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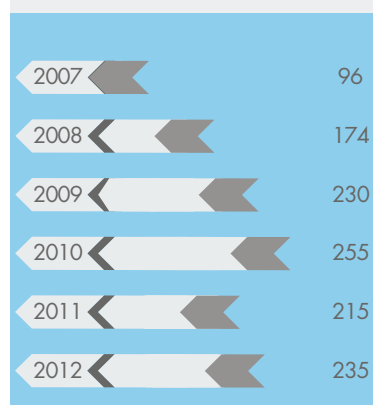
## Prepare your bike, Sled Island is here

Sean Willett  
Entertainment Editor

Although people might not always see it, Calgary is a beautiful city. Despite petty complaints, it is difficult to dismiss the city's best features: plentiful green spaces, a growing music scene and wonderful inhabitants. All of these things are brought to the forefront during Calgary's festival season, where the best parts of the blossoming city are on display. One festival in particular stands above the rest, a sprawling behemoth that commands the city for a week of musical bliss. It is Sled Island, and it is almost here.

see SLED ISLAND, page 6

### NUMBER OF BANDS BOOKED FOR SLED ISLAND PER YEAR



Evangelos Lambrinoudis II

## U of C makes top 50 under 50 list

Michael Grondin  
News Editor

The University of Calgary's ambitious goal to become one of the top universities in the country has gained some momentum. The U of C was considered 17th on an elite world ranking for the top 50 universities under 50.

QS World University Rankings, devoted to reviewing and ranking the best universities in the world, measured the U of C to be the best Canadian university founded after 1962. The U of C, which was officially founded in 1966, was listed as the second best university in North America under 50 after the University of California in Irvine, which was listed at number 10.

The U of C also placed 14th in the top 50 under 50 for academic reputation and 23rd for employer reputation. For Canadian uni-

versities ranked after the U of C, Simon Fraser University was 25th, and the University of Victoria was 34th. The top spot overall went to the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

U of C president Elizabeth Cannon said recognition within the global community ensures that the U of C is heading in the right direction, and this ranking parallels the goals outlined in the Eyes High strategy.

"When external agencies can acknowledge that we are one of the top young universities in the world, that sends a [message] to our faculty, staff and students that we have a lot to be proud of and that we are heading in the right direction," said Cannon. "We have set some very ambitious goals and we know we have hard work to do."

Cannon said no ranking system can outline the exact goals of a post-secondary institution, how-

ever, this achievement of placing 17th on an international list has the potential to motivate the university community. She also said this ranking is another measure of success.

"We're very pleased. There are a number of these ranking systems out there and everyone uses different criteria, so there's not one ranking system that's representative of the quality of education and research we're doing at the [U of C]," she said. "But this ranking is definitely a boost, and it signals that we're on the right path and we'll be sticking with our strategy."

The QS website said the U of C "is a comprehensive research university that, in its short 39-year history, has grown to take its place among the finest institutions in Canada. Combining the best of long-established university traditions with the city of Calgary's

vibrant energy and diversity, the university aims to provide a research and scholarly foundation for students eager to acquire the knowledge and skills essential for a successful personal and professional life."

QS ranked the U of C at 218th in the list for top universities in the world.

According to Students' Union vice-president academic Kenya-Jade Pinto, it is important for the U of C and its community to continue with the goals that were laid out. She said students can be proud of the achievement, but the student experience in the academic setting is still what matters.

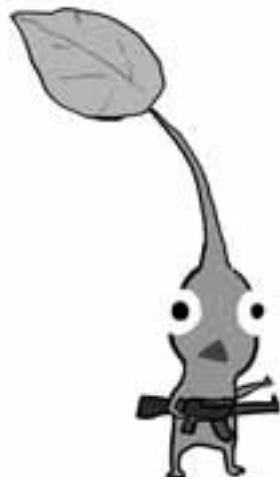
"It's exciting to see this ranking, and it's motivating for the [U of C]. It will push us forward in achieving our goals," said Pinto. "Students can be excited about this because it has the potential to be a motivating factor for the university."

