



ULU NEWS

ARCTIC WINTER GAMES
YELLOWKNIFE 2008

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2008

*In today's
ULU news...*

Alaska climbs to the top

Highlights from
yesterday's action ...
See pages 3, 5, 7

What's for dessert?

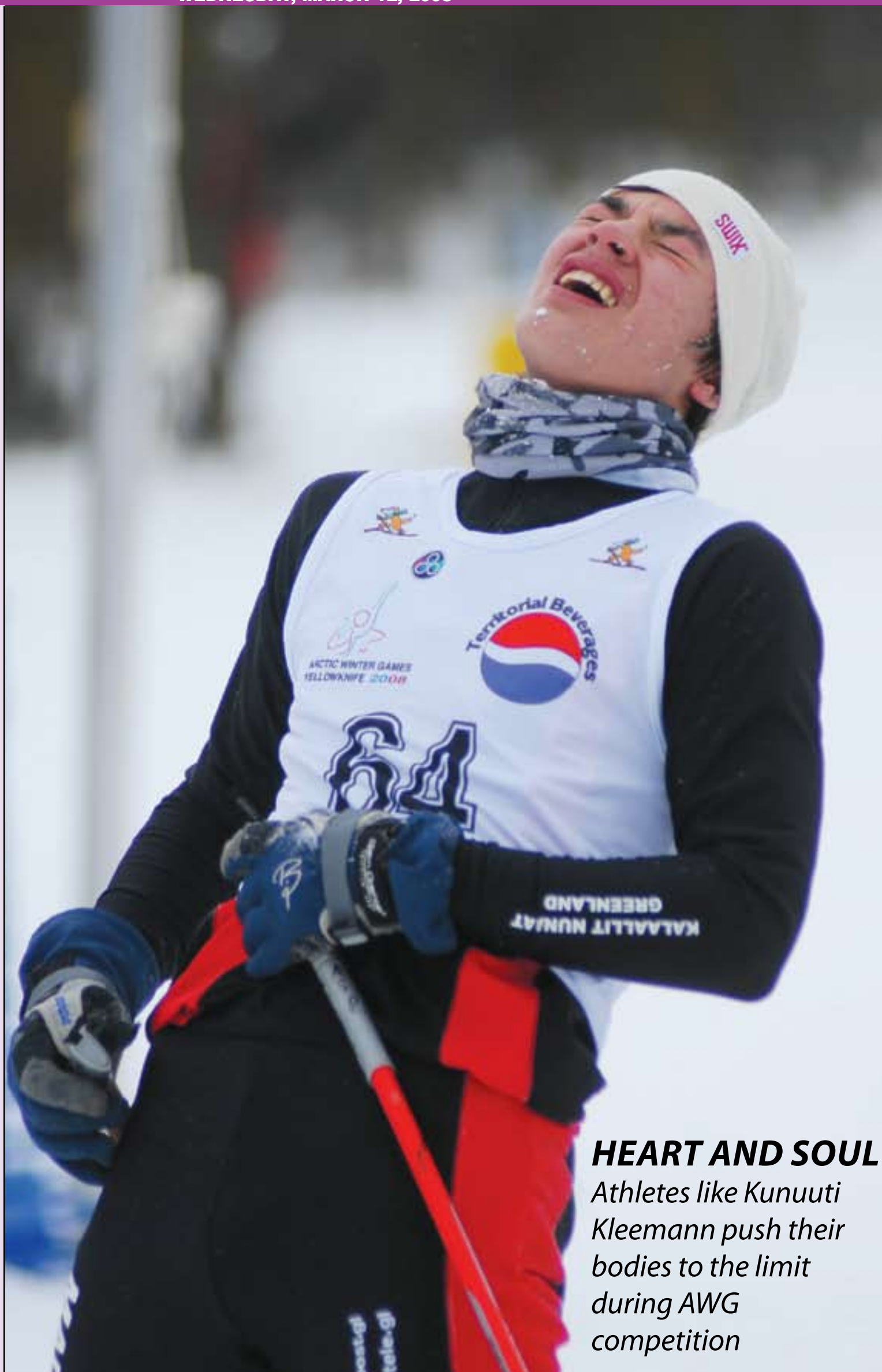
Athletes dine on
Chef Pierre's fare ...
See page 13

Pin it on me

AWG's favourite
trade good ...
See page 10

MEDAL COUNT

Team	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
 Alaska	16	14	19	49
 NWT	12	12	11	35
 Yukon	10	9	12	31
 Yamal	11	9	3	23
 Nunavut	2	7	7	16
 N. Alberta	4	6	3	12
 Greenland	2	4	2	8
 Nunavik	3	1	2	6
 Saami	2	1	3	6



HEART AND SOUL
*Athletes like Kunuuti
Kleemann push their
bodies to the limit
during AWG
competition*

