



ARCTIC WINTER GAMES
WHITEHORSE 2012

UWU news

Friday, March 9, 2012



Players for Team Yukon and Team NWT scramble for the basketball
Photo credit: **VINCE FEDOROFF**
Whitehorse STAR

published by
Illegitimus Non Carborundum
WHITEHORSE
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STAR
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THE DAILY HYPE

AWG NEWS AND UP & COMINGS



BY THE NUMBERS

CURLING

This roaring game originated in Scotland in the early 19th century and has always been a chivalrous game – let's have a look at some important numbers of this sport.

1970 – year curling debuted at the Arctic Winter Games. It was one of the 10 sports selected for the inaugural Games.

91.44 – maximum circumference of a curling stone in centimetres.

73 – minutes of playing time each team receives for a ten-end game.

60 – duration of a time-out in seconds. Each team may call two time-outs per game excluding any extra end.

45.72 – length in metres of the sheet from the inside edges of the back boards.

19.96 – maximum weight for a curling stone including handle and bolt in kilogram. The minimum weight is 17.24 kg.

10 – minutes each team is allowed to practice prior to each game.

8 – number of stones each team uses.

4 – total number of player per team.

2 – number of sweepers per curling team.

1 – number of points a team scores at the end of an end for each of its stones located in or touching the house that are closer to the tee than any stone of the opposition.



NWT Midget Male Colby Wallis celebrates a penalty shot goal in Wednesday night action.

PLAYOFF PREVIEW: IT'S ALL IN THE NUMBERS

by JOEL WITTEN

As we get closer to the medal round, the players sense that more is on the line, the hockey games grow more intense, and the quality of play is improving.

Wednesday night at Takhini Arena, the Nunavut Midget Males won a hard fought battle against their northern neighbours: NWT. This put these teams and the Yukon hosts all in similar positions, each team having won 2 games and lost 1 for a total of 4 points. Team Alaska stands 0 and 3.

At this stage, NWT Midget Male standout Colby Villebrun leads all skaters in his category with 7 points. Nunavut's Lodie Ipeelie and Yukon's Tyson Glass each have 5, as does Villebrun's teammate Keegan Hnatiw. Watch for these players to continue to make a difference as their teams advance to the medal round.

All the rink rats I conferred with, found picking a playoff winner in this grouping too close to call. As expected, Yukoners in the stands are banking on the home team, hoping that home ice

advantage will be the difference when the Ulu are handed out.

In the Bantam Males category, Team Alberta North looks like the team to beat. Undefeated in four games, Alberta North has averaged more than 8 goals a game for an impressive total of 34 goals scored. They have been stingy at the other end of the ice, only allowing 8 goals so far. Team NWT is second, going 3-0-1 for 6 points. Alaska stands third with 4 points and a 2-2 record. At 1-3, Yukon has two points. Despite a solid effort, Team Nunavut was not able to win any of their first four games.

For the Bantam Males Brad Girard of Team Alberta North is setting a strong pace with 11 points. NWT's Curtis German is right on his heels with 10 points. With 9 points, Girard's teammate Geoff Gordon stands third. If these skaters continue to produce at this level, their teams will contend for gold.

The Junior Females is a tight race, with Alaska and Alberta North each having posted 3 wins and one tie for 7

AIPAI NUNAVIK!

The font-tastic cheer from Nunavik-Québec
by Heather LeDuc

It started with an AWG Facebook post: Aipai laguma Nunavik lar-itsi!!! Aipai!!!... Aipai!!!...

It looked like a cheer, but I wasn't sure. I Googled Aipai, and came up with a reference to a syllabic font developed for the Nunavik Inuttitut. I was stumped. How does a font relate to a cheer?

Nunavik-Québec's Chef de Mission Jean Dupuis gave me the scoop.

At the Grand Prairie Arctic Winter Games in 2010, the contingents were all waiting to participate in the opening ceremonies. The wait dragged on, and the young athletes were growing bored and restless. Something had to be done to motivate them and keep them from nodding off.

That's when Nunavik-Québec's head coach Tunu Nappartuk came up with an idea. On the spot, he made up a cheer, and began chanting: Aipai laguma nunavi lagitsi! aipai... nunavik; aipai... nunavik; aipai... nunavik! (If I say Aipai repeat after me Aipai nunavik aipai nunavik!)

That was the spark that lit the room. The athletes perked up, and soon all the contingents were chanting cheers of their own.

