

# How did SFU athletics run circles around the competition?

## The answer is in the Archives.

When SFU burst onto the Canadian university scene in 1965, it broke with tradition. Chancellor Gordon Shrum's university awarded athletic scholarships for the first time in Canada. Other Canadian universities downplayed athletics in favour of academics. But Shrum believed in the educational and recreational value of sports and in competition at the highest level. He wanted to keep Canadian athletes at home and develop winning teams to promote the university's public image. So began 40 years of exceptional athletic success combined with academic excellence.

### Looking south, not east

Until 2001, Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) boycotted SFU because it awarded athletic scholarships. SFU pointed out the double standard: many Canadian universities used indirect means to give their athletes financial support and they played scholarship-granting U.S. schools. Director of Athletics Lorne Davies stood his ground. He sent Clan teams south instead of east, competing as a member of the United States National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) league.

Starting with football, basketball, and aquatics, other sports were added as interest and resources permitted. During its 37-year NAIA affiliation SFU varsity teams have won 53 national championships in seven men's and women's sports. In 2001 SFU won its 5th straight Sears Directors' Cup, awarded to the best overall athletic program in the NAIA.

Today SFU athletes continue to demonstrate their proficiency, competing in ten intercollegiate sports and winning championships both in the NAIA and CIS leagues.



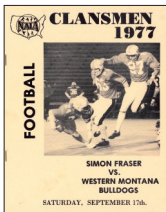
◀ This cartoon illustrated the article "SFU Athletic Program Taps for Canada," which appeared in SFU Weekly, January 6, 1977. SFU Media and PR.



◀ Clan swimmer Gaur Alibady was named the outstanding women's performer at the NAIA Championships in March 1983, where she set three NAIA records and won four individual events. SFU Media and PR.



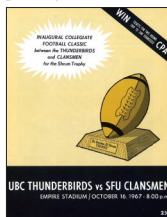
◀ Lorne Davies headed SFU's athletics program, considered one of the best in Canada, for 30 years. In 1994 he won the Premier award for outstanding contribution to sport in B.C. and in 2003 was awarded the Order of British Columbia. SFU paid him tribute in May 2005 when the Chancellor's Ignite was renamed the Lorne Davies Complex. Photo by John Hutchinson. SFU Archives.



◀ Cover of a Clan football program. SFU Archives.



◀ SFU's first Chancellor, Gordon Shrum. SFU Archives.



### "The Clansmen will play in the Rose Bowl!"

Shrum's boast never came to be, but SFU's soccer team did win the 1976 NAIA national championship at the Rose Bowl stadium in Pasadena, California. When SFU's football team did play in a bowl game, it was the Shrum Bowl, introduced in October 1967. 14,972 fans watched SFU defeat the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds 32-13, marking the birth of an athletic tradition that continues today.



◀ The Shrum Bowl, held 27 times during the past 40 years, continues to draw fans from SFU and UBC. SFU currently leads the series with 14 wins, 12 losses, and 1 tie. Photo by Bill Cunningham. SFU Archives.



◀ "No Thunderbirds" sign. SFU Archives.



◀ SFU sent an impressive roster of athletes to the 1976 Olympics held in Montreal. SFU Media and PR.

### "Swifter, higher, stronger"

SFU's scholarship policy served to develop high-performance athletes and coaches, able to compete in both amateur and professional ranks on the world stage. Proof of this is the number of Olympians and Canadian Football League (CFL) players that SFU has contributed over the years. Beginning with the 1968 Mexico Olympics, some 75 athletes and coaches have competed as Olympians. And over the years a substantial number of SFU footballers have swelled CFL ranks.



◀ Seven SFU Clansmen were selected in the 1984 CFL draft of university players - the first players from any single university that year. The Peak, February 16, 1984.

In October 1998 (Dante) Igall (BAIV) a criminology student at SFU made Canadian sports history in Ankara, Turkey by winning a gold medal at the world freestyle wrestling championships. While competing at SFU he won 2 consecutive NAIA championships with a three-year 119 lb university wrestling record. Igall was honoured as SFU's Top University Athlete in 1998, the Top BC Athlete of 1999 by Sport BC, and named Canada's Male Athlete of 1998. In 2000 Igall won a gold medal in the Sydney Olympics, marking the first time Canada has won a gold medal in Olympic freestyle wrestling. SFU Media and PR.



◀ Nadine Caron (BSc, BA) a kinesiology major at SFU played varsity basketball from 1988-1992. She was one of the Clan's top defensive players, as well as graduating with a 3.7 grade point average. Named a scholar-athlete three years in a row, and winner of the Gordon Shrum gold medal, she was the first First Nations woman to graduate from UBC's medical school. Photo by Linda Mackie. SFU Archives.

### Women beat the odds

Gordon Shrum didn't think that women would be interested in intercollegiate sports so athletic scholarships went strictly to men. In 1968 women had four varsity sports but they got little funding or encouragement. A decade later the budget allocation was one-sixth that for men, women's sports had few or no full-time coaches, and female athletes received less than a quarter of all athletic scholarship money. Nonetheless, women athletes and sports teams distinguished themselves. Beginning in the early 80s, SFU Clan women became regular contenders and champions in aquatics, cross-country and track and field, basketball, and wrestling.



◀ SFU Women's Basketball head coach Allison McNeill surrounded by players. Clockwise from top right: Heidi Hanson, Carly Morris, Michelle Hendry, Mary Lou McDonald, Nadine Caron, and Andrew Schindler. SFU Archives.

Today, the university allocates the same amount of money to operate men's and women's athletic programs. Efforts are underway to equalize the endowments that fund athletic scholarships.

### "Pride, passion, and tradition"

SFU's pride in the tradition of athletic success and sporting excellence is embodied in a Sports Hall of Fame established in 1985. Inductees are chosen for their collegiate, national, and international accomplishments as well as service to the university and the community. Charter members include Terry Bailey, Lui Passaglia, Dave Cutler (football); Bev Bland, Jay Triano, Bill Robinson (basketball); Debbie Brill (track & field); Marc Mongeon (wrestling); Doug Rorborough (golf); John Van Buren (swimming); and coaches Lorne Davies (football) and John Buchanan (soccer).



◀ Lui Passaglia was recruited by Clan football from Notre Dame High school in East Vancouver. With SFU he was named a NAIA District One All-Star twice and in 1976 the BC Clansmen football club made Lui their fifth overall pick. Passaglia graduated from SFU with a BA in geography and earned a teaching certificate from UBC. SFU Archives.



◀ In 1994 SFU and the Lions teamed up to establish the Lui Passaglia Endowment Scholarship, which is awarded annually to a student athlete entering the university. After a 2.5-year receding setting, football corner with the BC Lions, Passaglia is today Director of Community Relations for the team. SFU Media and PR.

## Your Archives. Your University.

The SFU Archives has collections about varsity sports from the Recreational Services and Athletics Department, President's Office, the Office of the Vice-President, Finance and Administration, and Faculty of Education. Do you have questions about SFU's athletic accomplishments? The answers are in the Archives.

