



ULU NEWS

ARCTIC WINTER GAMES
YELLOWKNIFE 2008

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2008

*In today's
ULU news...*

Best dressed

Teams barter for
jacket, uniforms ...
See page 15

Friends for life

Athletes make
lasting connections ...
See page 10

Memory lane

Participants share
best experiences
of 2008 games ...
See page 14

MEDAL COUNT










Team	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
 Alaska	53	37	52	142
 NWT	25	29	22	76
 Yamal	35	27	11	73
 Yukon	19	13	22	54
 N. Alberta	10	21	14	45
 Nunavut	10	18	15	43
 Saami	5	5	6	16
 Nunavik	5	5	5	15
 Greenland	3	7	4	14



photo: Mete Fohlland

Saami performer Elle Sofe Henriksen dances at NACC during the AWG Cultural Gala.

Also inside: 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 – FRIDAY, MARCH 14

ARCTIC SPORTS - St. Joe's Gymnasium

8:00a.m.-12:00p.m.	Open Sledge Jump
	Jr. Sledge Jump

BADMINTON - Sir John Gymnasium

<i>Semi & Final Rounds</i>	
8:00a.m.-5:30p.m.	Jr. Male/Female, Juvenile Male/Female
	Singles, Doubles, Mixed, Courts 1-4

BASKETBALL - Weledeh Gymnasium

<i>Bronze Medal Game</i>	
1:00p.m.-3:00p.m.	Jr. Female
3:00p.m.-5:00p.m.	Jr. Male
<i>Gold Medal Game</i>	
5:00p.m.-7:00p.m.	Jr. Female
7:00p.m.-9:00p.m.	Jr. Male

BIATHLON SNOWSHOE - Yk Ski Club

9:30a.m.-12:00p.m.	4 x 3 Relay Competition
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CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING - Yk Ski Club

11:00a.m.-3:00p.m.	Relay Mass Start
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CURLING - Yk Curling Club

<i>Bronze Medal Game</i>	
9:30a.m.-12:20p.m.	Jr. Male 27: Bronze Ulu Loser vs Winner Jr. Male 25
	Jr. Female 28: Bronze Ulu Loser vs Winner Jr. Female 26
<i>Gold Medal Game</i>	
2:30p.m.-5:30p.m.	Jr. Male: Gold/Silver Winner Jr. Male 23 vs Winner Jr. Male 27
	Jr. Female: Gold/Silver Winner Jr. Female 25 vs Winner Jr. Female 28

DENE GAMES - Athletes Centre Main Stage

<i>Hand Games</i>	
8:00a.m.-1:00p.m.	Jr. Male
	Jr. Female
	Juvenile Female
	Open Male
4:30p.m.-6:00p.m.	FINALS

DOG MUSHING - Back Bay

11:00a.m.-12:30p.m.	Juvenile	5 Dog, 10km
2:00p.m.-3:30p.m.	Co-Ed Jr.	7 Dog, 13km

HOCKEY - Shorty Brown and Olympic Ice Surfaces

<i>Bronze Medal Games</i>			
9:00a.m.-11:30a.m.	Shorty	Midget	
11:30a.m.-2:00p.m.	Shorty	Bantam	
2:00p.m.-4:30p.m.	Shorty	Female	
<i>Gold Medal Games</i>			
3:00p.m.-5:30p.m.	Olympic	Bantam	
5:30p.m.-8:00p.m.	Olympic	Female	
8:00p.m.-10:30p.m.	Olympic	Midget	

INDOOR SOCCER - St. Patrick's and Weledeh Gymnasiums

8:00a.m.-9:00a.m.	St. Pat's	Jr. Male	1st vs 4th
8:00a.m.-9:00a.m.	Weledeh	Jr. Female	1st vs 4th
9:00a.m.-10:00a.m.	St. Pat's	Jr. Male	2nd vs 3rd
9:00a.m.-10:00a.m.	Weledeh	Jr. Female	2nd vs 3rd
10:00a.m.-11:00a.m.	St. Pat's	Juvenile Male	1st vs 4th
10:00a.m.-11:00a.m.	Weledeh	Juvenile Female	1st vs 4th
11:00a.m.-12:00p.m.	St. Pat's	Juvenile Male	2nd vs 3rd
11:00a.m.-12:00p.m.	Weledeh	Juvenile Female	2nd vs 3rd
12:00p.m.-1:00p.m.	St. Pat's	Intermediate Female	1st vs 4th
1:00p.m.-2:00p.m.	St. Pat's	Intermediate Female	2nd vs 3rd

<i>Bronze Medal Games</i>			
4:00p.m.-5:00p.m.	St. Pat's	Jr. Female	
5:00p.m.-6:00p.m.	St. Pat's	Jr. Male	
6:00p.m.-7:00p.m.	St. Pat's	Juvenile Female	
7:00p.m.-8:00p.m.	St. Pat's	Juvenile Male	
8:00p.m.-9:00p.m.	St. Pat's	Intermediate Female	

