

Calgary tops Gateway rankings yet again

MARCH 30, 2010 - 2:15AM

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Canada West has once again dominated our top-10 rankings, as the three leading schools all hail from Canada's two western-most provinces, and this year's champion is familiar to the top spot having been atop last year's *Gateway* rankings. Here's a look at how each respective schools earned their way inside the rankings.

1. Calgary Dinos (139 points, Previous rank: 1)

For the second consecutive year, the Dinos claimed the top spot in our rankings by virtue of winning three national championships. A powerhouse in swimming, the Dinos captured both the men's and women's titles with the help of the CIS Rookies of the Year Bogdan Knezevic and Allison Lang. One of the biggest surprises of the year came in men's volleyball, where the Dinos dispatched of Dalhousie and the two-time defending champion Golden Bears in five sets, before taking down Trinity Western in four sets to claim the school's first men's volleyball national crown.

Calgary's athletic success included a pair of second-place finishes. The Gridiron Dinos turned in one of those runner-up finishes, as Calgary dropped the Vanier Cup to Queen's Golden Gaels. The women's wrestling squad claimed the Dinos other second-place finish. Solid performances by the cross-country and track teams also contributed to the Dinos' athletic achievements this season.

2. UBC Thunderbirds (126.5 points, Previous Rank: 6)

UBC led all Canadian schools with seven podium finishes in 2009/10 — however, none was more impressive than their women's volleyball squad, who capped off an undefeated season with their third-straight national championship

inside the U of A Main Gym. The women's field hockey squad was also golden in capturing a record 12th McCrae Cup with a 6–0 pasting of the Pandas in the final, and the women's and men's swim teams finished second and third, respectively. Three UBC athletes also captured Player of the Year honours in their respective sports: Josh Whyte (men's basketball), Liz Cordonier (women's volleyball), and Martha McCabe (swimming).

3. Alberta Bears/Pandas (119.5 points, Previous Rank: T3)

It was another successful all-around season for Alberta's athletic teams as they wowed fans on the ice, on the courts, and on the pitch. The most triumphant U of A team was Pandas hockey, who captured their record seventh national championship on the strength of three-straight shutouts from goaltender Dana Vinge. The hockey Bears, however, could not emulate the Pandas, finishing a promising season with a heartbreaking second-place finish. The Pandas field hockey team also shined by virtue of its second consecutive silver medal at the national tournament. The cross-country, swimming, curling, and volleyball teams also turned in solid performances this year.

4. Guelph Gryphons (112 points, Previous Rank: 5)

By running past the competition and claiming both the men's and women's cross-country national titles for the second year in a row. The Gryphons proved that excelling in the marquee sports is not necessary to make our top 10. Matt Brunsting took home male Athlete of the Year honours in cross-country, while teammate Genevieve Lalonde was named the women's Rookie of the Year in track and field. Guelph nabbed the national championship in men's track and field, but finished fourth on the women's side. The women's rugby squad also contributed with their third consecutive bronze medal.

5. Toronto Varsity Blues (90.5 points, Previous Rank: 7)

Jumping up two spots from last year's ranking, the Blues didn't win a national championship this year, but used a trio of second-place finishes in men's swimming, and women's cross-country and track and field to garner plenty of points. Wrestler Shujon Mazumber was named Athlete of the Year in his sport, as did swimming sensation Colin Russell and cross-country star Megan Brown. Toronto also notched top-seven finishes in women's field hockey, volleyball, soccer, and swimming, as well as men's soccer.

6. Laval Rouge et Or (80.5 points, Previous Rank: T3)

The strongest athletic school from La Belle Province, the Rouge et Or were once again a force to be reckoned with on the gridiron until they were upset in the Mitchell Bowl by the eventual Vanier Cup Champions from Queen's. Nonetheless, Laval had reason to be proud as their men's soccer squad dispatched rival McGill 3-2 in the gold-medal match to claim the school's first national championship. Both volleyball squads also had successful seasons as the women attained their first podium, placing with a bronze, and the men rode an undefeated season into nationals where they eventually finished fourth.

7. Windsor Lancers (74 points, Previous Rank: 8)

Co-hosts of this year's track and field nationals, the Lady Lancers failed to disappoint their hometown fans by running, throwing, and jumping their way to a second-straight national title, while the men captured silver. Hurdles star Noelle Montcalm was named CIS Athlete of the Year in women's track events, and Dennis Fairall once again received track and field Coach of the Year honours. Success for the Lancers also came on the hardcourt as both teams appeared at nationals, with the women dropping the title game to Simon Fraser.

8. Saint Mary's Huskies (70.5 points, Previous Rank: N/A)

Newcomers to our rankings, and the lone AUS representative, this Halifax-based school snuck into the top 10 by virtue of its men's hockey team downing Alberta

3–2 in the overtime frame of the University Cup final. The women’s hockey squad also contributed to SMU’s point total with a surprise bronze medal win over the Laurier Golden Hawks. In curling, the women narrowly missed gold, losing to Regina 6–5 in an extra end. Women’s field hockey coach Sharon Rajaraman and football coach Steve Sumarah received Coach of the Year honours.

T9. Western Ontario Mustangs (69.5 points, Previous Rank: 2)

Taking the biggest tumble down our rankings was UWO. The ‘Stangs were the only member of our top ten that failed to record a first- or second-place showing at any of the year’s national championships, but still managed to make the cut on the strength of three third-place showings in women’s wrestling, along with men’s and women’s track and field. From the curling rink to the pool and to the football field, the Mustangs’ respectable showings at the national level propelled them into the top 10.

T9. Saskatchewan Huskies (69.5 points, Previous Rank: 9)

The cinderella story of the year was Showron Glover and the U of S men’s basketball team, who shocked the country by knocking off the top-ranked Carleton Ravens and second-ranked UBC Thunderbirds to win the school’s first national championship in the sport. Moreover, the women’s hardwood squad knocked off provincial rival Regina in the bronze-medal game to win their first CIS medal. Additional points were awarded to the Dogs courtesy of wrestlers Beth Thompson and Tim Kent, who were each recognized for their outstanding community service.