



Canada West Universities Athletic Association

2009-10 Media Release

Wednesday, March 3, 2010

Canada West announces the 2009-10 women's basketball individual major award winners and All-Stars, as selected by head coaches around the conference.

Simon Fraser's **Robyn Buna** stood out as the best player on the nation's best team, earning her honours as Canada West MVP.

Coming off a season where she led the No.1-ranked Clan to a CIS national championship and being named the Player of the Game in the championship final, Buna (Kelowna, B.C.) put together another outstanding season heading up the Clan offence. She is perhaps the best pure scorer in CIS and is capable of running the fast break, driving the lane or baseline, and most of all, hitting clutch three-pointers from any spot beyond the three-point arc.

In her fourth and final season with the Clan, Buna led SFU with 14.3 points per game, helped them to a record 54-game overall winning streak and a 17-1 regular season record in Canada West. Buna was second in the CIS in three-point shooting percentage, at 48.8, which is equally impressive as opposing teams know that she is the No. 1 three-point shooting option on the Clan.

"Buna has matured into a great shooter who can also score off the dribble," said SFU head coach Bruce Langford. "This year we have had injuries at the point and she has stepped in very nicely at the point. Her ability to hit the big shot at the key time has been instrumental in our success."

Buna is also an outstanding student-athlete at SFU, posting an incredible GPA of 4.21 on a 4.33 scale, and volunteers with a variety of organizations and initiatives.

Not to be outdone by her star teammates, Rookie of the Year **Kristina Collins** was an integral part of the Simon Fraser Clan through their marvellous 17-1 campaign.

Starting 16 of 17 conference games she played this season, Collins (Port Coquitlam, B.C.) made an immediate impact on the nation's top team. Due to a knee injury to senior point guard Lisa Tindle, Collins has been required to step into the point guard role this season and has done an incredible job, posting the Canada West's second-best assist-turnover ratio, behind only teammate Katie Miyazaki, and had 57 assists. Collins is also a shutdown defender, and registered 37 steals in only 17 games.

"After losing our point guard for most of the season, Kristina has battled injuries herself and performed admirably," said Bruce Langford. "She has one of the top assist turnover ratios in the country and is the best first year defender we have ever had."

Katie Miyazaki, also from the Simon Fraser Clan, was voted by conference coaches as the Defensive Player of the Year.

A third-year swing guard, Miyazaki (Richmond, B.C.) has evolved into perhaps the best all-around player on the Clan. Third on the team in scoring, averaging 9.7 points per game, Miyazaki was the Canada West leader in assist-turnover ratio, at 1.9 per game, and led the Clan in assists, with 66.

On the defensive end, Miyazaki was fourth in the Canada West in steals, ninth in blocked shots and led the Clan with an average of 5.1 rebounds per game. A ball-hawk, Miyazaki's defence was key in a come-from-behind win over UBC earlier in the season, forcing a pair of late turnovers to allow the Clan to extend their record winning streak.

"Katie excels in several defensive areas: she blocks shots, she gets steals, she defends opponents' best players and dives after loose balls like a warrior," said Coach Langford. "She is a complete defensive package."

Getting the nod as Tracy MacLeod Award nominee is **Jessica Stromberg** of the Winnipeg Wesmen.

This past year Stromberg appeared in all 18 regular and two post season games for the Wesmen. Her determination led her to being one of the top rebounders in Canada West. An Academic All-Canadian all five years, Stromberg has also been a strong voice in the community. She has coached in the Jr. Wesmen program, the TMO Basketball School, been a guest coach with Inner City programs and represented the Wesmen in the local schools during "Learn to Read" month as a guest reader.

Early in Stromberg's CIS career she was diagnosed with fibromyalgia; a chronic fatigue/pain disorder that in most people consumes their everyday life. From the time she wakes until she goes back to bed each night her body is in a constant struggle to function pain free. General movements are a struggle and she fights to get the range of motion and strength she needs to not only play the demanding sport of basketball, but to also sit through classes and labs in her academic pursuit of a pre-med science degree. Jessica has always been strong willed and once she found out how to deal with the fibromyalgia she can be seen working hard in each game and practice. At times throughout her career the athletic therapy staff has asked her to rest because of her condition and the many other injuries she has had along the way and while she reluctantly complies, it is most difficult for her as she feels she is letting her team down.

"The daily grind of training, practicing and school is very demanding on the average player. For Jessica, suffering with fibromyalgia, each day is painful. In the five years I have coached Jessica, she has never quit once. She has done whatever was needed to have herself in practice and be ready for games, which often means extra hours in the athletic therapy clinic before and after practices and games. The courage and determination that Jessica has displayed to compete each day is a testament to her will", stated Wesmen head coach Tanya McKay.

Representing Canada West as a finalist for the Sylvia Sweeney Award is Manitoba's **Michele Hynes**.