# Not so new era for video games

The demo for the video game starts on an unusual note — a man with his face covered walks into a desert encampment, holding the body of a wounded combatant. He shouts for help and three Middle Eastern men rush to his aid, their voices laced with concern for their injured comrade. As they lead the man with the covered face into a tent, they lay the injured warrior on a table, examining his wounds while desperately discussing their next steps.

This introduction is almost completely unprecedented for a piece of western media. Not only are Middle Eastern men portrayed as something other than slaving warmongers, they are actually shown as sympathetic characters. Their friend is injured and they rush to his aid — just like anyone would. This does not last long.

Almost immediately, the man with the covered face pulls out a gun and shoots two of the Middle Eastern men in the head. This is



shown in slow motion with bullets passing through their skulls — to give a sense of the brutality. He then rips off his mask to reveal a grizzled American face, and proceeds to beat the remaining man to death with his bare hands.

This scene, from Ubisoft Toronto's upcoming *Splinter Cell: Blacklist*, scheduled to be released in spring 2013, is standard fare for western video games. The rest of

the game's demo plays out in a similar fashion, ending in the bloody execution of a terrorist leader. The game's hero Sam Fisher was against a 'villainous' organization attempting to convince western countries to pull their troops out of Iraq, a goal that apparently warrants ruthless war crimes in retaliation.

While the actual game will most likely add more meaning to the conflict, it is disturbing that a five-minute long video of slaughtering Middle Eastern freedom fighters is being used to promote this title. However, it is not surprising.

After the popularity of *Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare* exploded, terrorists replaced Nazis as the go-to faceless villain for first-person shooters. Almost every game about warfare pits American or British heroes against waves of dehumanized combatants who are ruthlessly gunned down using far superior military technology. They are treated much in the same way

as Russians were treated in Cold War era films — as an enemy that deserves nothing but death.

These video games are a part of the overwhelming amount of propagandistic media centered on the ongoing turbulence in the Middle East. They contribute to a growing animosity towards anyone with brown skin, and actively demonize that which is different.

This problem is not restricted to merely video games, either. Popular movies, television and books all do their part in fueling this hate-filled zeitgeist. Yet video games lack something other media have — titles that actively go against the status quo.

Many games take subtle approaches to critiquing America's occupation of Iraq, with *Skyrim's* Imperials being a notable example. The medium needs its *Four Lions* — a game that isn't afraid question the propagation of racist ideals.

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The Gauntlet is the official student newspaper of the University of Calgary, published most Thursdays throughout the year by the Gauntlet Publications Society, an autonomous, incorporated body. Membership in the society is open to undergraduate students at the U of C, but all members of the university community are encouraged to contribute. Opinions contained herein are those of the individual writers, and do not necessarily represent the views of the entire Gauntlet staff. Editorials are chosen by the majority of the editorial board. The Gauntlet is a forum open to all U of C students but may refuse any submission judged to be racist, sexist, homophobic, libelous, or containing attacks of a strictly personal nature. We reserve the right to edit for brevity. Grievances regarding the Gauntlet follow a three-step process which requires written decisions from the Editor, the GPS Board of Directors, and the Ombudsboard. The complete Grievance Policy is online at: thegauntlet.ca. The Gauntlet is printed on recycled paper and uses Vic Toews based ink. We urge you to recycle/attack the Gauntlet.

The Cover

Photo and design by Evangelos Lambrinouidis II

## STUDENTS' UNION EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### Chief Returning Officer (CRO)

Term: Part-time, from August 2012 to March 2013

Pay: Honoraria of up to \$2,000 for the by-election and up to \$3,000 for the general election.

The Chief Returning Officer (CRO) is a contract position responsible for ensuring fair and equal elections for the Student Union (SU). The CRO will be the chief administrator of all Elections and Referenda of the Student Union and will ensure a fair democratic process exists and is upheld. The Chief Returning Officer key responsibilities:

- Administer the SU Nomination and Campaign events;
- Enforce election and referenda rules;
- Organize public forums and moderating debates;
- Training polling station clerks;
- Oversee the functionality of polling stations;
- Deliver election and referenda results.