Aipai is an Inuttitut computer font developed by the Kativik School Board and a source of pride for the people of Nunavik. Combine "Aipai" with "Nunavik", and the words roll off the tongue.

The cheer, like the font, is now part of the culture, and followed the Nunavik contingent to Whitehorse.

Tunu Nappartuk wasn't able to come to the 2012 Games, but he's here in spirit, and in cheer.

points. Both of these squads are very strong both offensively and defensively with nearly identical goals for and against. Alaska has tallied 33 for and 5 against and Alberta North posting 30 for and only 4 against. It will take a major upset to unseat one of these teams from a berth in the final medal game.

Teams Yukon and NWT Junior Females have each gone 1-2-1 for 3 points, while Nunavut has yet to post a victory.

Jamie Rall of Alaska leads all hockey players with a stunning 9 goals and 6 assists for a total of 15 points. The next four spots in the Junior Females scoring race are held by Team Alberta North skaters Elisha Lamouche, Shyann Nicol, Morgan Loroff, and Charity Price.

The statistics always dictate the standings, but as we head towards the playoffs the numbers can only tell us so much. Power play and penalty killing effectiveness will be important

determining factors. A hot goalie can lead a team to victory, so too can a forward with the Midas touch. Ultimately, to walk away with an Ulu it will come down to preparation, execution, and a little bit of luck.

Whoops!

In the Thursday March 8 edition of the Ulu News, the following stories were misattributed:

"Family Time, Courtside" (pg 3) was written by Glenda Koh, not Indra Kley

"Two minutes for looking so good" (pg 6) was written by Joel Witten, not Thomas Schoeneich

Our apologies for the mistake.

Builders Supplyland would like to wish all the athletes, coaches and volunteers of the
2012 ARCTIC WINTER GAMES
A WONDERFUL YUKON EXPERIENCE.

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Photo credit: BRUCE BARRETT

Arctic Sports World Records set at AWG 2012

[as of Thursday morning, March 8]

Kneel Jump
Junior Female
Monday, March 5
Veronica McDonald, NWT
1.32 metres
(previous 1.31m)

Triple Jump
Open Female
Wednesday, March 7
Anna Rivard, Yukon
8.55 metres
(previous 7.9m in 2010)

Triple Jump
Open Male
Andrew Bell, Nunavut
10.95 metres
(previous 10.51 in 2004)

Alaskan High Kick
Autum Ridley, Alaska
6'2"
(previous 5'10")

WATCH YOURSELF IN ACTION!

AWG Daily on TV (Whitehorse cable channel 9) and a YouTube gadget near you. New episodes at 9 pm daily during the Games.

Day 5: Thursday, March 8 edition:
Snowboard Cross
Dene Hand Games
Biathlon both Snowshoe and Ski Wrestling

AWG Daily captures the flavour and pizzazz of the Games. Yukoner Chris McNutt gives us a small sampling of the energy and excitement happening around town. Catch the faces of the kids, spot someone you know, see the action and feel the electrifying energy in the air.

RECORDS TUMBLE AT ARCTIC SPORTS

It doesn't happen very often that the *Ulu News* delivers the news of a new World Record to an athlete. But there is a first for everything.

by THOMAS SCHOENEICH

On Wednesday morning, Andrew Bell from Nunavut had finished the Triple Jump in first position with a new record of 10.95 metres. He jumped 44 centimetres further than the previous record set by Alexander Shernakov from Yamal at the 2004 Arctic Winter Games.

But up until Wednesday night – until the *Ulu News* told him – Bell wasn't even aware that there wasn't just a gold Ulu but also a new World Record in his name.

"It feels great. I'm very happy about that. This is my first Arctic Winter Games," the 27-year-old said. "When I lived in Nova Scotia, I used to participate in track and field events. So there are some similarities in the jumping events but there's definitely a technique to the Arctic Sports that takes a little bit of time."

Bell moved to the community of

Kugluktuk in western Nunavut in 2008. The athlete only took up Arctic Sports in November last year.

"Where I'm living now, I was looking for hobbies and activities and things I could use to occupy my evenings and I took up Arctic Sports with a few other people in the community," he said.

"(My coach) Andrew Atatahak shared a lot of his secrets with me. He has been helping me out a lot. It (Arctic Sports) is (addictive). Especially when all these athletes come together and we help push each other to a new limit. That's what I like about it."

The beauty of Arctic Sports is not only the great sportsmanship and camaraderie among the athletes. Together with Dene Games, it's the only sport at the Arctic Winter Games in which records are set

or broken – and there has been no shortage of that at the 2012 Arctic Winter Games.

