

Sports centre thefts spurn new security

Thefts in sports centre means new security measures will have to be taken

By Kate Vangerven
Panther Post

Exercise, we've been told, stimulates the release of endorphins which results in happier people. Happier people tend to be nicer people, and nicer people typically do not act in such a way that will negatively impact those around them. The onslaught of recent locker thefts from the Chi-Wan Sports Centre has me doubting the science behind this exercise/endorphins business. That is, unless those responsible for the theft are not members of UPEI's fitness centre at all.

Without cameras in the locker areas or witnesses for many of these cases, it's impossible to know who exactly is responsible for this reign of thievery occurring on our very own campus. While it's safe to assume there is more than one individual responsible, it is also not plausible to think of this as petty organized crime.

The theft so far seems to be more of a recreational sport to these miscreants, and while the Chi-Wan and the Cari are both deemed buildings for recreational use I don't believe that's the type they had in mind. The term 'recreational theft' is applicable mainly because of the items stolen thus far. The lost possessions range from articles of clothing to car keys to cell phones, iPods to wallets.

An employee of the Sports Centre, Robbie Saada spoke with me briefly on his knowledge of both what has happened, and what the staff is able to do. As mentioned before, there are no cameras to record any of the crime happening so there is little the staff can do for the victims of the theft. When a disgruntled member of the gym stalks back to the desk to complain their locker has been ransacked, the staff calls security to file a report and then does a search of the gym, including garbage cans

in case something's been deemed unworthy of a thief.

Unfortunately for first year student Laura Bennett, her cell phone was apparently too valuable for a garbage can. Mid-October, her phone was taken out of a locker she had not locked, and although Bennett understood she was partly to blame, she was understandably upset by the incident.

Employee Robbie Saada believes "if you value your belongings, you should lock your lockers."

So what is being done now to protect UPEI fitness centre member's valuables? There are a number of measures being discussed to enforce tighter security in and around the locker area and rooms. In the near future, all members may need to swipe their card (typically swiped at the actual fitness centre) at the front desk located on the main floor of the sports centre.

Also, to prohibit just anybody from entering through the doors between the Cari Complex and the sports centre, these doors will also receive a swipe card overhaul, enabling only those with UPEI ID cards to gain access.

Another initiative to protect locker users is the installation of surveillance cameras, although this may happen later, in conjunction with the 2009 Canada Games.

Men's, women's hockey pick up steam

Victories whet Panthers appetite

By Kate Vangerven
Panther Post

It's a sport easily associated with Canada that most people, young or old, are familiar with and a sport that requires you to block out the chill in your bones if you plan on being a fan.

A fast-paced game can get a heart beating like nothing else, and you may find yourself uncontrollably reacting (loudly) to a rotten pass or a beautiful goal.

Hockey is one of the only sports played year round at UPEI, and quite possibly the most popular. Both the men's and women's teams have experienced success so far this season, each team in their own respects.

The men have done well consistently which has placed them in a tied and deserved position of second place within the Atlantic University Sport conference with St. Mary's University. UPEI and SMU are trailing just two points behind [Moncton].

Strong performances from 3rd year student Justin Donati has fueled the Panthers desire to continue winning. The game against SMU alone found Donati scoring four goals for the team. But rather than pat his own back, Donati directs the credit for the success elsewhere.

"Good linemates. Jordan Knox, and now with the addition of Cory Vitarelli, it's

been awesome playing with both of them and hopefully we can keep it rolling," he said. "We wanted to play our game and not take these guys too lightly. When you do that's when they score a few quick ones on you."

Hopefully, this type of teamwork continues throughout the remainder of the Men's season.

As for those Lady Panthers, they have also tasted a morsel of success this season in their November 9th game against St. Mary's University which they won 5-2. In UPEI women's hockey history, the UPEI team has never once been able to beat the women's hockey team from SMU, until now.

To instill in our Lady Panthers the continued drive to win, make it your own personal goal to attend at least two games in 2009. It's not mandatory that you paint your face green, or bring an air horn, or even make a sign. All you need to do is be there to see the success women's hockey can achieve.

Panthers sports in general all need the support of their peers. With floor stickers and posters decorating the Murphy Student Centre, library and other buildings around campus, you can always find out when the next game is. Whether it be hockey, volleyball, or basketball make an effort to learn of your school's successes and do your part in helping to continue them.