SNOWBOARDING - Bristol Pit

10:00a.m.-4:00p.m.	Quarter Pipe
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SNOWSHOE - Yk Golf Club

10:00a.m.	5km	Juvenile Male/Female
	7.5km	Jr. Female
	10km	Jr. Male

SPEED SKATING - Olympic Ice Surface

8:30a.m.-2:00p.m.	1000m	Juvenile
	1500m	Junior
	2000m	Juvenile Relay
	3000m	Junior Relay

TABLE TENNIS - Range Lake North Gymnasium

<i>Preliminary Rounds</i>	
8:00a.m.-12:00p.m.	Mixed Doubles
<i>Semi & Final Rounds</i>	
1:00p.m.-5:00p.m.	2 Player Teams
	Mixed Doubles
	Doubles
	Singles

VOLLEYBALL - Yk Arena, Courts 1 & 2

<i>Bronze Medal Games</i>	
12:00p.m.-2:00p.m.	Jr. Male
2:00p.m.-4:00p.m.	Jr. Female
<i>Gold Medal Games</i>	
4:00p.m.-6:00p.m.	Jr. Female
6:00p.m.-8:00p.m.	Jr. Male

CULTURAL SCHEDULE

Performing Arts Cultural Gala Evenings

Northern Arts and Cultural Centre	8:00 p.m.
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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	10:00a.m.-6:00 p.m.
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Visual Arts Art of the Spectator Exhibition

Tree of Peace	12:00p.m.-8:00 p.m.
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Full schedule and results can be found at the Arctic Winter Games website awg2008.ca

DAILY WRAP-UP

Team NWT's Darryl Tait hits a backflip in the junior male big air competition.

Team Yukon speed skater continues gold ulu haul

Alberta wrestlers pound competition, Alaska runs away with ulu lead

by Daniel T'seleie

Team Yukon won another ulu for dog mushing yesterday. Rachel and Ben Kinvig finished with a combined time of 30 minutes and six seconds in the four dog 7.5-kilometre juvenile co-ed team race. The time was good enough for gold.

This is Rachel's second gold ulu of the Games. The weather was cold, but not cold enough to affect the dogs, the team said. The fresh snow does affect performance, slowing the team down. But this is felt by all the teams.

The duo may have had some help from the course design, which is "good, but boring," Rachel said. "It just goes straight, there's no hills." Her dogs are used to running uphill.

Yukon speed skater Troy Henry took his third gold ulu of the week in the 777-metre junior male event. Henry finished a mere 0.12 seconds behind NWT's Angus Smith. Close finishes are a

familiar story for Henry. He won the 500-metre race on Tuesday by half a second and the 1,000-metre on Monday by only one tenth of a second.

Alaska is still leading in ulus. They've been averaging more than 30 a day since the start of the Games, and yesterday the Americans were true to form. The Alaskan snowboarders came out strong for the third day, winning four medals in the big air competition.

Wrestlers also had a good day yesterday. Americans took 10 ulus in Inuit wrestling, seven of them gold. This brings Alaska's ulu count to 22 for this week's wrestling events.

Allison Ducker and Hannah Summers earned another dog mushing medal for Team Alaska, finishing behind NWT's Jason Baxter and Alexis Campbell to win silver in the six dog – 10-kilometre junior co-ed team race. Summers also took the bronze in Wednesday's six dog – 10-kilometre junior co-ed race.



Ben Kinvig and his four-dog team cross the finish line in the 7.5-kilometre juvenile co-ed team race. He and teammate Rachel Kinvig had the fastest combined time and won gold in the event.

The Alaskan Dene games team put up a strong fight in the pole-push yesterday. They say the trick is teamwork and communication. Determination plays a big part too.

"You fall, you've got to get back up," said athlete Aurora Warrior. As of press time the pole-push

results were unavailable, but the team was confident they would perform well.

Wrestlers from Team Alberta North made a name for themselves on the mat yesterday. The team won seven ulus in the Inuit wrestling events. Devin Huggard-McInnis fought his way to gold

in the up to 82 kilograms male division.

It was another good day for Alberta's snowboarders. Their jumps won them four ulus in the big air competition. Boarders Alex Cyr and Brooke Voigt both won their third ulu in the event. For Voigt it was her third gold.

DAILY WRAP-UP

Greenland soccer unbeaten

Yamal and NWT form bond, Saami wins in cross-country skiing

by Jennifer McPhee

Team Greenland's junior male soccer team heads into the semi-finals tomorrow in first place. Greenland won their last non-playoff game yesterday, beating Nunavut 11-7. Even though the undefeated team continued its winning streak, it played its weakest soccer yet during this game, says chef de mission Claus Nielsen. The team and goalie over-relaxed and didn't perform to their usual standards because they were entering the semi-finals in first place no matter what, said Nielsen.