On top of Bell's record, Yukon's Anna Rivard landed 8.55 metres in the Triple Jump on Wednesday – a new World Record distance. She now holds both the Record in the Open Female and the Junior Female category in this event.

Another World Record was set by Autumn Ridley from Alaska. She kicked 6'2" in the Junior Female Alaskan High Kick. The previous record had been 5'10".

Already on Monday, Veronica McDonald from the Northwest Territories finished with an impressive 132.4 metres in the Junior Female kneel jump. She added 1.4 centimetres to the previous World Record distance.

Head Official Edward Arey has

been impressed so far with the level of competition in Whitehorse. But he thinks that even some long-standing Arctic Sports records will be challenged sooner or later.

"Records are always going to be broken because there are going to be more kids that are adapting different ways of training, so their ability and strength are going to be different" he said. "So there's always going to be a way of beating a Record."

Andrew Bell hopes that his Triple Jump Record will stay his with him, at least for while. "I hope it (the Record) holds for a while and I hope I can expand that a little bit more maybe next time," he said.

"The plan is to stick with it (Arctic Sports) and we are going to keep the practices going as usual. Everybody from our team has learned a lot from these Games."

TOP TWEETS

@evaholland
I'm totally hooked. Some of these girls move like gymnasts, others like basketball players. Huge range of approaches to the jump.

@paperless_crane
You should go to the basketball gold medal games. You could have a chance to win \$10,000. #awg2012 #halfcourtshot

@YukonSusan
Four new records set at AWG One of them set by Yukoner, Anna Rivard in triple jump She jumped 8 point 5-5 metres #cbcnorth #awg2012

@danrueck
#awg2012 Dene hand games look like a blast!

@YukonCurler
What a great week at the Arctic Winter Games. Everything running so smoothly. Congratulations Whitehorse and Games organizers. #awg2012



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Air North, Yukon's Airline is thrilled to be the official airline of the 2012 Arctic Winter Games.

To all the athletes, coaches, supporters, volunteers and AWG staff – congratulations and thank you for making the 2012 Arctic Winter Games a huge success!

THE PLAYERS

THE WHO'S WHO OF THE GAMES



FROM POINT A TO B DURING THE AWGs

by BRIGITTE PARKER

Did you know that the AWG transit system provides transportation services to athletes, coaches, and cultural participants every 15 minutes to all major AWG venues? Originating from the Athlete's

Village, the transit system's route includes the catering facility, sports venues, mission offices, social activity centres and major hotels around the city.

Orchestrating the transportation

logistics to support the Games is a complicated affair. Yellow school buses, on hiatus for March Break, were commandeered into services with extra buses added during morning and playoff peak periods.

Shuttling gear and equipment also required special planning and attention. Biathlon rifles and ammunition need safe and secure transportation while skiing sports and hockey require space for lengthy or bulky equipment.

The AWG overall transportation plan also includes colour-coded

luggage -handling, AWG transit schedule maps and even the coordination of a lost and found system!

Meanwhile, the City of Whitehorse expected a major increase from the normal 35 people to over 100 people per ride during the Games due to limited parking at the venues.

"We can squeeze you on," says Cheri Malo, AWG Transportation Chair and Manager of City of Whitehorse Transit.