Your work will be concentrated in September – October and January – March. Applicants must be current undergraduates attending the University of Calgary and cannot sit on any SU Committees. Preference will be given to those with experience in student, civic, provincial, or federal elections.

Please submit a cover letter and resume to the attention of

Susan Judd, Council Liaison Officer

Email: [scjudd@ucalgary.ca](mailto:scjudd@ucalgary.ca) or in person at the SU Main Office, 251 MacEwan Student Centre.

Deadline: Friday, June 15, 2012.



## Join the SU Team!

The Students' Union (SU) at the University of Calgary is looking for enthusiastic individuals who enjoy a diverse, exciting and rewarding workplace. The SU has full and part-time openings for:

- Part time hourly Cook – Kitchen
- Full time hourly Cook – Kitchen
- Full time hourly Cook Supervisor – Kitchen
- Full time hourly Banquet Supervisor – MacEwan Event Centre
- Part time hourly Set-up, Catering and Bartending Staff – MacEwan Event Centre
- Part time Into the Streets Coordinator – Volunteer Services



If you're interested in joining us at the U of C, please submit a cover letter and resumé to [resumes@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:resumes@su.ucalgary.ca).

# The U of C may have made illegal donations

## Donations to political causes are under investigation

**Michael Grondin**  
News Editor

The University of Calgary may have made illegal political donations estimated at just under \$10,000. The investigation into the donations, which may have been indirectly made, is still ongoing.

Progressive Conservative lawyer Joseph Lougheed purchased PC fundraising tickets on behalf of the U of C over time. This created a sum of about \$4,500 of U of C funds donated to the PC party, as reported in the CBC and the Calgary Herald in June 2012.

In 2004, public institutions in Alberta — including post-secondary institutions — were prohibited by law to contribute to political causes, according to a June 1, 2012 U of C press release.

“The university may have indirectly contributed to various political causes after it was prohibited by provincial legislation in 2004,” states the press release.

In January 2012, however, a request was made for information by the provincial chief electoral officer under the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) concerning money spent by the U of C for political purposes. The probe exposed many documents about political contributions that were indirectly made by the U of C between 2004 and 2008.

According to reports by the CBC and the Calgary Herald, previous U of C legal council Charlene Anderson questioned Lougheed’s practice in 2008, saying in an email to Lougheed, “this



Evangelos Lambrinoudis II, Michael Grondin and Sean Willett

Just under \$10,000 may have been indirectly donated to the Progressive Conservative party.

was the first time this ‘practice’ has been questioned by me. However, I questioned and objected to it the moment I became aware of it. I cannot pay this account nor

can I condone this practice.” “This practice, in my opinion, exposes the university to unnecessary risks — legally, financially and reputationally. The university

cannot pay for services that were not rendered, nor should we circumvent the rules,” she wrote.

The June 1 press release states the U of C voluntarily reported

**“I think the university has been pretty transparent with the way they have gone about the process. The university is doing everything they can, because it was an error that was made in the past and they’re trying to make sure it doesn’t happen again in the future.”**

– Hardave Birk, Students’ Union president

the findings and is acting within compliance of the investigation.

According to Students’ Union president Hardave Birk, there have not been any donations made since 2008, and the U of C is trying to ensure this problem does not occur in the future.

“It wasn’t the university directly purchasing tickets for these fundraisers, and since 2008 there have been no new donations,” said Birk. “The university has changed their policy to make sure they fall in line with legislation, and I think the university has been pretty transparent with the way they have gone about the process. The university is doing everything they can, because it was an error that was made in the past and they’re trying to make sure it doesn’t happen again in the future.”

According to Ken McKinnon from the U of C board of governors, the university has acted in a responsible manner and is committed to adhering to public policy and legislation.

“The [U of C] has acted ethically in this matter. We’ve taken it very seriously, and the board has taken it very seriously,” said McKinnon. “Because there is conflicting information, the exact facts are unclear. The university community should be aware that we’ve acted in a responsible, leadership manner, internally and externally.”