Team Yamal's junior boys are in second place heading into the semi-finals, followed by Team NWT. The two teams faced off yesterday, and the score was tied 3-3, until Azat Bikbulatov scored his third goal for Team Yamal in the last few minutes of the game.

Afterwards, Bikbulatov said the Russian soccer players had to quickly adjust to different rules and a different ball. The Russians are used to playing according to FIFA rules, and the ball used during these Games is softer and more bouncy, he says.

The team has basically had to learn a totally new way of play-

“
They're still
going strong.”

ing soccer, said coach Vyacheslav Teryukhov. Considering these adjustments, the team's performance is satisfactory, he says.

Team Yamal has really enjoyed playing against Team NWT, because the players on this team are technically strong, and also a nice bunch of people. In fact, Bikbulatov would like to establish some kind of continuous relationship with the team. So maybe next time the NWT Team could travel to Russia and play under international rules?

“That would be very good,” he says, with a smile.

NWT junior boys coach, Jack Simpson, says both teams have watched and admired each other's style of soccer over the course of the Games. Team Yamal is “technically phenomenal” and plays soccer with creativity, he says. Simpson said he would also like to keep in touch with Team Yamal.

Greenland's badminton players are still “rallying down the highway,” says Greenland chef de mission Claus Nielsen. “They're still going strong,” he says.

Team Greenland's junior male and female volleyball team played its first semi-final volleyball game yesterday. The junior boys lost 15-12 against Nunavut – in a match that went the full five games – and will play for the bronze medal tomorrow. Chef staff person Finn Nielsen said the team was disappointed that it didn't beat Nunavut yesterday. “But Nunavut plays well,” he says.

Unsurprisingly, Yamal racked up several medals in the open female figure skating team event yesterday, and earned more medals in biathlon and cross-country skiing yesterday.

It took gold in the biathlon four-by-four-kilometre junior mix (this result was still provisional as of press time). And Yamal's cross-country team won gold ulus in the junior male and juvenile female two-and-a-half-kilometre classic. In the two-and-a-half kilometre classic male juvenile division, Team Yamal secured the silver ulu.

For the second day in a row, Evgenly Ivanov surprised his team by winning a bronze snowboarding



photo Jennifer McPhee

Team Yamal's junior male soccer team is ranked second heading into the semi-finals

medal. Ivanov won his first medal in the rail jam juvenile male category on Wednesday, and his second in the big air juvenile male category yesterday.

This is Ivanov's first time snowboarding outside of Russia and it has been interesting for him to see how the sport has developed in other countries, he says.

Team Saami won one gold and

three silver cross-country skiing medals yesterday. It took the gold ulu in the juvenile male two-and-a-half-kilometre classic relay. And it won silver ulus in the two-and-a-half-kilometre juvenile female classic relay, the junior male two-and-a-half kilometre classic relay and the midget male two-and-a-half kilometre classic (results were still provisional as of press time).



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Jordin Tootoo is the Official spokesperson for Nunasi Corporation.

DAILY WRAP-UP

Nunavik Dene games coach Pauyungie Nutaraaluk huddles with her athletes before competition Wednesday.

Nunavut v-ball vies for gold

Medal rounds abound as teams try for ulus

by Lisa Scott

The week is quickly wrapping up and Team NWT is heading in the semi-final badminton competition strong today. Juvenile female Pooja Chugh enters the singles competition in first place with five wins ahead of Greenland and Yukon. Chugh has had good games so far and is also heading into the semi-finals in third place in female doubles with partner Gillian Waugh and in mixed doubles with partner John Stanga.

"It's going good so far. I'm making sure my leg is doing okay for semis and hopefully for finals," says Chugh about an injury in her leg she came into the Games with.

Waugh has had a tough games, pulling her shoulder and back muscles in a game against Greenland, leaving her out of the singles semis.

Badminton playoffs should be exciting for team NWT starting today at Sir John Franklin high school.

Over at the Bristol Pit snowboarding venue the popular big air competition started on Thursday morning. The weather was chilly with a nasty wind, but the athletes huddled by the fire between jumps and kept warm. The NWT was shut out of juvenile medals, but Logan Andrew awed the judges and took gold for junior males, while teammate Darryl Tait topped up his medal count with a

bronze. On the female side Deidralee Roy won bronze.

At the hockey rink, the junior girls team made the playoffs, playing Thursday night against Alberta. That match determines if they make it to the gold medal game on Friday. The bantam boys are also in the playoffs round. Scores for both games were not available by press time.

Nunavut

Team Nunavut had another good day at the speed skating oval, as Manasie Kendall won his third bronze in the junior boys 777-metre race. The junior boys rivalry of Troy Henry of the Yukon, Angus Smith of NWT and Kendall

has continued all games, Henry took gold and Smith won silver in Thursday's race.

