photos: Jennifer Obleman

The Nunavik Throat Singers performed to an appreciative audience at Thursday night's cultural gala at the Northern Arts and Culture Centre.



This drummer performed with Rankin Inlet's Tusarniq Choir at Thursday's cultural gala.



The Mt. Edgecumbe High school Yup'ik Dance Group from Alaska performed traditional dances as well as a hunting drama and a cowboy song.



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