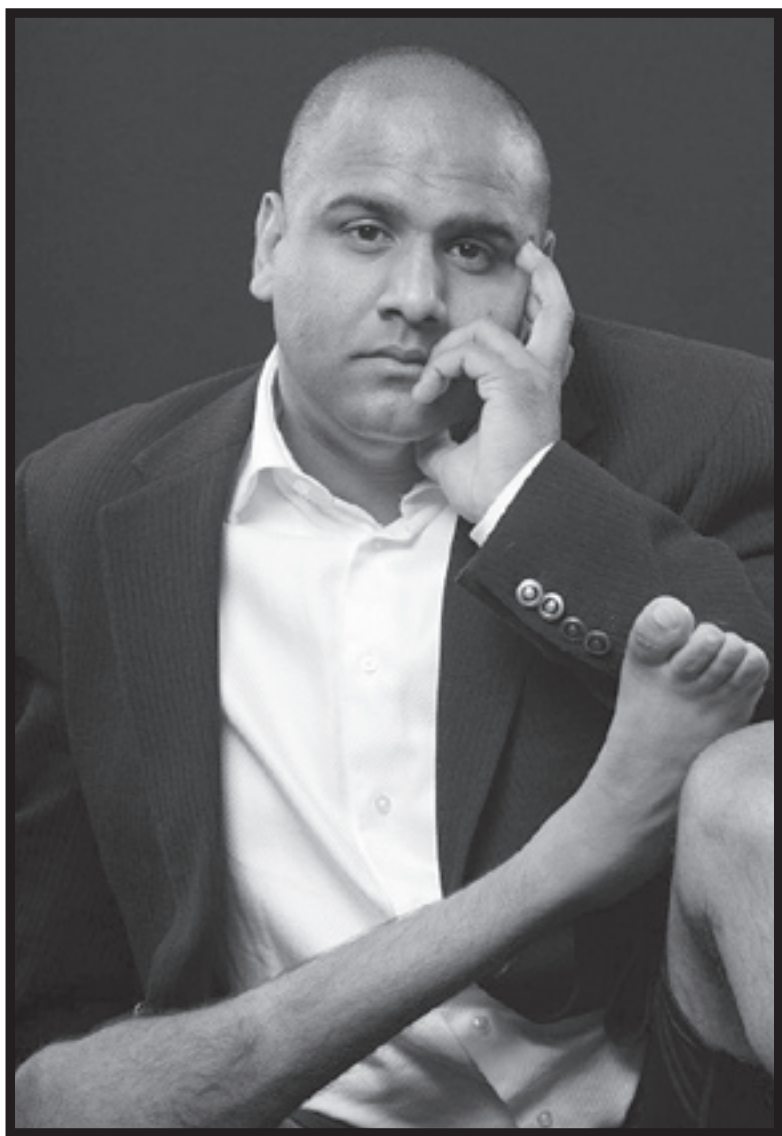
Since implementing their new transit system last July, the City

was confident it could provide a 30 minute service from anywhere in the city to the Canada Games Centre.

AWG volunteers can also get on the City buses for free with their AWG accreditation badge.

"We did it for the Canada Winter Games and we wanted to make sure people can get around to the venues despite the limited parking," said Malo.

Extra buses will be running for later hours during the closing ceremonies on Saturday night.



AFGHANISTAN TO AWG: THE VALUE OF SERVICE

by KAREN KEELEY

Over the past year, Yukon's Ramesh Ferris had numerous opportunities to travel around the world promoting the importance of polio eradication. We had a chance to talk with Ramesh during the volunteer orientation sessions held at the Canada Games Centre.

What motivated you to volunteer for the 2012 AWG?

It was an opportunity to give back to my community, to be a role-model for others in the hopes that I might inspire them to see the value and importance of giving back to their community through volunteering.

What program are you taking at the College? How does the co-op element work?

For the first time in Yukon College's history, students have an opportunity to enrol in what is called Service Learning. This unique opportunity allows students to take advantage of learning opportunities outside of the classroom that includes new skills development, demonstrated leadership, and becoming a volunteer.

A partnership between Yukon College and the 2012 Arctic Winter

Games was formed. As a student in the Service Learning Course, I'm required to volunteer for 15 hours either before, during or after the Games, with wrap-up activities. In addition to the 15 hours of volunteering, I'm also required to write a 25 page report on my learning and my overall experience at the Arctic Winter Games.

What are the benefits to you?

In return for my participation, I get the value of being a part of a unique sport and cultural event hosted here in the great Yukon. I also receive 3 academic credits which I intend to use towards the completion of my Bachelor of Social Work Degree that I'm currently working on, in partnership with the University of Regina and Yukon College.

What do you hope to give to others by helping with the Games?

My hope is that by participating at the 2012 Arctic Winter Games, I can be a role model for others, particularly the younger ones and inspire them to get involved in volunteering

for a worthy cause. People need to be motivated to get out of their everyday comfortable routines. In order for communities to successfully thrive in diverse ways, I feel it's essential for community members to volunteer. We all have unique gifts, skills, and talents to offer, share and to learn from one another.

What are your duties at the Games?

Three areas that I am volunteering in are: assisting with volunteer orientation, accreditation and uniform collection, with Venue site ticket verification, and working in the HIP Lounges. I really enjoy engaging and working with members of the general public, so for me, I purposely selected positions in these areas.

Ramesh recently returned from a trip to India where he was busy wearing his humanitarian hat in the cause of eradicating polio, as he has done in Afghanistan, too. Look for him during the Games when he'll be wearing the bright blue and green volunteer colours. In the spirit of giving back—his engaging smile will be a beacon of inspiration.