David Coulombe continued his winning streak Thursday, winning the 666-metre juvenile boys final. Coulombe now has two golds and a silver in his pocket from this week's speed skating action.

Over on the volleyball courts the Nunavut boys team has had an incredible tournament, coming into the semi-finals in second place with six wins and four losses. They defeated Greenland in semi-final play on Thursday and will advance to the gold medal match against Alberta Friday night. Should be an exciting game to see.

At the hockey rink Nunavut's

"I'm making sure my leg is doing okay for semis and hopefully for finals."



Steven Hussey of team NWT in the big air competition held Thursday at Bristol Pit.

midget boys are having a great tourney, entering the playoffs on Thursday. They played Alaska, but lost 10-4. They'll play the bronze medal match this morning versus NWT at the Multiplex arena.

In a nail-biting game, Nunavut edged team NWT 77-76 in Basketball semi finals to advance to the gold medal match today.

Nunavik

Team Nunavik may only be competing in four sports at these Games, but the athletes are holding their own on the badminton court. Noah Annanack is through to the semi-final round in mens singles play, going in with five wins and only one loss. He plays Greenland today as the playoffs begin.

Annanack and doubles partner Jari Leduc advance to the finals,

and tied for third place. They start playoff action today against the undefeated team from Greenland.

On the girls side Vanessa Aragutak and Anna Keatainaq didn't make it to the semi-final rounds, ending with respectable finishes in womens singles and doubles play.

Nunavik's young snowshoers are finished up the sprint races at the Yellowknife Golf Course and compete in the long distance events of five-kilometres, 7.5-kilometres and 10-kilometres today. The team favours the long-distance over the sprint races as the athletes come from a cross-country running background.

Team Nunavik also competed in the one-foot high kick yesterday and the pole push. Results weren't available by press time.



NWT's Chelsea Comeau goes up for a shot in the last girls basketball game before playoffs. Russia won the match 81-65.

THE DAY IN PICTURES



Gymnastics at the Yellowknife Multiplex during the Arctic Winter Games 2008.



photos: Merle Robillard

Jari Leduc, 17, of Team Nunavik watches badminton action at Sir John Franklin high school.



The Big Air Snowboard competition at Bristol Pit during the Arctic Winter Games 2008.



Nunavik teammates Olivia Ikey, 19, left, Steven Gordon, 17 and Linda Makiuk, 19, make their daily call home to family at the Northwestel Athlete's Centre Tuesday.

THE DAY IN PICTURES



Nicole Phillips of Team Northern Alberta competes in junior female curling at the Yellowknife Curling Club.



Jeferson Sanders of Team NWT rides the bus from the Northwestel Athletes Centre Tuesday.



Allison Winarski, 15, and partner Andy Tan, 15, (not pictured) compete in the Juvenile Mixed Doubles Badminton at Sir John Franklin High school during the Arctic Winter Games 2008.

photos: Merle Robillard



Team Alaska, right, pushes Team Yukon out of the circle during the juvenile female pole-push competition in Dettah during the Dene games.

AROUND THE GAMES

Arctic Winter Games forge long-lasting connections

Friendships endure for years after

by Daniel T'seleie

With thousands of athletes in town for the Arctic Winter Games everyone is meeting new people and making new friends. But what's the best way to stand out in a sea of random faces?

Try styling your hair into a killer mohawk, it worked for Kelly Tuktudjuk. "Lot's of people take pictures," says the volleyballer from Repulse Bay, Nunavut. Once the ground is broken there's no shortage of things to talk about, his home town is a good place to start. "People don't know where the location is, I have to tell them," Tuktudjuk says.

Sparking up a conversation isn't always easy, especially when language barriers come into play. Tuktudjuk has had an interesting time trying to converse with the Greenland athletes at the lodgings. "Their coach, he can speak English. I usually talk to him."

The talkative team representing



Robin Sproule, former AWG athlete and official at these Games, caught up with some old friends at a dinner for alumni on Tuesday.

Alaska in Dene games has made some new friends from as far away as Russia. Introductions were the easy part.

"They gave us cards that said their name in English," says Christina Glenzel.

After a little research the Americans found an innovative way of bridging the communication gap and keeping the conversation flowing. "We found this translator on the Internet," says Chelsea Morrow. The online program converts text from one language to another, but it isn't foolproof. "Sometimes it doesn't make sense," Glenzel adds. The nonsense statements are always good for a laugh.