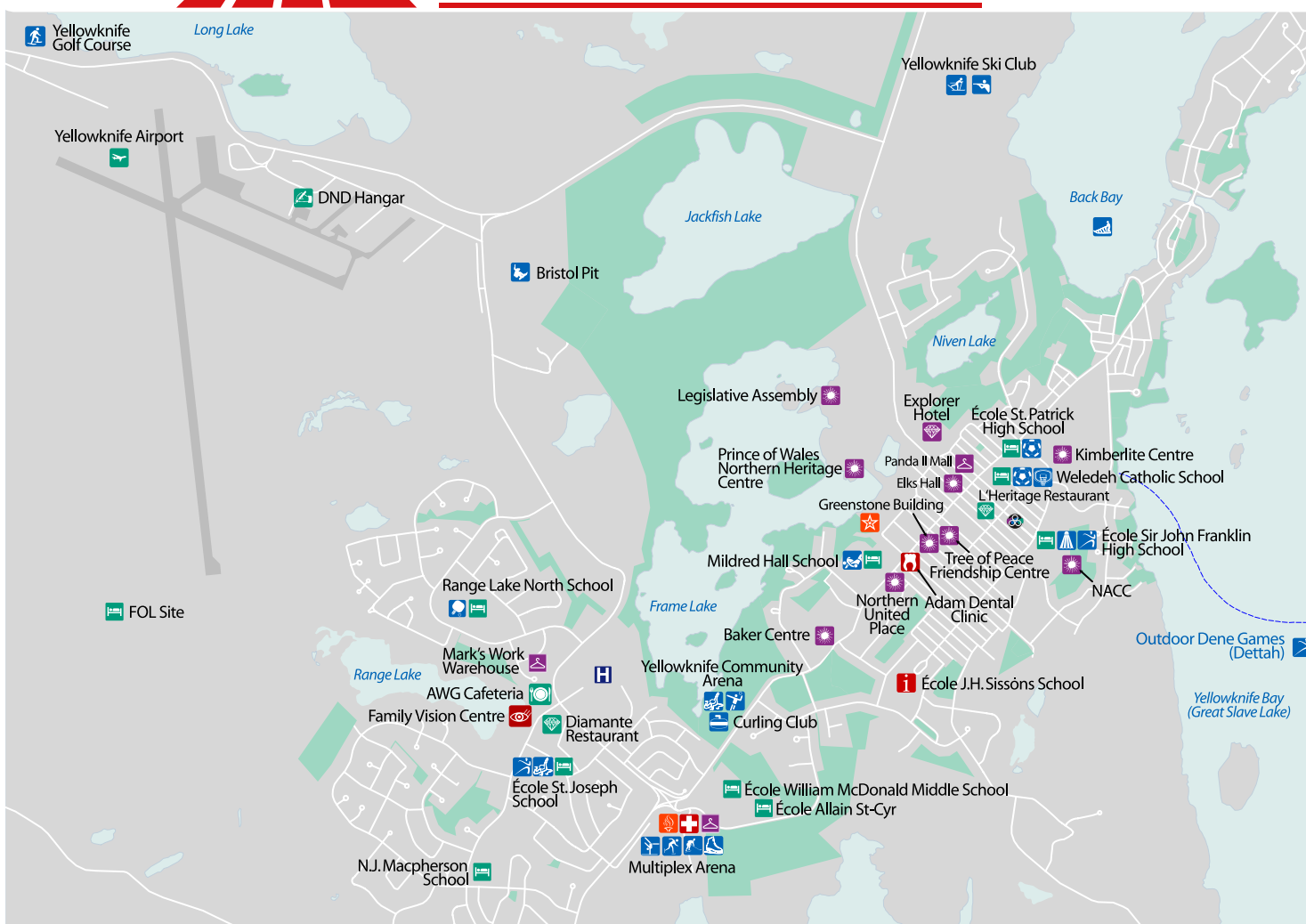
Also inside: a day in pictures • contingent profiles • athlete profiles

ARCTIC WINTER GAMES VENUE MAP

Map Sponsored By:



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Arctic Winter Games Venues and Events

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



**ARCTIC WINTER GAMES
YELLOWKNIFE 2008**

SCHEDULE OF SPORTING EVENTS – WEDNESDAY MARCH 12

ARCTIC SPORTS - St. Joe's Gymnasium and YK Arena

8:00a.m.-9:30a.m.	St. Joe's	Open Triple Jump
9:30a.m.-11:30a.m.	YK Arena	Jr. Triple Jump
<i>Preliminaries</i>		
1:00p.m.-5:00p.m.	St. Joe's	All Alaskan High Kick
<i>Finals</i>		
6:00p.m.-10:00p.m.	St. Joe's	All Alaskan High kick

BADMINTON - Sir John Gymnasium

8:00a.m.-6:00p.m.	Jr. Male/Female, Juvenile Male/Female	Singles/Doubles, Courts 1 - 4
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BASKETBALL - Weledeh Gymnasium

9:00a.m.-11:00a.m.	Jr. Female	Nunavut vs Yamal
11:00a.m.-1:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Alaska vs NWT
1:00p.m.-3:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Nunavut vs Yukon
3:00p.m.-5:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Yukon vs Alaska
5:00p.m.-7:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Yamal vs NWT

BIATHLON SNOWSHOE - Yk Ski Club

9:30a.m.-11:00a.m.	Mass Start Competition
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BIATHLON SKI - Yk Ski Club

2:00p.m.-5:00p.m.	Mass Sart Competition
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CURLING - Yk Curling Club

<i>Draw 4</i>		
9:30a.m.-12:20p.m.	Jr. Male 13	Yukon vs Nunavut
	Jr. Male 14	N. Alberta vs Alaska
	Jr. Female 15	Nunavut vs N. Alberta
	Jr. Female 16	Alaska vs NWT
<i>Draw 5</i>		
2:30p.m.-5:30p.m.	Jr. Male 17	NWT vs Yukon
	Jr. Male 18	Alaska vs Nunavut
	Jr. Female 19	Yukon vs Nunavut
	Jr. Female 20	Alaska vs N. Alberta

DENE GAMES - Athletes Centre Main Stage

<i>Finger Pull</i>		
10:00a.m.-12:30p.m.	Jr. Male	
	Jr. Female	
2:00p.m.-5:00p.m.	Juvenile Female	
	Open Male	
4:30p.m.-5:00p.m.	FINALS	

DOG MUSHING - Back Bay

11:00a.m.-12:30p.m.	Juvenile	4 Dog, 7.5km
2:00p.m.-3:30p.m.	Co-ed Junior	6 Dog, 10km

FIGURE SKATING - Olympic Ice Surface

7:00a.m.-4:15p.m.	Long program
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HOCKEY - Shorty Brown and Olympic Ice Surfaces

7:30a.m.-9:30a.m.	Shorty Female	NWT vs Nunavut
9:30a.m.-11:30a.m.	Shorty Bantam	NWT vs Nunavut
11:30a.m.-1:30p.m.	Shorty Midget	Alaska vs Yukon
1:30p.m.-3:30p.m.	Shorty Female	Yukon vs Alaska
3:30p.m.-5:30p.m.	Shorty Bantam	Alaska vs Yukon
5:00p.m.-7:00p.m.	Olympic Midget	NWT vs Nunavut
5:30p.m.-7:30p.m.	Shorty Bantam	Nunavut vs N. Alberta
7:00p.m.-9:00p.m.	Olympic Female	Nunavut vs N. Alberta