Xerox Canada Ltd.
salutes the athletes of
The Arctic Winter Games



MAN IN MOTION: RICK HANSEN'S 2012 AWG TOUR

by HEATHER LEDUC

Most of the athletes and artists participating in the 2012 Arctic Winter Games weren't even born when Rick Hansen set out on the first Man in Motion World Tour. Hansen started the 40,000 km odyssey in Newfoundland in 1985 and ended 26 months and 34 countries later, raising \$26 million for spinal cord injury research, rehabilitation and sport.

Hansen's journey didn't end there, and he has continued to work to support research and to create more accessible, healthy, inclusive communities through the Rick Hansen Foundation.

The Foundation's current focus is the 25th Anniversary Rick Hansen Relay, which retraces the entire Canadian portion of the tour. Participants include 7,000 medal bearers, all of whom were nominated for making

a difference in their communities.

Yukon's Ramesh Ferris is one of these medal bearers. In 2008, Hansen supported Ferris during his cross-Canada Cycle to Walk tour to eradicate polio. Ferris will be participating in the final stage of the relay through the Fraser Valley into Vancouver.

Canada's north isn't one of the official stops on the tour, but Hansen is visiting all the territories to recognize northern difference makers. Since Hansen believes that sport can bridge differences and inspire youth, it's no wonder he's visiting Yukon during the Arctic Winter Games.

Rick arrives in Whitehorse on Friday, March 9. Rick's first stop is an event hosted by the Yukon Council on disABILITY at the Yukon Government Main Administration Building on Friday.



Rick Hansen meeting a quadriplegic man near Sudbury, Ontario during his Man in Motion Tour on December 11, 1986.

On Saturday, March 10, Hansen and Minister of State (Sport), the Honourable Bal Gosal, will drop the ceremonial puck at the gold medal hockey game at the Takhini Arena. Hansen also has a big role in the clos-

ing ceremonies Saturday evening, when he'll be presenting awards to AWG difference makers.

But we'll have to wait until the ceremony to find out who those AWG difference makers are.

ALL THINGS ZAMBONI

by SARA BERGQUIST

Charlie Brown once said, "There are three things in life that people like to stare at: a flowing stream, a crackling fire and a Zamboni clearing the ice." I have to agree with him on that one.

Last winter, Takhini Arena was packed for the WHL game between the Kamloops Blazers and the Vancouver Giants. It was a great game and the crowd was rowdy. The loudest cheers, however, came when the Zamboni hit the ice between periods.

How did the Zamboni come to be? And how are these machines critical to the success of ice sports during the Arctic Winter Games?

How did the Zamboni come to be?

Ice resurfacing machines are vehicles that clean and resurface ice rinks. In North America, we call these machines 'Zamboni' even though Zamboni is a registered trademark named after its inventor, Frank J. Zamboni.

Before mechanical ice-resurfacing

machines were invented, it would take three to five workers around an hour and a half to resurface ice. They used scrapers, towels, shovels, squeegees, a hose and sometimes a tractor to do all the work a Zamboni now does in minutes.

Frank Zamboni wanted to find a way around this and he succeeded in 1949 when he patented his "Model A Zamboni Ice Resurfer." Now figure skaters, speed-skaters, hockey players and recreational skaters would be able to skate on the best ice possible without waiting as long.

How are ice resurfacing machines critical to the success of ice sports during the Arctic Winter Games?

I met up with some of the facilities staff at the Canada Games Centre to find the answer. It turns out the Zamboni is just one part of maintaining ice.

Arena floors house a refrigeration system. Workers spray successive thin

layers of water on the cold surface. The end product is a sheet of ice about one and a half inches thick. The temperature of the ice is closely regulated because the quality of the ice is key and can make the difference between a medal-winning effort and potential injury.

Can you imagine playing a whole game of hockey without having a fresh sheet of ice at the start of each period? Or being the last figure skater to perform? What if you skated in the last heat of a speed-skating race? This is where the Zamboni comes into play. With three rinks and three sports, the Zamboni will hit the ice over 150 times over the course of the Games. Skilled facilities crews will ensure the ice has clean edges and a smooth, flat surface. And they do this in minutes.

So the next time you break your previous speed record, execute a flawless routine or get a little extra zip on your shot, make sure you thank the men and women who work

“
There are three things in life that people like to stare at: a flowing stream, a crackling fire and a Zamboni clearing the ice.