It's not just youth who are celebrating new friendships this week. Twenty alumni from the first AWG in 1970 were invited back by the host society to attend these Games as special guests. They got a chance to catch up on old times at a special dinner on Tuesday night. "I met lots of people. Some I've slowly lost touch with, but [the AWG] is a stepping stone to meet great new friends," said Robin Sproule, a veteran athlete who represented the NWT in five events over 12 Games. She has kept in touch with athletes she met years ago, mostly by letter



Models display some AWG gear from past years during a dinner reception for alumni.

or phone. "We didn't have the e-mail system," Sproule said. Today's athletes are all about e-mail, and as Glenzel says "who knows" how many e-mail addresses they have exchanged so far. Well, Tuktudjuk

does, but he prefers to stay in touch by phone.

You might think that rivalry between competitors would surpass the instinct to be nice, but it doesn't. Tuktudjuk has reconnected

with four or five of Team Alaska's volleyball players that he competed against at the last Arctic Winter Games, and the conversations are always friendly. "They are good people," Tuktudjuk says.



This isn't Kelly Tuktudjuk's first photo of the week. His hair is a big draw, and he's been saying "cheese" quite a bit. Athletes from other contingents are also interested in hearing about his home town of Repulse Bay.



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For only FIVE DAYS you will have a chance to seek,
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You will find the hints in the ULU NEWS,
You will have from TEN to FIVE daily to solve all the CLUES.

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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.

Hints

- Going on the land and need some gear? Kit up your camp and get it here.
- Where glass gets a second life
- Go down the hill and on the right, art in a log building- morning is night.
- Hold on one second, someone else wants to say hello!

- Skis that fly
- It is not quantity but quality that counts
- No chairs to sit, but many books to read
- The only visible piece of Inuit Art in Old Town
- The largest solar panel in Yellowknife
- The gallery where morning is broken with all the colours of the rainbow

Yesterday's winners

- Breda Marian Teh, Victoria, B.C.
- Anika Affleck, Yellowknife
- Chloe Hoeschsmann, Yellowknife
- Chris Yurris, Yellowknife

Raven artists

- Donna Shreiner
- Ann Timmins

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

ATHLETE PROFILE

There can be only one

Twin brothers from Greenland battle for gold in Arctic sports

by Jennifer McPhee

Team Greenland identical twins Pilo and Minik Rasmussen will battle each other for gold in the open male knuckle hop and head pull today.

Only one athlete can win, but the 24-year-old brothers don't let sibling rivalry get to them. That's how games work, they say. Whatever happens, they'll accept it, learn from the experience and use it to make them stronger athletes. "It will be good for us," says Pilo.

In fact, competing against each other works to their benefit. "I think that's what makes them champions," says Tony Fisker, another Team Greenland Arctic sports competitor, who translated the interview. "They fight against each other and it makes them better. They are both at the same level."

On Wednesday, Pilo won a bronze ulu in the open male triple jump, and Minik placed fourth. At the last Arctic Winter Games in Alaska, Pilo won four medals: gold in triple jump and head pull, bronze in kneel jump and silver for all-around athlete. Minik didn't attend the 2006 Games because of an injury.

Being together this year is great because they can support each other. "We don't get homesick or anything because we are always there for each other," says Pilo.

Do they ever fight? They did when they were younger, but now fighting each other would be too dangerous because they're both equally strong, they say. They could really mess each other up.

Fisker, who lives in the same town as the twins, says the brothers were his idols when he was younger and they were his coach. They both excel at every single sport, and they're in incredible physical shape. If professional athletes existed in Greenland, these two would be paid to compete, says Fisker.

Minik and Pilo both have the same four tattoos. And their personalities are also almost the same, says Fisker. "They're equally nice ... They are good to everybody. They don't get mad and when they do get mad, they keep it under control. They are very good boys."

The best aspects of the Games are catching up with friends from past games, meeting new friends, and competing with everything they've got, they say.

After their triple jump competition, two female athletes asked to have a photograph taken with them. It's something that happens a lot, but they're used to it now and it's ok because they'll never see them again, they say. So do their girlfriends like all this? "Maybe not," says one. "No," says the other.