INDOOR SOCCER - St. Patrick's and Weledeh Gymnasiums

8:00a.m.-9:00a.m.	Weledeh Jr. Male	Greenland vs Yamal
8:00a.m.-9:00a.m.	St. Pat's Juvenile Male	Alaska vs Yukon
9:00a.m.-10:00a.m.	St. Pat's Juvenile Male	Nunavut vs NWT
10:00a.m.-11:00a.m.	St. Pat's Jr. Male	Nunavut vs Yukon
11:00a.m.-12:00p.m.	St. Pat's Jr. Male	Alaska vs NWT
12:00p.m.-1:00p.m.	St. Pat's Jr. Female	Alaska vs NWT
1:00p.m.-2:00p.m.	St. Pat's Jr. Female	Yukon vs Nunavut
2:00p.m.-3:00p.m.	St. Pat's Juvenile Female	Alaska vs Nunavut
3:00p.m.-4:00p.m.	St. Pat's Juvenile Female	N. Alberta vs Yukon
4:00p.m.-5:00p.m.	St. Pat's Intermediate Female	Greenland vs Saami
5:00p.m.-6:00p.m.	St. Pat's Intermediate Female	Nunavut vs Yukon
6:00p.m.-7:00p.m.	St. Pat's Intermediate Female	Alaska vs NWT

SNOWBOARDING - Bristol Pit

10:00a.m.-4:00p.m.	Rail Jam
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SNOWSHOE - YK Golf Club

2.5km CXC	
10:45a.m.-11:00a.m.	Juvenile Male/Female
5km CXC	
11:00a.m.-1:00p.m.	Jr. Male/Female

TABLE TENNIS - Range Lake North Gymnasium

<i>Preliminary Rounds</i>	
8:00a.m.-5:00p.m.	Singles Events

VOLLEYBALL - YK Arena, Courts 1 & 2

12:00p.m.-1:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Crt 1	N. Alberta vs NWT
12:00p.m.-1:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Crt 2	Alaska vs Greenland
1:00p.m.-2:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Crt 1	Nunavut vs Alaska
1:00p.m.-2:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Crt 2	N. Alberta vs Nunavut
2:00p.m.-3:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Crt 1	Yukon vs Nunavut
2:00p.m.-3:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Crt 2	NWT vs N. Alberta
3:00p.m.-4:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Crt 1	N. Alberta vs Alaska
3:00p.m.-4:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Crt 2	Alaska vs Nunavut
4:00p.m.-5:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Crt 1	Greenland vs NWT
4:00p.m.-5:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Crt 2	Yukon vs Greenland
5:00p.m.-6:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Crt 1	N. Alberta vs Nunavut
5:00p.m.-6:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Crt 2	Alaska vs N. Alberta
6:00p.m.-7:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Crt 1	Yukon vs NWT
6:00p.m.-7:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Crt 2	NWT vs Greenland
7:00p.m.-8:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Crt 1	Greenland vs Alaska
7:00p.m.-8:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Crt 2	Yukon vs Nunavut
8:00p.m.-9:00p.m.	Jr. Male	Crt 1	Yukon vs Alaska
8:00p.m.-9:00p.m.	Jr. Female	Crt 2	NWT vs Nunavut

WRESTLING - Mildred Hall Gymnasium

<i>Individual Competitions</i>		
9:00am-3:00pm	Jr. Male/Female	Alaska
		N. Alberta
		Nunavut
		NWT

CULTURAL SCHEDULE

Performing Arts Lunchtime Concerts

Tree of Peace	12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
Baker Centre	12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
Northern Arts and Cultural Centre	12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Visual Arts Art Installation Project

Kimberlite Centre	10:00a.m.-6:00p.m.
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Visual Arts Contingent Visual Arts Exhibition

Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre	10:00a.m.-6:00 p.m.
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Visual Arts "Creartik"

Elks Hall	12:00pm-6:00 pm
Tree of Peace (performance)	6:30pm-9:00pm

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

DAILY WRAP-UP

The first day of snowboarding competition was good to Brooke Voigt. The Albertan won gold in junior female banked slalom.

Alaska takes the lead

Northern Alberta climbs ulu count, Yukon holds on to third

by Daniel T'seleie

Team Alaska had a strong day two, taking the lead in the ulu race.

The team's bantam male hockey team recovered from their loss to Northern

Alberta yesterday with a decisive win over Team Nunavut.

They already had a 9-0 lead after the second period, but this was no reason to slow down. "In the third period we stepped it up," said left winger Tyler Sands. The team scored eight goals in the third and

shot down Nunavut's offense for a final score of 17-0.

Alaska has two games left in the round robin tournament, and it won't be easy. Sands describes the competition as "intense," and says it's difficult adapting to the playing styles of teams from different coun-

tries. "It's a lot faster than I'm used to." Centre Aaron McInnes agrees. "It's more physical," he says. "They move the puck a lot too."

Alaska came out strong in the first day of snowboarding. The banked slalom competition was held yesterday and Americans Kyle

Gray and Sparky Kesler took gold in the juvenile male and female divisions respectively, both winning by less than half a second.

After a slow start on Monday Team Alberta North made themselves known yesterday. The team's snowboarders secured five ulus in banked slalom competition. Brooke Voigt dominated in the junior female division, winning by more than two seconds. She says it was a good day. "Usually I tend to hurt myself," Voigt says. "It was good to be injury free." Like most of the snowboarders she is competing in all the events, and is looking forward to today's rail jam, an event she trains for frequently. "I tend to hit [rails] more than anything else."

Tuesday was a good day for Team Yukon's ice and snow competitors. Ski biathlete Ryan Burlingame won his second gold ulu in as many days. He breezed across the finish line of the senior male's six-kilometre sprint just 1.3 seconds ahead of Team Yamal's Vitaly Gordievskiykh.

Cross-country skier Dahria Beatty also won her second gold of the Games. She finished the midjet female's 500-metre free qualification nearly five seconds before Alaska's Maranda Merkes. Athletes from Team Yukon also won medals in figure skating, snowshoeing and snowboarding.



Team Alberta North's Dillon Tallcree takes a practice throws in the before the snowsnake competition.



Yukon's Chelsea Duncan sends the stone down the ice in yesterday's junior female curling competition. The team has won two of their three matches so far, and has one left before playoffs begin.

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Opening Ceremonies

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

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hosted by Rassi Nashalik

CBC News: Northbeat
Weekdays at 6 pm MT
hosted by Nadira Begg



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Daily broadcasts to the **Yukon**, 4 pm PT
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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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DAILY WRAP-UP

Yamal masters table tennis

Saami soccer sleeps in, Greenland dominates badminton

by Jennifer McPhee

Saami soccer team players were still snoozing in their sleeping bags yesterday until ten minutes before their early morning soccer match. Because of schedule changes, the team thought it wasn't slated to play until much later in the day, said coach Bengt Are Jensen.

They madly scrambled to get to the game as quickly as possible, skipping breakfast. Despite the rude awakening, the resilient girls still managed to win their second game. "They didn't know they had a match at all," says Jensen. "They thought they could sleep in ... It was hectic. They fought well, despite no breakfast, and won five to four in the end."