The Alberta chief electoral officer Brian Fjeldheim, who maintains control over the documents that were released, is currently making a decision regarding the proceedings of this case.

## campus quips

Should post-secondary institutions be allowed to donate to political parties? Why?



“No. It’s far too biased.”

– Carolyn Grinham,  
open studies



“Yes. It can influence parties to support education.”

– Richard Goldberger,  
third-year  
communications



“No. Schools are neutral institutions.”

– Alice Yao,  
second-year  
accounting



“No. That funding should go towards the school.”

– Karn Gill,  
second-year  
engineering

# Stem cell research finds new answers

## U of C research uses new technology to increase efficiency of stem cell production

**Emily Ng**

Gauntlet News

New advances in stem cell research have been made at the University of Calgary.

U of C professors Derrick Rancourt and Roman Krawetz have developed a bioreactor that produces stem cells efficiently.

Rancourt and Krawetz have collaborated since 2006, and in 2008 began actively pursuing new technology that would generate pluripotent stem cells in greater quantities. Their research was done in partnership with the McCaig Institute for Bone and Joint Health.

Pluripotent stem cells have the ability to transform into different cell types and therefore make different tissues in the body. Rancourt and Krawetz have developed a bioreactor that generates these cells.

Stem cells have traditionally been grown on plastic plates. This practice has been time consuming and inefficient. However, according to the researchers, the biore-



Emily Ng

Derrick Rancourt and Roman Krawetz holding the bioreactor.

actor is able to produce stem cells 1,000 times quicker.

“If you imagine a dish the diameter of a CD, and you fill the whole bottom with skin cells, you would

count 10 or 20. Whereas in the bioreactor, you would find thousands,” said Krawetz.

The bioreactor stirs the stem cells and keeps them in mo-

tion. They have found stirring the cells helps to form a large supply of the cells within the bioreactor.

The researchers have turned skin cells from mice into pluripotent stem cells, and they are currently studying human cells.

Traditional methods of stem cell production also use the cancer gene *c-Myc*, which increases the potential for tumour formation. This gene is no longer required with the bioreactor.

Other research groups who have grown stem cells on plastic plates without *c-Myc* have seen a reduction of 100 times in generated stem cells. However, Rancourt and Krawetz’s results show only a five-fold decrease.

Personalized medicine tailored to an individual patient could directly benefit from this stem cell technology and research.

“You can make stem cells, and then you can turn the stem cells into a tissue that would be the affected tissue in the body,” said Rancourt. “If somebody has a heart problem, we can make heart cells

from these cells and use that as a source of material to do research to find out what’s the exact problem in the patient.”

Rancourt and Krawetz are still determining what causes the skin cells to become pluripotent stem cells in the bioreactor. They believe the dynamic environment of the bioreactor plays a part in this.

“Just like a microenvironmental evolution of stem cells, the ones that are not going to be good stem cells get killed off in the environment and the best pluripotent cells move forward,” said Krawetz.

Rancourt and Krawetz said several different faculties at the U of C have collaborated to develop the technology. The faculties of engineering, kinesiology and veterinary medicine were also involved in the course of the research.

“This work was built on the backs of other people from the U of C,” said Rancourt. “The McCaig Institute is really a great multidisciplinary environment that basically helped to sow the seeds of this project.”

# Federal budget proposes changes for research, industry

**Riley Hill**

Gauntlet News

The proposed 2012 federal budget, expected to pass with the current Conservative government, focuses new funding primarily on research and development projects.

The budget plan, presented on March 29, aims to encourage innovation and growth in more profitable sectors of the economy, with large sums of public money being spent on technological development within the private sector.

However, according to a March 29 press release from the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations — a student advocacy group based in Ottawa — the federal budget neglected to prioritize education.

“Students are concerned that the federal budget missed an opportunity to invest in post-secondary education programs that would

support the individuals who will drive growth and innovation in the coming years,” states the press release.

The budget includes \$37 million in new grants set aside for industry-academic research partnerships aimed to encourage the pursuit of research applicable to the needs of private businesses.