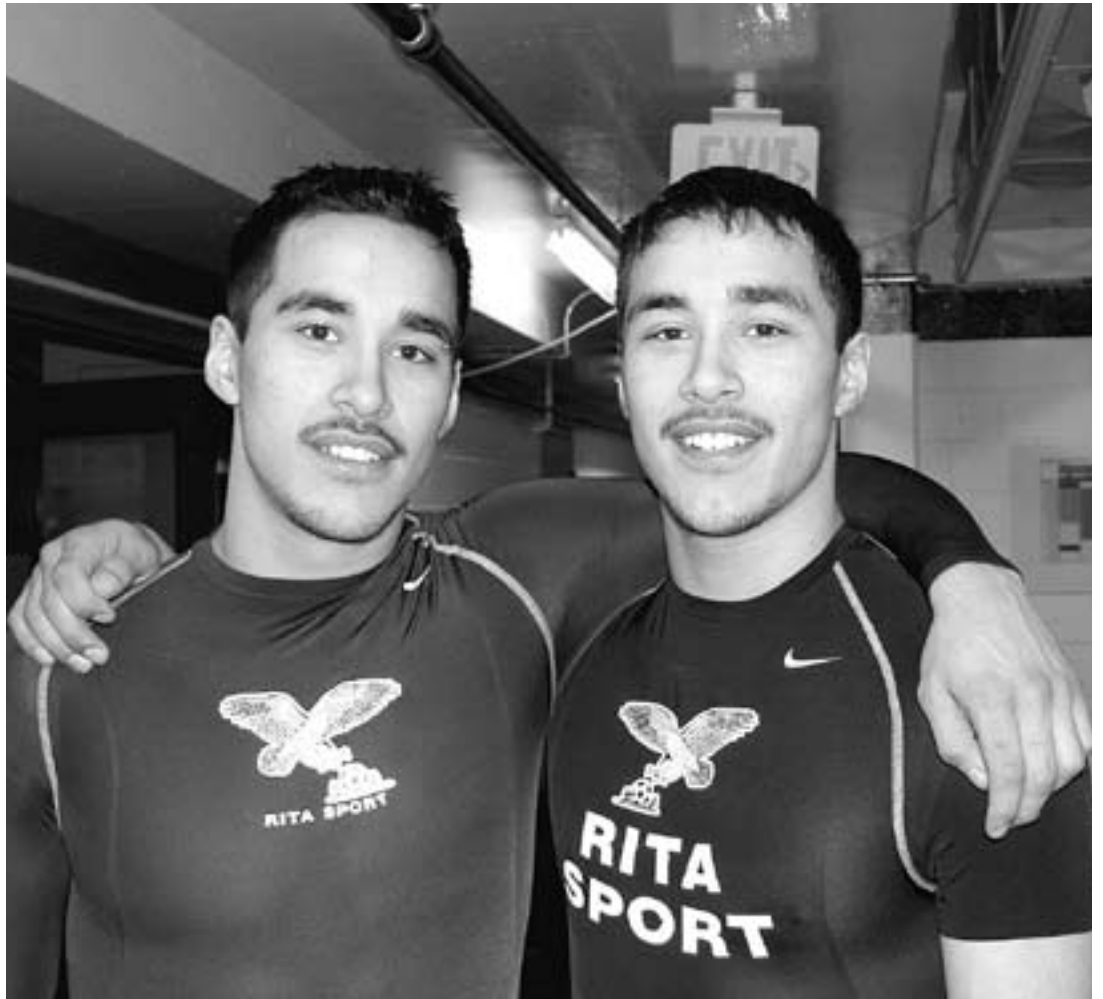


photo Jennifer McPhee

Identical twin brothers Minik and Pilo Rasmussen, from left to right, don't let competing against each other affect their relationship.

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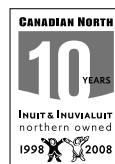
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CONTINGENT PROFILE

Creeping up on the competition

Sports involvement increasing in young territory of Nunavut

by Lisa Scott

With each set of Arctic Winter Games Team Nunavut seems to be creeping up on the competition, no longer hanging out in the shadow of the larger, stronger contingents.

With athletes like Ronald Anawak in Arctic sports and Sarah Ali in speed skating both scoring golden ulus and other up and coming athletes strutting their stuff on the ice, in the arenas and on the courts, this team can no longer be dismissed. Even sports where the young territory doesn't have a long history, like wrestling or table tennis are starting to breed strong Nunavut athletes.

Chef de mission Frank Tootoo has noticed the strength of his team growing in recent years and credits much of it to an increase in volunteers coaching and officiating



photo Lisa Scott

Frank Tootoo says his athletes are getting stronger and better than ever before.

in home communities in sports like speed skating and hockey.

"We have people involved with programs ... and they realize that it's good for kids to be involved in sports and to be active," he says. As generations change in the territory, the recognition of the benefits of physical fitness are increasing and that's resulting in more sports

activity, he says.

More parents are getting involved in sports in Nunavut and the resulting development is obvious to see at these Games.

"We've always had top athletes in different sports, but I really notice it rising as a whole now," says Tootoo. "I see a higher level of athletes and their abilities."

Evidence of this movement can be seen in sports like table tennis, coached by Attila Csaba. The young team already has a bronze medal in the junior girls doubles from Mahik Havioyak and Pia Tikivik in a field that is usually dominated by strong international players. Csaba has started a table tennis movement in Kugluktuk and he's seen the sport pick up in communities like Cape Dorset, Coral Harbour and Iqaluit.

"Greenland and Russia have very strong programs and we are on the way to developing something we can be competitive with them," says Csaba.



photo Merte Robillard

Elizabeth Irkootee of Team Nunavut competes in the Arctic Winter Games juvenile dog mushing on Back Bay in Yellowknife.

The territory of Nunavut is growing, too. In 2001, two years after it became a territory, there were about 25,000 people. That number has jumped to almost 30,000 and with new people moving in and bringing new sports expertise with them, the involvement in sports is growing too.