This was the Saami crew's second game and second win. On Monday, they won five to four against Team Alaska. The team also played Team Yukon at 9 p.m. yesterday evening.

Team Yamal blew everyone away yesterday with its masterful table tennis skills. The team won every team event except the juvenile boys category, losing in that category to its only real rival, Greenland. This amazing accom-

plishment was "pretty easy" for Team Yamal because the tennis champions practice so much and take the sport – and winning – so seriously, says translator Irene Titkov. Russians have an "if you play, you are supposed to win," attitude about sport, she adds.

Emily Cao of Team Alaska was wowed by two juvenile Team Yamal tennis players, Vitaliy Ivchenko and Sidorov Ilya. "Both can rally back and forth for, like, ten minutes without stopping," she says. "It's pretty cool."

Team Yamal's figure skaters took top spot in each flight of the short program yesterday earning them a gold medal with Viktoriya Lobanova coming out on top. The result bodes well for their free skate performance today.

"The last category was very tough," says assistant chef de mission Yana Vrublevskaia. "All the girls had bad luck ... they just fell, and fell and fell, but the last girl [Lobanova] collected all her power and effort and won the gold medal for the team. What was most touching is that when she made her farewell bow, she just burst into tears ... It was so emotional."

Team Yamal sledge jump competitor, Rodion Taligin, spent the day watching Arctic sports. The

two-time sledge jump champion is hoping to win again this year at the competition on Friday. According to translator Alexander Kulyashov, Taligin can jump 70 sledges without stopping.

Team Greenland dominated at badminton, winning almost every match yesterday, and is also performing well in Arctic sports.

"They get better and better every time," said coach Kim Rosing. Arctic sports is a big part of Greenlandic culture, and Rosing was not surprised by the team's great results. One of the team's strongest performances so far came from Erneeraq Lindenhann who has now won gold in the airplane event in the past four games.

Bodil Mikaelson is one of just four female athletes on Team Greenland competing in Arctic sports. Her favourite events are the two-foot high kick and the Alaskan high kick. "Maybe because those are the ones that I'm good at," she says. "I'm not the best one, but I like it."

She doesn't get nervous competing in front of large crowds because she concentrates so hard that she blocks out the onlookers. "When you are about to kick something, it feels like you are alone," she says.



photo Jennifer McPhee

Yamal table tennis players Ilya Sidorov and Vitalik Ivchenko, from left to right, wowed onlookers with their impressive rally skills.



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Jordin Tootoo is the Official spokesperson for Nunasi Corporation.

DAILY WRAP-UP

Teams rack up day two ulus

NWT scores Dene record, Nunavut excels in volleyball and Nunavik heads into two-foot high kick finals Tuesday night

by Lisa Scott

They led the Games in the ulu count after day one, but on day two Team NWT saw its competition sneak up on them as Alaska and the Yukon racked up medals.

The male curling team from the NWT came back from a loss to Alberta on Monday to clinch their second game in a close match-up against Alaska, 9-8. They went on to win their next game against Nunavut as well. The team is made up of players John Murray, Robert Heimbach and David Aho, under the direction of skip Colin Miller.

Coach Maureen Miller watched her team closely as they faced Alaska on the ice. "I didn't feel like we had our best performance yesterday and we have a chance to improve today," she said during the game. Two of the curlers, Miller and Aho, are defending a bronze medal from the 2006 games.

"It's a long season. Their goal is just to improve along the way," says their coach.

The female team – of Natasha Petten, Danae Kelln, Jessica Hopkins and skip Kate Maksymowich – is 1 and 1 as well, after winning their first game against Nunavut and then losing to the Yukon. The single round robin continues Wednesday.

Team NWT broke their first record of the Games, as Travis Grandjambe won gold in the Dene games snowsnake competition. Competing in the open male category, Grandjambe threw a distance of 491.1 feet to best the old record of 460 feet.

Out at the snowboarding venue, competition got underway Tuesday with the banked slalom. Darryl Tait of the NWT took the gold medal in the short slalom race against some tough competition. Deidralee Alain Roy won bronze in the junior female category.

Snowboarding competition continues Wednesday with the quarter-pipe event.

Tuesday was another good day on the biathlon range for NWT, as athletes came out and represented once again. Brandon Norris won a gold in the snowshoe biathlon two-kilometre sprint, while his sister Alicia took home a gold in the female category. Snowshoe biathletes Colton Glaicar and Charlene Deneyoua added to the medal count with a silver each in the two-kilometre and three-kilometre

sprint races, while Madison Pilling won a bronze in the junior female two-kilometre sprint.

Both the female and male NWT volleyball teams are struggling early in the Games. After six matches both the boys and the girls teams have two wins and four losses. They have time to make it back into contention in the double round robin, as they get the chance to play each team twice.



Nunavut table tennis players Jutai Toonoo Jr. and Jackson Tootoo EII warm up between doubles games on Tuesday.

Nunavut

Team Nunavut has come out strong for the Games and Tuesday's play was no different. The open co-ed wrestling team emerged from six rounds of matches with the silver ulu on Tuesday. Alaska took the team gold, while Alberta North won bronze.

Nunavut managed to best its 2006 result at the Kenai Games, where they took the bronze medal in this event.