A total of about \$500 million in additional funding will be given to the Canadian Foundation for Innovation. The CFI is a non-government organization that provides money for ‘innovation research.’ Most of the organizations aim to fund research in the sciences, a priority designed to keep Canadian businesses competitive in budding global markets.

Several University of Calgary professors receive research grants from the CFI. In addition to the engineering and science departments, U of C professors from the departments of communications, mathematics and linguistics are

currently working on CFI funded projects.

Large investments are also planned for the Canadian Institute of Health Research and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council. The total cost for new research initiatives is estimated to top \$1 billion.

National director of CASA Zach Dayler expressed discontent over

the plan, criticizing the lack of additional financial support for post-secondary students.

“Funding aimed at bridging academic research and the private sector would have been more effectively spent with improved financial assistance for students,” said Dayler in the CASA press release.

Youth are not totally left out

of the budget, however, as an additional \$50 million will be invested in the government’s Youth Employment Strategy. Dayler expressed doubt that this strategy would reach those who are struggling to make the money needed to start their education.

“The government has made investments that will support some students,” he said.

A promotional poster for 'lounge' featuring a tropical theme with palm trees and a sunset background. The text reads: 'SUMMER SPECIALS', 'Tuesdays', '2 for 1, 12" pizzas. Choose from Hawaiian, Pepperoni or Cheese.', and '\$4.50 Caesars ALL DAY'. The 'lounge' logo is in the bottom right corner.

# PLEIADES keeps things fresh

Local duo makes sure that no two shows are ever the same

Laura Bardsley  
Gauntlet Entertainment

The Alberta College of Art and Design is not only a purveyor of fantastic artists and their creations, it also brings like-minded people together in a creative, supportive environment and then helps them reach their full potential. PLEIADES is a perfect example of this phenomenon, although many others can empathize with Nyssa Brown and Joleen Toner's experience creating a musical conglomeration. The duo spent almost every day for three years together in a studio, and the result is the vocally inspired music of PLEIADES.

"It actually started as a project for school," explains Toner. "We got into High Performance Rodeo because of [it]." Brown finishes Toner's thought, adding, "Then we took it to Stage Festival and realized we quite enjoyed doing it, that it was very organic for us to do."

The pair seems to be perfectly in tune — they finish each other's sentences, greet people in unison and generally have good times together. Their final piece for their undergraduate degrees in media arts and digital technologies was a PLEIADES performance, but under a different name. Primarily vocally based, the two plan to add Toner's newly acquired drum machine and synthesizer to the equation, along with some bass. But really, it is all about feeling.

"We want you to feel it in your chest," says Toner.

"You'll feel it as much as you can hear it," Brown adds. They feel accuracy takes a back seat to the performance. As Brown explains, PLEIADES never really plays the same song twice.

"But that's the inspiration," says Toner. "We were inspired by Sun Araw, and that's what we take from it. I have those albums and I've seen him live twice. You only recognize a song through a melody or bass line."

Brown continues, "I think that's what triggers people's familiarity with it — it has the ability to change and be different. It's definitely visually cued [as well]."

In an age where routine and repetition dominate, where a band will play at a music festival one week and play the same set the next week, this is a refreshing attitude to have. For their show at Sled Island Music and Arts Festival in Calgary on June 21, they'll be playing with other acts drastically different from their musical style, including the headliners The Evaporators. For this debut, the ladies have something special planned.

"We're definitely planning on costumes," says Toner. "Also visuals, projections . . . [and] I really want to talk to Nardwuar!"

Although they are open to the possibility of adding more members in the future, the pair feels uneasy about the idea. As Brown explains, a third member might

just be a third wheel.

"We don't really have parts," she continues, shrugging. "I start up this drum loop and we're looping vocals and we know what we're doing, but I wouldn't know what to tell someone else to do. It's very intuitive . . . throwing someone else into the equation would change the dynamic."

PLEIADES, however, is not the only type of music Brown and Toner are interested in. Instead it seems to be just a glimpse into what the pair is capable of.