This team of 220 athletes and 60 coaches, officials and mission staff added a couple of sports to this year's games as well. A female

gymnastics team was sent for the first time, as well as two dog mushing teams. Usually the latter sport is too expensive to fly the dog teams to far off cities.

As the games hit the final two days, Nunavut is really showing itself to be a competitor, though Tootoo says it's not about the medals. It's not his goal to win ulus, he says, but rather to show off Nunavut's strengths to the visitors and players here and to have fun doing it.



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Photo: Ron Rose

CONTINGENT PROFILE

The pride and joy of Alberta

Young team shows dedication to their sport

by Daniel T'seleie

Dene games athlete Skye Quintal-Janvier may exemplify the grit of Team Alberta North.

You might say the event hasn't been everything that Janvier may have hoped for. On Sunday, she slipped on the ice during the opening ceremonies and suffered a concussion which forced her out of competition on both Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday, she had to leave the Games due to the passing of a family member.

Despite it all, she competed Wednesday morning and managed to win the gold ulu in the junior female finger pull. It is one of four ulus for the Dene games team, which played the rest of the week without Janvier.

It's that kind of determination that is keeping Alberta North in a close race with Nunavut and the Yukon for fourth place in the ulu count. It's an impressive performance considering the team's conspicuous absence from several sports such as dog mushing, basketball and table tennis. The Albertans are only competing in about 60 to 70 per cent of the events, said media liaison Scott Fraser.

Northern Alberta is represented by 213 athletes and coaches from 28 communities, all north of the 55th parallel. Most athletes have only had the chance to train for a few days with their teammates before coming to Yellowknife, NWT to compete. But this isn't the case for all the sports.

All eight snowboarders and both coaches from Team Alberta North are from Fort McMurray. The boarders have excelled this week, and have taken 13 ulus in the three days of snowboarding competitions.

Team Alberta North is also full of rookies, but this is a good thing says Fraser. "The Games are meant to provide an opportunity to new athletes." But don't take their experience as a reflection of their ability.

"We've been doing pretty good," said Dene games competitor Misty Marten. She was introduced to Dene games during the AWG tryouts in January. "My friend told me, 'try out', so I did." Marten beat 60 would-be competitors in the snow snake tryouts and made the team. Not bad for a first try.

She has taken a liking to Dene games, and her teammates have taught her many things in the past two months.



Robbie Rebus of Team Alberta North goes for a quick flight in one of the most exciting events in snowboarding, big air.

Training opportunities in Dene games and Arctic sports have increased in the past few years and more people are coming to tryouts, Fraser says. This is a trend

Team Alberta is happy to see. "We always send the Dene games and Arctic sports teams," says Lenny Richer, mission staff in charge of Dene games and

Arctic sports for Team Alberta North. These traditional sports are rooted in Arctic life and culture, and "that's what the Games are about," Richer adds.



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AROUND THE GAMES

The Games on instant replay

Athletes and participants share their AWG highlights

by Lisa Scott

During one hectic week, Yellowknife has morphed from the capital city of the Northwest Territories to the bustling hub for the Arctic Winter Games. Everyone is involved somehow, from store owners to bus drivers to, of course, the athletes. No one seems to be working at anything except making these Games the best they can be.

While teams have descended on the city to compete for hundreds of gold, silver and bronze medals, the true spirit of the Games that resonates with everyone is about the people and cultures filling the city.

Badminton teammates from Team Yukon Abbie Rotondi, Vanessa Carlson and Jerome Belanger have enjoyed the action on the court, but say hanging out with teams like Greenland, Yamal and Saami has been a highlight.

"I especially like the Yamal people. They're really interesting," says Belanger. The 14-year-old even looked up some Russian words so he could communicate, learning to say "Hi my name is Jerome" and "Bye." He's tried sign language to chat with the Russians as well.

"I think it's awesome that we get to meet people from other

cultures," he says. The trio has also been impressed with the volunteers at the games and their friendliness.

Over at the Bristol Pit snowboarding venue loud tunes have been playing and the announcer has been entertaining everyone with hilarious commentary. With a windchill factor above any other venue in the city, the snowboarders have had to deal with the cold all week.

Wyatt Martin of Alaska warmed up around the fire on Thursday during the big air competition and talked about his highlights of the week.

"The rail jam. It was a lot of fun and there were a lot of good riders out," says the 16-year-old. He placed fourth in the competition, just out of the medals.

"It's kind of cool to hang out with other teams and to see their different views," he adds. The Alaskan athlete was impressed with the helpfulness of his peers, especially after he got many offers of the use of a snowboard after he busted his board earlier in the week.

Yamal snowboarder Evgeny Ivanov spoke through an interpreter about how amazing his week in Canada has been.