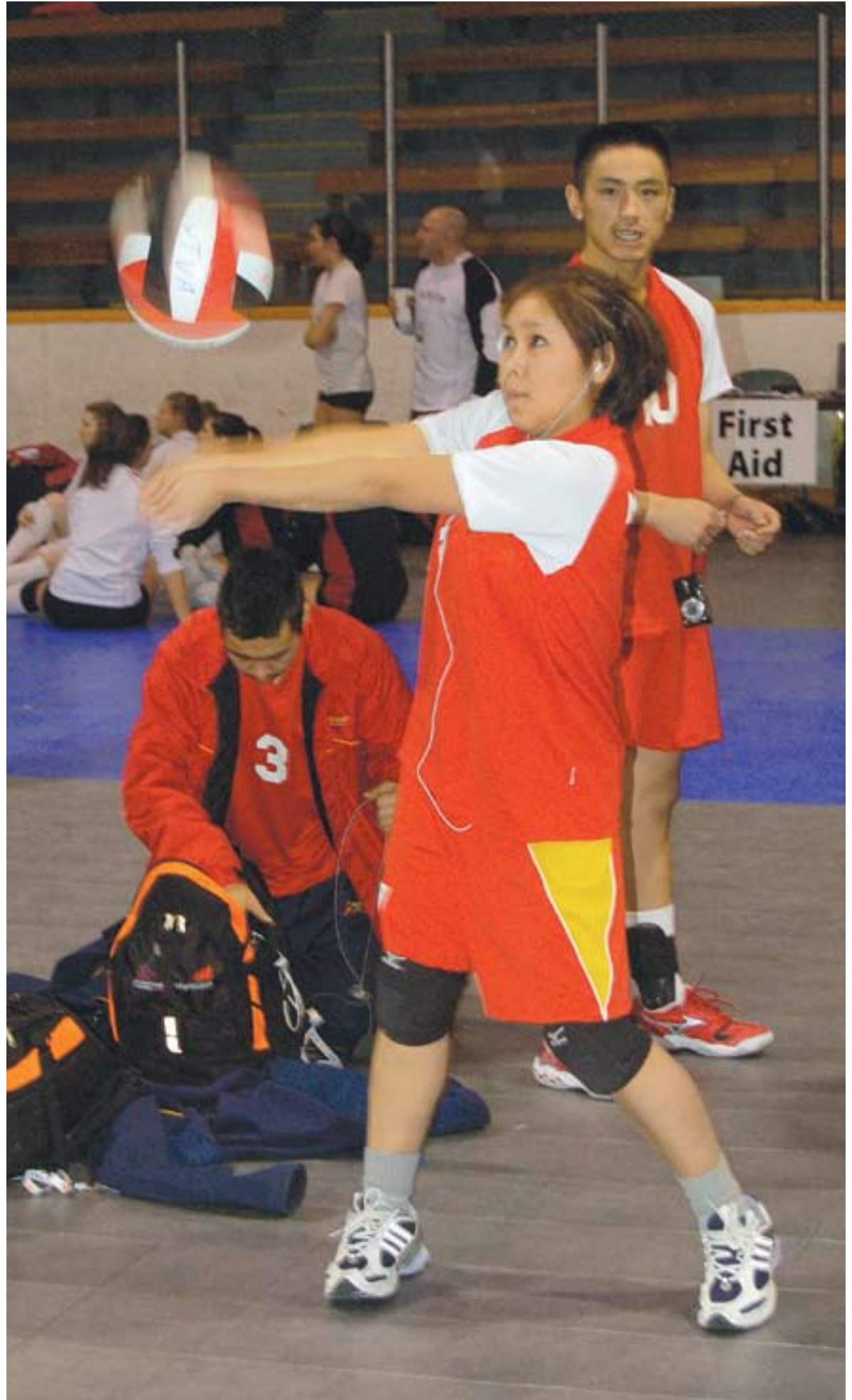
On the volleyball court at the Yellowknife Community Arena, team Nunavut was pretty hyped up Tuesday as double round robin action continued. The male team won all three games on Monday and headed into Tuesday's play early in the day. With a loss to Alberta and Greenland and one win against the NWT, that puts the team at four wins, two losses.

Stephan Angotialuk was still on a high after Monday's performance, attributing their first loss Tuesday to the early hour of play after the adrenalin highs of the previous day.

"We were wide awake last night. This morning we were tired," says the power hitter.

On the female side, the team struggled against some difficult competitors, failing to win a game on Monday and losing two games on Tuesday before getting their first win against Greenland. The girls head into Wednesday's competition down five games.

Up at the table tennis venue, team play continued Tuesday, with the powerhouse Russian team continuing to dominate the round robin. Nunavut has had a surge



Nunavut volleyball player Aalaa Michael, 18, warms up before a game Tuesday.

in interest in table tennis which shows in their eight-player team.

Coach and former Canadian National Team coach Attila Csaba has something to do with that. His players had to beat a field of 50 athletes just to make it onto the team, showing how much interest there is in the racquet sport in Nunavut right now.

For Kelvin Taipana, 13, the Games are a chance to learn from the more experienced Russian players. "They're really good," he says of their serves and their

movement on the court.

Taipana and doubles teammate Jutai Toonoo Jr. were on the court Tuesday and Taipana says he and his teammates are improving each day.

Nunavik

Team Nunavik competed in Arctic sports, Badminton, Dene games and the 2.5-kilometre snowshoe today.

Sandy Annanack won a gold ulu in the Dene games snow snake competition on a day when

records were being broken by competitors. Out at the snowshoe venue, juvenile male competitor Norman Angnatuk placed a respectable sixth place in the 2.5-kilometre cross country race, while Minnie Snowball also took sixth for the juvenile girls.

Mission staff Nancy Dea of team Nunavik says the team has had a great two days of competition.

"Everyone is doing well and everyone is placing well. It's a positive day, just like yesterday," she says of the small contingent.

“Their goal is just to improve along the way.”

photos: Lisa Scott

THE DAY IN PICTURES



Seventeen-year-old Zara Bachli of Team Yukon hugs her coach after winning a table tennis match against Rosa Lorentzen, 17, of Greenland, pictured left, at Range Lake North school yesterday.



Darryl Tait of Team NWT carves the first corner during a practice run of the Snowboard Slalom course yesterday.



Competitors make their way to the top of the hill during a warm-up for the Snowboard Slalom event at Bristol Pits Tuesday

photos: Merle Robillard



The Astronotes of Grande Prairie Alberta, consisting of Harrison Koehli, left, Dahsiell Dronyk, Thomas Grosset and Dexter Dronyk perform alternative rock at NAAC yesterday.

THE DAY IN PICTURES



Alex Robinson of Groundwork Sessions Funk Ensemble, a Whitehorse based dance group performs at NAAC Tuesday.



Alice Strick of Team Alaska competes in the two-foot high kick at Ecole St. Joseph school Tuesday.



Malu Olsen, a cross-country skier from Team Greenland, wraps up in a blanket to keep warm at the Yellowknife Ski Club Tuesday.



photos Merle Robillard

Blain Richter, Team Alberta cross-country skiing coach, uses some wax and a little elbow grease to prepare skis for the athletes before race time.



Seventeen-year-old Zara Bachli of Team Yukon serves against Rosa Lorentzen of Team Greenland at Range Lake North school Tuesday.

AROUND THE GAMES

A trinket-trading frenzy

AWG pins switch hands like crazy at Yellowknife Games

by Daniel T'selele

If you ask Alberta's Sydney Litwin how many pins she has collected at the Arctic Winter Games you'll only get one answer, "I have no idea." She keeps a scarf laden with shiny trophies hidden in her bag. "I have more, too."