On the court, Hynes ranked among the Canada West leaders in scoring (11.6 ppg), assists (4.3 apg), steals, three-point field goals and assist-turnover ratio. Off the court she is a shining star in the lives of many people fortunate enough to know her.

Hynes played a key role in the Women's Basketball Shoot for the Cure Fundraiser, Among other things, she organized the tournament passes, the pink Bison t-shirt sales on campus and was the leading force in the evening fundraiser event, one of the main reasons that the U of M's women's basketball team was able to donate \$7500.00 to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

She has been a mentor and coach in the U of M – Skownan First Nation Community Partnership each of her five years at U of M. She has worked in the community as a school and youth recreation volunteer and organized/coached at summer camps. She also worked with the teams participating in tournaments around Manitoba. Hynes has been a coach in our JRB Basketball Club program for the last five years. Most recently, she has been working with a group of rural athletes to increase their experiences, knowledge and skill of basketball. Hynes has been a member of the U of M Athletes Council for four years and has been a member of the Bison team in the Challenge for Life 20 km Cancer Care Manitoba Fundraiser the last two years, raising over \$1000 each year. In addition to all of the above contributions, Michele has done volunteer coaching at Children of the Earth High School and Morris High School as well as Wheelchair Rugby Manitoba in 2007-08. She has volunteered to help with Basketball Manitoba provincial teams at tryouts and practices as well as assisting with Dr. Joanie Halas' research for the Faculty of Kinesiology at the U of M.

Head coach Pam Danis said of Hynes, "Michele is that special player that all coaches dream about having. She is the corner stone of our program both on and off the court. She exemplifies what our program is about in that she strives for excellence in everything she does. Over her five years as a Bison she has maintained a strong academic standing while committing herself to her team and other's. She has set the bar high for future athletes to embrace not only their basketball experience, but their time in the classroom as well as the community."

Now in his ninth season as head coach of the UVic Vikes, Coach of the year **Brian Cheng** has guided the team to their best conference season since 1999-00. The Vikes finished the Canada West regular season with a record of 14-4 (.777) and placed second in the Pacific Division. They finished the season ranked No. 5 in CIS and made their eighth straight post-season appearance. Cheng's squad entered the playoffs with a nine-game winning streak, which included a victory over to the No. 1 Simon Fraser Clan in the season finale, ending the Clan's record winning streak.

"Brian is a tremendously hard working coach and it is satisfying to see him recognized with this award," said UVic Vikes Director of Athletics & Recreation Clint Hamilton. "Regardless of opponent, Brian works hard to prepare our Vikes team to be in the best position to succeed, and I believe this is recognized by his peers in being awarded this distinction."

Buna, 2009 CIS Player of the Year **Kayla Dykstra** of the Victoria Vikes, 2006-07 CIS Rookie of the Year and national tournament MVP **Laurelle Weigl** (SFU) and **Caitlin Gooch** (Winnipeg) are all members of the All-Star team after selection to the all-conference roster in 2008-09. For Gooch, this is her third straight election to the team. **Lindsay DeGroot**, an All-Canadian while playing for McMaster in 2006-07 and 2007-08, is a First Team Canada West All-Star selection for Saskatchewan this time around.

Following is a breakdown of all individual award winners and All-Stars:

Awards

MVP: Robyn Buna, Simon Fraser

Rookie of the Year: Kristina Collins, Simon Fraser

Defensive Player of the Year: Katie Miyazaki, Simon Fraser

Tracy MacLeod Award nominee: Jessica Stromberg, Winnipeg

Sylvia Sweeney Award nominee: Michele Hynes, Manitoba

Coach of the Year: Brian Cheng, Victoria

All-Stars

First Team

Robyn Buna, SFU
Lindsay DeGroot, Sask
Kayla Dykstra, UVic
Brittany Read, Regina
Lia St. Pierre, UBC

Second Team

Laurelle Weigl, SFU
Marisa Haylett, Alberta
Caitlin Gooch, Winnipeg
Debbie Yeboah, UVic
Joanna Zalesiak, Regina

Major award winners will automatically become finalists for national awards, to be announced by Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) at the national championship, hosted in Hamilton, Ont. by McMaster University, March 12-14.

This weekend the Final Four takes place at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, B.C., where the host and defending CIS champion Clan are hungry for one final CIS title before moving to the NCAA next season. SFU hosts the Saskatchewan Huskies in one semifinal on Friday night, with Alberta taking on Regina in the other. The top three finishers at this weekend's event qualify to take part at Nationals.

Please direct questions to the Canada West office: sportsinfo@canadawest.org, or contact one of the 14 Canada West women's basketball schools. Information for all conference schools can be found on the www.canadawest.org Members page.

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About CWUAA

“Canada West is consistently the most decorated of the four conferences in Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS), winning at least 10 CIS national titles every year since 1997-98. Comprised of 14 schools, from the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, the CWUAA produces numerous major award winners and Academic All-Canadian student-athletes each year, with many going on to athletic success around the globe in pro leagues or events such as the Olympics, Paralympics or Universiade Games.”