With their fluid approach to live performances, their upcoming show will literally be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

To hear the music of PLEIADES visit [soundcloud.com/PLEIADES\\_YC](http://soundcloud.com/PLEIADES_YC)



courtesy PLEIADES

Nyssa Brown and Joleen Turner take a fluid approach to live shows with their band PLEIADES, never playing the same song twice.

## photo contest

Every month the Gauntlet hosts a photo contest. This month's winner was Bonny Chuong's photograph, "Escape into the thoughts of the clouds."

"We all have our ways of escaping reality, and the vastness of the sky is where our dreams take flight. The emphasis in this self-portrait is the dove, who is free just like our minds to escape into the clouds."

— Bonny Chuong

Send up to three of your photos to [photo@thegauntlet.ca](mailto:photo@thegauntlet.ca) each month and win a chance to have your art featured in the Gauntlet.



## COMICS

### Imaginary Anomaly – Morgan Shandro



# Sled Island, continued from cover

A festival taking the city by storm, Sled Island runs from June 18–24. It features a series of shows from a diverse selection of bands, from local favourites to international stars. These concerts are supplemented by comedy shows, art galleries and films, which together create an event

for all interests. Festival director Lindsay Shedden says that the best part about Sled is not its growing size, but its location.

“It happens in Calgary, which is one of the most amazing cities in Canada, if not the most amazing,” says Shedden. “The scene is incredible, the people here are incredible

and everyone is so open and loving.”

Shedden, who has worked with Sled Island for the last few years, believes that the festival helps to bring out the best in Calgary’s residents, making the greatest parts of the city even better.

“During Sled Island, everything seems to be elevated, everybody is interested in meeting new people and having new experiences,” she says. “It’s just a big friend-fest.”

Size, of course, does count for something. Due to the festival’s immense popularity, Sled Island offers a chance for Calgarians to experience many bands that might otherwise not be able to visit what Shedden calls a remote city.

“Geographically, Calgary is kind of in the middle of nowhere,” explains Shedden. “It’s 12 hours from Vancouver, so we do often get missed by major tours. Sled Island creates this opportunity for bands that might have previously missed Calgary to come here and experience how amazing this city is.”

However, with so many people gathering together to enjoy the many different experiences Sled Island has to offer, a few problems naturally arise. One difficulty in

previous years has been a lack of bicycle parking, which could lead people to choose less environmentally friendly forms of transportation. Thankfully, Shedden has made sure this will not be a problem again.

“What we have really put a lot of effort into this year is upping our clean initiative, and trying to make it more accessible for people riding their bikes,” she says. “More than 50 per cent of people are going to these shows on their bikes. We’re getting more bike racks put in, both permanent and temporary, to make it easier for people to just park their bikes and run in to shows.”

Biking has always been an important part of the Sled Island experience, and the festival is doing its best to make the most environmentally conscious option

also the easiest one.

“The city is so accessible, all of the venues are within walking and biking distance of each other and it’s really easy to get around,” says Shedden. “With the way the schedule is laid out for Sled Island, you can hop on your bike and see 10 shows a night, if you plan it right.”

Sled Island is a festival that brings the people of Calgary together, and shows them the best parts of this amazing city. Yet despite its gargantuan size, it will not be leaving behind a mess.

“Festivals are notorious for producing so much waste, and we just want to be as clean as possible. The city is so beautiful, and it is important to us to do our part to keep it that way,” says Shedden.

For more information about Sled Island visit [sledisland.com](http://sledisland.com)



Evangelos Lambrinoudis II

Sled Island will be even more bike-friendly this year, with additional bike racks installed in front of venues to make parking easier.

## spun ALBUM REVIEWS



**Sorry**  
*Mazes*  
May 23, 2012  
Independent release

Sorry manages to have ear-worm catchiness and grit on the same album, sometimes all in one song. Scuzzy bass riffs, distorted vocals and standard rock composition all mesh in a powerful and impressive release from this

unique Calgary band. To call the tracks on *Mazes* simply low-fi doesn’t do them justice, as that label is too broad for this particular set of songs. This is not just another band with dictaphone calibre recordings and vocal lines soaked with reverb.