It can be hard to keep track of so many pins, and many competitors, coaches and fans of the AWG couldn't tell you how many they have either.

Not everyone is a serious pin collector, but you would be hard-pressed to find a single athlete who has not traded at least a few. "Everybody [in the athlete's village] goes room to room and trades," said Alberta's Jenna Walsh.

"Our team is trading quite a few," said NWT's Zander Affleck, who has acquired 20 new pins so far. He too says people have been showing up in his room asking to trade.

Not all the pins are unique to the AWG. Many of the collectibles that are floating around are from cities, towns or sports organizations. "There's special Yellowknife pins," said NWT's Dylan Short. The NWT athletes, like most contingents, are given pins by their coaches so they may trade them with other competitors.

A quick poll of favourite pins is guaranteed to point you in one direction, Nunavut.

"We always have interesting

designs," said Nunavut's Manasie Kendall.

Each Nunavut athlete was given 24 pins for these Games, but there's a catch. The pins are divided into four sets of six, and when all six are combined they form a whale's tail. It's like a puzzle. This is the third time Nunavut has used the puzzle-pin design for the AWG. Past sets include a 10 piece iglu and an eight-piece inuksuk.

Nunavut athletes can't trade all their precious and popular pins immediately, though. They have to ration them throughout the Games. "[Athletes] from other places don't get all their pins at once. Each day they get a new pin," Kendall said. With fresh pins on the market every day the trading never stops, and neither does the haggling. Most athletes are willing to make a one-for-one trade, but some drive a hard bargain. "Some people try and get more for their pin, they think it's more valuable," Kendall said.

Kendall has been rebuilding his pin collection after the original was stolen at his first AWG in 2004. To this day he does not know who took them. Once word got out the other athletes, coaches and officials at those Games dug deep into their pockets and pitched in to get him started again.

Now Kendall has more pins than he can keep track of. He attaches them to towels, and has covered two so far. There's a good reason he keeps them on towels and not on his jacket, "it gets kind of heavy."



Above: Alberta's Sydney Litwin holds up a scarf full of pins. Most were collected at the 2006 Arctic Winter Games. It looks like a lot, but she has even more in storage.

Left: Nunavut speed skater Manasie Kendall holds up his Nunavut speed skating pin. Pins are a hot commodity at the Arctic Winter Games, and athletes trade them like stocks.



photos Daniel T'selele



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Hints

- Show your spirit and get your sports wear here.
- Art in here where the lights dance, come visit it when you get the chance

- A French name for home fashion
- Not all that glitters is gold, NWT's second one of these I am told.
- Where the bureaucrats meet for a coffee treat
- From big to small they have it all, gifts for all

- your Northern hearts desires
- So much more than a soup store
- Not for sculptors, not for painters, but holds more artists than Nashville can take
- Inspiration is very hard to find
- Not all gossip is news

Yesterday's winners

- Tara Naugler, Yk resident
- Hannah Clark, Team NWT
- Dana Polakoff, Team NWT
- Hanna Latour, Team NWT

CONTINGENT PROFILE

Team NWT represents

More girls than boys, more aboriginal players than ever before

by Jennifer McPhee

As the 20th Arctic Winter Games evolves into a competition with more sports and contingents, one of its three founding members is also evolving – into a very different team than it was in 1970.

The profile of Team Northwest Territories is changing with each Games and those changes are very apparent this time around. The 350-participant team is made up of 55 per cent females for the first time that chef de mission Doug Rentmeister can remember in his 20-year history with the competition. The team is also boasting more involvement from the territory's 33 communities. More than 45 per cent of the team members are from communities outside of Yellowknife, where the majority of athletes have historically lived.

"We've got strong rural representation," says Rentmeister.

Eighteen NWT communities are represented on the rosters for these Games. That is after a record 28 communities came out to the territorial trials, with 825 athletes vying for a spot on the team. These include communities like Colville Lake in the Sahtu region and the outpost of Fort Reliance.

With more communities participating, he says that naturally boosts the team's aboriginal involvement for the contingent.

"In previous Games, it was the other way around. We're now seeing a strong representation of our aboriginal brothers and sisters," says Rentmeister. "We have a strong aboriginal component that is indicative of our population base."

Events like snowshoe biathlon are leading the charge in the increase, with all eight of its members coming from outside the capital city of Yellowknife, with one athlete joining



photo Lisa Scott

Doug Rentmeister, chef de mission for Team NWT, says this is a very different team than those he's seen go to the Arctic Winter Games since he became involved in 1988.

the team from the tiny community of Trout Lake. Team NWT usually has a strong ski biathlon team, but the sport of snowshoe biathlon is just starting to grow in the territory. The young team snagged a total of six ulus in their first day of competition and six more on day two to make a total so far of four golden ulus, five silvers and three bronze.

The Dene games team has put on a new face, too. The trend in previous Games has been for one community to dominate the trials and make up the team. This year's 18-athlete team is made up of male and female players from all age groups, hailing from nine different NWT communities. The diversity of the squad is a sure indication this contingent is more diverse than ever before.

As for performance at these Games, Team NWT may have led the ulu count after day one, but Rentmeister isn't banking on holding off the competition for long. "It's not an easy feat to choose who our strongest opposition will be coming from," he says, adding that all the contingents are pretty awesome.

Regardless of the ulu count, Team NWT 2008 is a strong one, made up of players that truly represent the territory that has just more than 42,000 people spread across a massive landscape of over a million square kilometres.



photo Mele Robillard

The 2008 Team NWT features players from more communities outside the capital than ever before, as well as an increase in aboriginal and female athletes, like Michaelis Hurst pictured here.



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CONTINGENT PROFILE

Greenland pulls off bronze

Team strong in badminton, table tennis, and culture

by Jennifer McPhee

Team Greenland did so well at Arctic sports at the 2006 Games in Alaska, it decided to compete in Dene games for the first time in 2008.

On the first day of the Games, Alfred Lindenhann won a bronze medal in stick pull. "It was an unexpected first win," said Team Greenland chef de mission Claus Nielsen.

"We knew he was very good, but that he could win a medal was a surprise," says mission staff Finn Nielson.

Greenland's 125-member contingent also includes an amazing badminton team. "Badminton is a very big sport in Greenland," says Finn Nielson. "We have many good players."