– Charlie Brown

hard to make sure the ice is as close to perfect as possible throughout these Games. Their hard work and technique help make it possible for you to excel at your sport.

Q?A

ULU GETS TO KNOW YOU
by Brigitte Parker



Ulu News spoke to Niklas Thorleifson and Sofia Lyberth, both indoor soccer players for Greenland.

NIKLAS:

What's on your iPod?

Lil Wayne, Drake, a lot of hip-hop and rap music.

What is your goal for AWGs?

To win Gold and make new friends.

What do you do to relax in your down time?

Listen to music.

What do you think of AWGs?

This is my first time here and this is a great city. The Canada Games Centre is different and my favourite part of the Games. We do not have facilities like this in my hometown.

SOFIA:

What's on your iPod?

My favourite song is Boomerang by DJ Felli (featuring Akon, Pitbull, & Jermaine Dupri)

What is your goal for AWGs?

To win Gold!

What do you do to relax in your down time?

I hang out with my friends and we go out.

yukon energy keeping tradition in play



ARCTIC AND DENE SPORTS
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THE VIEW FROM UP HERE

NEWS FROM THE PODIUM



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Reffing hockey at the 2012 Arctic Winter Games has been a great opportunity to give back to a sport that I love, make new friends, and promote fair play and sportsmanship."

Darrell Pasloski, hockey referee and Premier of Yukon



Photo credit: DAVID MUSSELWHITE

BALANCING ACT: GYMNASTICS

by GLENDA KOH

Results for the All-Around Event:

Gold: Austen Fraser, Alberta North

Silver: Fayne O'Donovan, Yukon

Bronze: Michaela Brown, Alaska

For more results, see www.awg2012.org

Gymnastics isn't for everyone. If you think you can get up off that couch and do a back flip right now, think again.

"Very few average adults can do any of the things these gymnasts are doing," says Team Yukon Mission Staff Tammi Sikorski. "A cartwheel or a handstand, or maybe the occasional round-off, which isn't too hard."

Maybe that's why the Polarettes gymnastics club was a packed house on Thursday for the individuals' competition. We love to see the impossible.

At this event, individuals compete on each of 4 pieces of equipment: uneven bars, vault, the floor and the balance beam. Medals are awarded for each of the four exercises, and a fifth medal goes to the top all-rounders.

Tuesday's team competition saw Team Alberta North take the gold Ulu by just a hair. There was a mere 0.59 point spread between Alberta North and Team Alaska's 146.86 points. As father of multiple medalists, Austen Fraser puts it, "One missed step by any of them could have cost them the medal."

Team Alberta North and Team Alaska have the advantage of an older team, with a number of 14- to 16-year olds. Gymnastics is often considered a young sport because so many participants reach high levels of ability at such a young age. However, with age comes experience, both in terms of sheer practice hours, and in terms of competition.

That competition experience is what every club in every sport throughout the north grapples with. Due to the remote nature of northern communities, it is always a challenge to participate in enough competitions.

For example, Team Nunavut's gymnastics contingent hails from its two clubs in Rankin Inlet and Iqaluit. This is Nunavut's third AWG.

Mike Soales, Nunavut's Mission Staff for Gymnastics, notes, "Just flying from Rankin to Iqaluit for a territorial championship is over \$1,000 per athlete. Getting to Winnipeg or Toronto is that much more."

Still, Rankin Inlet is incredibly lucky to have coach Lisa Kresky, a dedicated high school teacher and coach who has been the driving force behind gymnastics in that community.

Soales says, "Lisa is completely dedicated to the kids, and in turn they are equally dedicated to her."

Gymnastics is certainly a sport that requires dedication. The gymnasts practice between 15 and 30 hours a week at this level.

With such precise, highly technical requirements, that practice time is necessary. A typical skill is completed within seconds, so a competitor doesn't have much time to think.

On the vault, for example, a move is completed within seconds. Points are deducted for any imperfection, such as slowing down before approaching the springboard, not planting hands correctly on the vault, or a bent or arched body.

Gymnasts not only train their bodies. They also have a heightened sense of where their body is located in relation to other things. That sense, known as proprioception, is not something most of us are not aware of, but is an ability that can be honed.