"I've never met such friendly and kind people. It's amazing how

friendly and helpful everyone is," he says.

"Everything is terrific. It's been my best vacation ever," he says jokingly of his first trip out of Russia. Despite the small snowboarding venue at these Games, Ivanov considers Canada to be the home of snowboarding and was impressed to see snowboarders from other countries with different styles and development.

Hockey highlights

Northwest Territories hockey players still have their minds on the Games as they look back on the week and try to sum it up.

Andy Williams was pretty stoked to get their team's first win against Nunavut earlier this week, even though the goaltender didn't get to play the net.

For Fort Smith player Nagidhe Paulette, playing with a team that ups the competition a few notches from his home team is the best.

While sportsmanship is apparent in all the sports at the Games, Gerald Pascal's highlight of the week shows off the more contact-oriented nature of his sport.

"Laying out Alaska's captain was good," he says about the NWT midget boys' Tuesday game against Alaska.

The Games weren't just for the



Photo Lisa Scott

Athletes warm themselves up by the fire at the snowboarding venue. Snowboarders say they were impressed with the friendliness of the people at these Games.

athletes though, with each team featuring a large cultural component, too. Jeanette Kakfwi and Cara Manuel have been working with mentor Kirsten Carthew learning the ins and outs of filmmaking at the games. They are taking part in the Film Arts Program and have been bustling about from venue to venue shooting footage of the Games.

They both enjoyed the snowboarding and liked watching the "cool air" in the big air competition. They made sure to catch some Arctic sports action too, if

only to check out some of the cute guys competing.

The Fort Good Hope participants were also excited to learn about filmmaking. "I learned a lot of things about the camera and filmmaking," says Manuel.

As the Games enter the final two days and the competition ratchets up a notch, the participants at the 2008 Games seem to have really captured the spirit of competition and truly become "Northern stars inspired by dreams" – this year's Games slogan.

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AROUND THE GAMES

photo: Mervin Redland

Closest to the camera: These Team Alaska girls say they are not big fans of their uniforms. Front to back: Leah Francis, Heidi Doner, Abby Query, Sid Browning.

Let the clothes-swap begin!

Athletes search for most coveted uniforms

by Jennifer McPhee

As the Arctic Winter Games winds down, the clothes swapping begins. So which teams' gear is proving the most sought-after this year?

Definitely not their uniforms, says a group of girls on the Alaskan snowshoeing team. They'll have to settle for whatever offers they get since all the other teams have better uniforms.

Their uniforms look like any other coat, and are way too big, they say. "Someone asked if I wanted to trade my coat for a pin," says Leah

Francis. "I almost agreed."

The Alaskan girls love Team Saami's multi-coloured outfits the most. It would be cool to have a uniform from an exotic country, and to know that your own stuff is floating around somewhere so far away, says Francis. "Maybe someone will think Alaska is cool and exotic, but I doubt it..."

NWT's blue and white uniforms and Greenland's red uniforms are among the most coveted this year.

Hope Charpentier of Team NWT started trying to line up a Greenland girl to trade with on Wednesday. Finding someone was tough at first. About 15 girls rejected

Someone asked if I wanted to trade my coat for a pin. I almost agreed.

her offer outright.

"It was so disappointing," she says. Finally, she cut a deal with someone outside the computer lab.

The transaction hasn't occurred yet, but Charpentier took down the girl's sport and room number so she can track her down.

NWT soccer player Justin Doyle says he wants a Greenland or Yamal jersey, partly because these teams are excelling at soccer, but also because it's rare to have the chance to trade stuff with people from other countries.

Some athletes can't bear to part with their own gear. Sarah Brenton of Team NWT will probably hang onto her uniform, even though she's been offered cold hard cash for it. She likes her uniform because it stands out more than the others.

The only trade she would even consider is with Team Greenland.

On the other hand, Dayna Thompson of Team Yukon is a big-time trader. She loves Nunavik's fur-lined jackets, but she's already promised her coat to someone from Team Alberta. She's happy with this trade and likes that Alberta's jackets are made by North Face.

At the last Games, she traded every single item she had. She even traded her jacket for a warm-up jersey because she liked it so much. "It's all in the fun of the Games," she says. "I like to go home with something new."

GAMES Talk

What activity did you enjoy most outside your sport?



Carson Sieben, 15, volleyball, Alberta

We haven't had time to do anything outside volleyball because we've been focused on our sport.



Pauyungie Nutaraaluk, Coach, Dene games, Nunavik

Enjoying spending time with my girls cheering on our other teams.



Eric Chalker, 13, speed skater, NWT

Trading pins. I've got a really big collection now and I just started this week.



Chelsea Morrow, 12, Dene games, Alaska

The beach party. We swam and used the rock climbing wall. There were also prize draws.



Chantai Minet, 16, basketball, Yukon.

Taking in the other sports. The timing of the other events was convenient.



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