Of course, Team Greenland is also expected to do well in Arctic sports, and has a top-notch table tennis team. Their tennis players are the only ones giving Team Yamal a run for their money. "We are normally one of the best to do well in table tennis," said Claus Nielson. "The Russians are our rivals."

Along with the sports already

mentioned, Team Greenland is competing in cross-country skiing, volleyball, and soccer this year. Probably, it won't do very well in cross-country skiing, said Claus Nielsen. "We hope for one or two medals, but we don't expect any," he says. "We have been good at cross-country skiing before, but now we are not so good."

Team Greenland's intermediate girls soccer team is also having a tough time. The team lost its first game 3-1 to Team Yukon on Monday, and lost again 7-0 to Team Alaska yesterday. One of the players got a red card early in the yesterday's game for too much contact and another player, Inaluk Rosing Petersen, suffered a minor muscle injury, although she continued to play anyway because there weren't any substitutes.

"It cost us a lot," said chaperone Arina Kleist. "All the players got real tired."

Also at this year's Games are six talented young Greenlandic cultural performers. They'll showcase Greenland's culture with dance, theatre, and sound during the cultural galas on Thursday and Friday. Greenland's performance, titled Sila, features a stunning light show

and the artists themselves become part of this scenography because their modernized costumes are embedded with lights.

Greenland's cultural contingent also demonstrated mask dancing, one of the oldest forms of theatre in the Inuit world, at the lunch time shows earlier in the week. The performers tell the story of the mask, and the symbolism behind it.

Mask dancing combines erotic and comical elements and was used to teach children about where they came from, and about fear.

"In the old times in Greenland, it was very important for children to know what fear is before they were confronted with something really dangerous," explains Anders Berndtsson, says chief executive officer of The Nordic Institute of Greenland, which co-ordinated Greenland's 2008 cultural program.

"If you didn't know the feeling of fear, so you could control it and react, you died when you were confronted with something. Nature in Greenland, as in all Inuit areas, is very beautiful, but it's also very harsh."



photo Jennifer McPhee

Inaluk Rosing Petersen of the Team Greenland intermediate girls soccer team nurses an injury during a match with Alaska on Tuesday.



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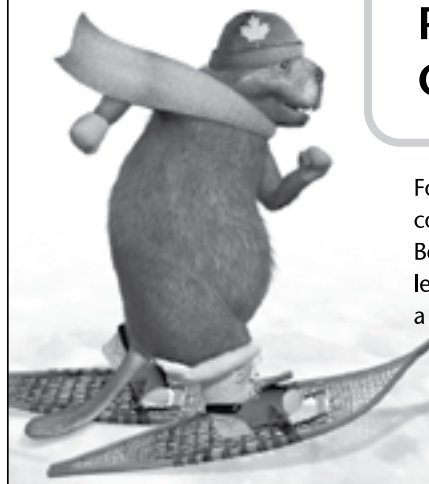
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AROUND THE GAMES

Pierre LePage of Chef Pierre's Catering and his staff are preparing tens of thousands of meals during the Arctic Winter Games.

Athletes kept well-fed

Chef Pierre and staff work hard to put 60,000 meals on the table

by Jennifer McPhee

It's chef Pierre LePage's job to ensure the multitudes of hungry, growing athletes at the 2008 Arctic Winter Games get enough to eat.

It doesn't appear that this will pose a problem. The food and supplies that arrived for the Games filled 11 semi-trailers.

"More than 300 kilos of food came in," said LePage on Saturday.

"The trailers came in on Wednesday and nobody has slept since. We just found the pork chops that are on the menu tomorrow."

The cafeteria was a vacant building until LePage and his crew arrived late last week to start unpacking the pallets and setting up the facility, which is located, fittingly, in the former home of Extra Foods on Old Airport Road.

LePage and his fleet of employees are serving up breakfast, lunch and dinner and participants can also graze on cheese and cold cuts between meals. The cafeteria is already a popular hang-out spot and the graffiti wall across from the entrance is getting more and more crowded.

The menu – supplied by the Arctic Winter

Games – consists of the same kind of food offered at the Canada Winter Games. Lunch and dinner include two starches, two soups, meats, vegetables and dessert.

It's too soon to say which foods will prove the most sought-after, but the kids seem to like what they're getting so far, says LePage. "One kid came up to me, a little guy, and said, 'You should come home and teach my mom how to cook turkey!'"

Saami cultural performers Elle Sofe Hentiksen and Inger Biret Gaup stopped by the cafeteria for a quick bite after arriving in Yellowknife on Saturday evening. In between bites, Hentiksen said the food was "good."

Incredibly, LePage expects to serve almost 60,000 meals by the end of the games. About 50 employees are working at the cafeteria and at the downtown prep centre.

His already-busy catering staff – roughly another 50 employees – are preparing culinary delights for receptions around town, and working at his two busy Yellowknife restaurants, Le Frolic and L'Heritage.

Le Page is used to cooking high-end fare, so the cafeteria experience is a bit different, he says. "It's low-budget, high volume."



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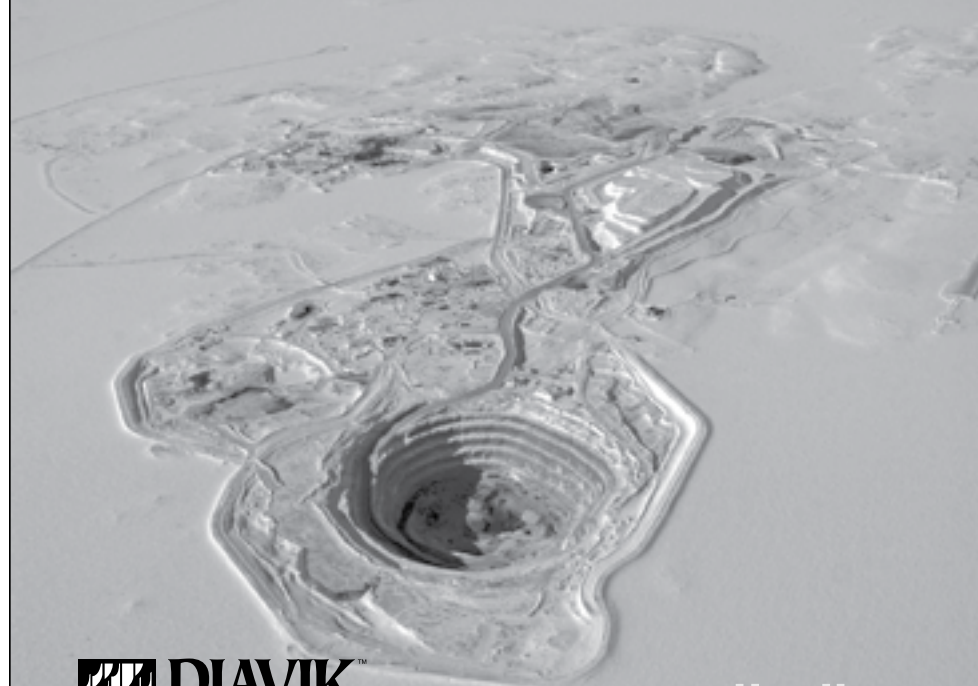
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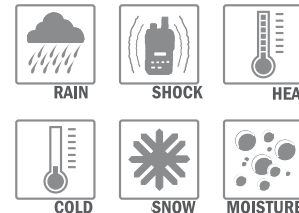
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ATHLETE PROFILE