Gymnastics might not be for everyone, but Sikorski points out that it's a great for teaching balance and strength

AWG ULU COUNT

As of 7:00pm Thursday, March 8

CONTINGENT	G	S	B	TOTAL
Alaska	47	49	45	141
Yukon	33	33	18	84
NWT	19	22	39	80
Alberta North	31	25	19	75
Yamal	32	24	14	70
Nunavut	5	8	18	31
Greenland	6	7	8	21
Nunavik Québec	5	7	9	21
Sápmi	3	2	1	6

in children and young athletes. It can also provide the foundation for many other sports.

"Yes, it's a young sport," she says,

"but when they leave gymnastics, there are so many other sports available to them because they're so strong and so quick."

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YOUR PHOTOS

More photos available on the AWG Flickr website: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/awg2012/>



1 A gymnast performs for judges at Vanier Catholic Secondary School (Photo by **Tim Hogan**) **2** An athlete takes aim in the Biathlon-Snowshoe event (Photo by **David Musselwhite**) **3** A snowboarder gets some air in the half-pipe event (Photo by **Tim Hogan**) **4** An alpine skier runs a slalom (Photo by **Cozmo Ace Malzarby**) **5** Team Yukon at the Badminton doubles competition (Photo by **Vince Fedoroff, Whitehorse Star**) **6** Arctic Sports at Vanier Catholic Secondary (Photo by **Bruce Barrett**) **7** Team Sápmi gets big crowd support at Indoor Soccer (Photo by **Lidwina Hanrath**)



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TALENT & SKILL

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?



Maya Austin (light top) and Rachel Pettitt (dark top) show Ulu News' guinea pig a thing or two on the ice.

Photos by: **THOMAS SCHOENEICH**

GUINEA PIG: BABY ELEPHANT WALK

It's hard to look elegant on ice if you have no practice in skating. It's even harder when two true ice princesses accompany you. Still, I tried to become a figure skating star.

by **INDRA KLEY**

The ice is plane and smooth. Too smooth for my rental skates and me. I stumble, and regain balance just before I am about to fall. My coaches meet me with disbelief. Could someone really be so wobbly on the ice? Yes. And the lesson hasn't even started.

It's definitely not an easy task for Maya Austin (14) and Rachel Pettitt (13). The two Team Yukon athletes agreed on initiating me into the secrets of figure skating. "Anyone can do figure skating," Maya had said earlier. Even a 30-year-old German who never did any gymnastics or ballet? And whose last skate dates back almost 20 years (if you can call 'being on the ice rink to watch cute boys' skating)? "Yes," Rachel says. "It's all in your head. If you think you can do it and you know what to do, you can land it. Just set your mind to it."

I know what to do, my mind is set and I actually land – on my bot-

tom. The crossover, a basic stroking technique, looked okay while Maya and Rachel skated hand in hand with me. But my first attempt alone ends in the first corner. My knee hits the ice, my coaches rush towards me, worried looks on their faces. I grit my teeth, get up and prefer to continue skating hand in hand with the girls.

The two-foot spin is another basic move Maya and Rachel want to teach me. They turn and turn and turn and turn around. I manage to do 1.5 spins. Then it's getting serious: the waltz jump is a variation of the famous Axel. I try and try and try. But every time it gets to the point where I am supposed to stick the blade's tip into the ice and jump, I panic. The memory of my first bad overturn on the ice is too vivid. I am afraid to fall on my knee again. The Axel has to wait.

We try the drag instead. And this move turns out to be my move. I

drag my leg on the ice as if I were Kathi Witt, the German 1988 Olympic Figure Skating champion herself. My coaches are thrilled. Delighted by this success, I head for the spiral. In this element, the skater glides on one foot while raising the free leg above hip level. I don't know if I managed to raise my leg above my hip, but I raised it – and at the same time stayed on my blade.

Maya and Rachel are excited. With those five basic moves, I could actually create my own program, they say. I know already which music I'd take for my free skate: Baby Elephant Walk. Although I felt more like a big elephant when I, accompanied by these two charming, lithe aspiring athletes, tried to dominate the ice, the track matches my performance like no other.

Today at 5 p.m. in the CGC: The Figure Skating Team Event Junior Female.

A snowmachine offers a lift at the snowboard half pipe event at Mount Sima

Photo credit:
Tim Hogan



Christie Richardson
Mortgage Professional

Best of Luck to all Arctic Winter Games participants!



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“I just thought, a true athlete thrives on adversity. So I tried to be a true athlete.”