Pain and glory of competition

Saami skier gives her all despite laundry list of injuries



by Jennifer McPhee

This is Team Saami's third time taking part in the Arctic Winter Games and cross-country skier Marja-Liissa Partapuoli is the only member to compete in all three games.

The 18-year-old took home three silver medals and one bronze medal at the last two games in Fort McMurray, Alta., and Kenai, Alaska.

When *Ulu News* spoke with her on Monday, she was "a little nervous and excited" because she was about to compete in the five-kilometre classic.

"That's my favourite," she says. "This is the day that I am going to give the most."

Partapuoli placed eighth in the event, likely because she is still recovering from a bad throat infection, skied despite a knee injury, and recently almost broke her foot playing soccer in the snow. She said she was going to try to ignore the pain in her knee and not let it hold her back.

Partapuoli is from Masjok, a Saami village in northern Norway with a population

of just 3,000. The town may be small, but a large number of skiers reside there, she said. Partapuoli comes from a family of skiers, and has pictures of herself skiing before the age of two. She started skiing even before that, and was skiing competitively before she was eight years old.

"I love the feeling," she says. "I like being outside and I like to move. It's always been like that. I love sports."

Sometimes, though, in the middle of a race, she wonders why she does it. "That's when it's really hard," she says. "When I finish, I can't wait until the next time. I forget all the pain. I'm a little sadistic. I like pain."

Over the years, she's made many friends from all over Alaska and the Yukon. "It's fun to meet them again," she says. "Some of them are not at these games."

Yesterday, Partapuoli competed in the 750-metre sprint. Finally she will ski in the 10-kilometre skating competition on Thursday.

This is Partapuoli's last Arctic Winter Games, something that makes her "a little sad," but she may come back as a coach. "It has been very fun to be in the Games."

Saami skier Marja-Liissa Partapuoli is passionate about cross-country skiing despite the pain it sometimes causes.

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ATHLETE PROFILE

Arctic sports all about tradition

Alaskan athlete's skills passed down from generations

by Daniel T'seleie

Most of us have seen the impressive displays of physical strength, stamina and endurance that are unique to Arctic sports, but not everyone is familiar with the culture and traditions behind these games.

"These games are very old, they've been passed on generation to generation," says Alaska's David Thomas. The 21-year-old athlete is competing in Arctic sports, and already has nine ulus from previous years.

He is not gunning to add to his medal count, though. "These games aren't like other sports, like cut-throat competition," Thomas says. He is more concerned with sharing his culture and achieving a new personal best, goals that are more in line with the traditional spirit of the games.

Thomas now lives in Palmer, Alaska, but he is an Inupiaq, from the Kotzebue area of northwestern Alaska. Before the amenities and securities of modern times, life on the land was harsh and people had to be strong both physically and mentally.

"They had to be tough in order to survive, and these games would help prepare for that," Thomas says. He cites the arm pull as an example. Two competitors sit facing each other, both linking the arm. When the competition begins they both pull, the first one to let go loses. This game helps prepare young hunters for pulling seals from the ice after spearing them.

The games, also known as kittik or anagtaq, are a traditional annual event for the Inupiat of Alaska. There are, and always have been, competitions every year near the winter solstice, known today as Christmas games.

"During the darkest and coldest time of the year, when you're that far north, the sun doesn't rise for about a month-and-a-half," Thomas says. "We'd play these games to lift our spirits." With only an hour or so of twilight each day, people did not travel much and preferred to stay in their camps and

compete in kittik. "It's a huge sense of community and camaraderie."

Thomas is competing in eight of the Arctic sports events, but he is strongest in the knuckle hop and one hand reach. He fully expects to make it to the final rounds of the one hand reach, and at 5'8 he says he will be one of the shortest finalists in a sport

where height matters. Technique is more important than size, according to Thomas.

His biological father, who taught him the one hand reach, had a very interesting technique that Thomas has not seen anywhere else.

"He balanced his entire body weight on his finger tips," he says, and adds the extra few inches of height can make all the difference.

Thomas is double jointed and has trouble replicating his father's style. "You have to be strong enough, and I can't do it, yet."

He learned kittik from his biological father and adopted father, both of whom played.

He has shared this knowledge with students in Anchorage and Palmer, and with many people at the 2008 Arctic Winter Games.

"It's really neat because all of us come from the Arctic region, but all from different areas and some of these people have never seen the games we play,"

Thomas is competing with a pinched nerve, which is "hindering" his performance. But you wouldn't know this unless Thomas told you, he's still as happy as a clam to be here. He came to the Games for fun, and his biggest goal is to "leave with a smile."

We'd play these games to lift our spirits.

photo Daniel T'seleie

Alaska's David Thomas demonstrates the technique used in the one hand reach. The goal of this Arctic sport is to balance your weight on one hand and touch a target with the other. It may be hard to see, but Thomas' legs are entirely off the ground.



GAMES Talk

Which event is the most exciting to watch?



Kiana Palamar, 13, Yukon, Arctic sports.

The Airplane, because it shows a lot of strength and it's cool the way they can hold their bodies straight.



Jordan Brass, 18, Alberta, volleyball

Soccer, because there are big crowds and a lot of action. I love it.



Chelsea Comeau, 16, NWT, basketball

Basketball, because you can learn a lot and put it in your game.



Simon Ningeok, 16, Nunavik, Arctic sports

Hockey, because I like to play it and there's a lot of action.



Nina Ruckhaus, 14, Alaska, snowshoe biathlon

Cross-country skiing, because it's really fast and looks very challenging.



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