Snowboarder and Olympic Gold Medalist,
Jasey-Jay Anderson



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CULTURAL BEAT

YOUR DAILY DOSE OF AWG CULTURE



GET PINNED

PIN OF THE DAY

It may not be the most flashy, nor does it comprise of rotating, multiple parts, but the pin for AWG 2012 General Manager Chris Milner is on fire right now. This pin is so hot that one trader got an entire puzzle for a single Chris Milner. Only one of two pins to feature an individual person, the popularity of the Chris Milner Pin is a fitting testament to anyone who knows him, who has worked with him or who wants to simply bling out with a cool guy's name on their lanyard.



Hold on tight to your Chris Milner or trade it carefully. Everyone wants a piece of him.



MAGICAL MYLARCHITECTURE, UNDERGROUND

by HEATHER LEDUC

The Arctic Winter Games is rife with magic. Any time a team of young people come together for sport and culture, awesome moments are bound to happen.

This is true of *MYLARchitecture*, an awesome collaborative art piece created by students attending the Yukon School of Visual Arts (SOVA) in Dawson City. SOVA instructor Veronica Verkley installed the multi-media work and today walked me through its many magical layers.

The piece evolved from a challenge put to the students by internationally acclaimed artist Ed Pien, who asked them to use Mylar to create habitats for imagined creatures. This presented significant difficulties, considering Mylar consists of flat sheets of transparent, inanimate plastic. However, the students used all matter of ingenuity to manipulate the material and coax it into an astonishing variety of forms.

Equally inventive is how the students worked together to exhibit the 17 individual habitats as a cohesive whole. As we walk through screens and encounter the space, there are three rows of habitats, each suspended from the ceiling at a different height. Behind them is a screen made with

several large pieces of paper, which have been crumpled then flattened so the surface is crinkled. Between the suspended shapes and the screen, there is a sheer curtain or scrim, which the viewer walks behind to experience the projection of the habitats on the screen.

The shadows of the suspended habitats emerge as three misshapen but beautiful totems on the screen. The projector also has a DVD of video shot by the students. When projected, these ghostly moving images play on the habitat shapes and animate them. It's like encountering a strange, sparkling, ethereal landscape whose invisible inhabitants we can only imagine.

Or, in the case of the pre-school kids who toured *MYLARchitecture* with SOVA instructor Veronica Verkley, it's a really fun space to make shadow puppets!

MYLARchitecture opened March 8 in Arts Underground as part of the AWG cultural programming. Also in the Underground are the Yukon Art Society's exhibition *Exquisite North*, featuring collaborative work by a number of visual artists, and MacBride Museum's *Bill MacBride's Yukon: Images from Yukon in the 1950s* in the Hougou Heritage Gallery.

GAMES GEAR

SKIN SUIT FITS JUST LIKE SKINNY JEANS!

by BRIGITTE PARKER



Despite their name, speed skating skin suits stretch a lot and are easy to get into. According to Alberta North speed skater Liam Ennis, his aerodynamic skin suit "fits just like skinny jeans".

Studies on skin suits have concluded they significantly increase the average skating speed by 0.2 – 0.3 seconds per lap for athletes, especially in the long-distance speed skating events.

As a result, all skaters are required to wear a suit that fits the contours of the body to ensure every race is run completely on athletes' skills. There are restrictions to the suit's design. It cannot alter the shape of the skater's body.

The suits also protect the skaters from harm. Team Alaska wears suits partially made of Kevlar while Team Alberta North wears a full Kevlar suit.

"The full Kevlar is warm and heavy," says Ennis. "It feels better than normal clothes. Some people wear an under suit of Kevlar and an over suit on top. It is good because it keeps us safe."

While Ennis has never been victim of a crash, he did smash into a competitor during his first meet. The opponent fell in front of him and Ennis accidentally hit him in the stomach with his skate and stepped on him. Fortunately, the competitor was wearing protective Kevlar, which did not get cut so he only suffered bruising from the hit.

Always a fast skater, Ennis took up speed skating two years ago because he couldn't shoot at hockey. He instantly fell in love with the sport and its adrenalin rush. The 12-year-old was bumped to compete at the junior level and is also on the relay team.

His kit includes soccer shin pads, safety goggles and a cycling helmet. The boots for his speed skates are specifically designed to fit stiff and snug around his feet. The "rocker" blades are also adjusted to the side of the boots based on the athlete's performance to ensure the boot doesn't touch the ice during the race. The tips of the blades are also rounded which influences how much of the blade touches the ice.

This is Ennis' first time competing at the AWGs and he loves it. "It is great! You line up to race and the person next to you is your enemy and then later, we could be sitting together having lunch as friends."

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From all of us at Northwestel



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