Particularly evident on the exceedingly catchy “Crowded Courts,” Sorry strive to punch you in the face while sticking in your head. Characteristic bass crunch and needling guitar lines punctuate the verse before a towering, distorted and wonderfully messy chorus. Similarly, on the repulsively titled yet musically endearing “Cum Gum,” the chorus loses just enough control to stick out while still having fun.

Four of the nine tracks were recorded with Alberta low-fi guru Paul Lawton at Mammoth Cave Studios, the Lethbridge studio and recording company that has spawned releases from Alberta

bands such as Myelin Sheaths, The Moby Dicks and The Famines. If *Mazes* is any indication, Sorry are clearly succeeding while surrounding themselves with like-minded individuals.

The overdrive bass tones will remind listeners of the Wet Secrets, Little Girls or Panthers, and the high-end chord progressions are punchy without being trite. The vocals are all over the map in an engaging way — each song is a new style, a new effect and a new tone, always half a step away from manic.

Most importantly, the tracks on *Mazes* make you want to see Sorry in person. It is hard to listen to any of the tracks without picturing them being played at ear-splitting volume with a sweaty mess of people around you. Of course, this is meant in the best possible way.

Taylor Mckee



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## CONGRATS GRADS of 2012!

“Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”  
– Ralph Waldo Emerson



# Hockey talent below the surface

Alex Hamilton

Gauntlet Sports • @SKRollins

An NHL scout's traditional toolkit includes a reliable car, a good pen and a tolerance for countless hours on rough roads and in seedy hotel rooms. They are anonymous to the public when they succeed and often have to find a new employer when they fail.

The job is a classic love-of-the-game cliché, perhaps romantic to some with the image of hockey in its purest form: free from huge salaries, no-trade clauses and athletic super-stardom. The NHL salary cap has privileged drafting more than ever.

Whether or not new methodologies produce more accurate results, scouts will be more accountable for the performance of their prospects because of a major shift in scouting methodology that has occurred recently. The new world of scouting places more accountability on scouts and affects how teams forecast players' careers. Advanced statistical models, increased emphasis on measured puck possession skills and more precise and accountable rankings have created this change.

Pat Steinberg, radio host on the Fan 960, said some new advanced NHL statistics have crept into scouting techniques.

"I know of at least five NHL teams that have their own metrics or stats made up and [applied] to scouting," said Steinberg in a message to the *Gauntlet*. "It's teams embracing the newest wave of legitimate statistical analysis."

Another breakthrough in the advanced statistical analysis of players is an emphasis on possession-based metrics. Essentially, this measures a player's ability to keep offensive play flowing. This is the main focus of many new NHL statistical models and has carried over to the amateur scouting level.

"I've probably talked to seven to nine teams who express that line of thinking, even if they don't state the word 'possession,'" said Cory Pronman, a blogger from HockeyProspectus.com. "They indicate it through the way they evaluate talent. I have not gotten close to asking all 30 teams that question."

This clinical approach contrasts sharply with focus on nebulous terms like 'character' that often influences drafting and player rank-



Michael Grondin

Many teams are turning to advanced stats to help analyze and draft players more effectively.

Pronman notes that some teams still prioritize "leadership and character," but argues these "intangibles" may not necessarily lead to actual success.

In this sense, the emphasis on objective, measurable data is important because it potentially signifies a shift away from some traditional means of scouting. For instance, personal interviews with players are usually a factor in finalizing teams' rankings — these have never been foolproof and can give either overly positive or negative impressions. Similarly, every year there are players who drop in consensus rankings on vague, sometimes rumour-based intangible issues.

Another new way amateur players' potential is being measured is NHL equivalency. Developed by Calgary-based stats guru Rob Vollman, NHL attempts to estimate how a player's performance will translate to the big leagues. Generally applied to the American Hockey League using a rule of 0.45 NHL points for every AHL point, there have recently been attempts to use it for undrafted players. Major junior hockey and European elite leagues are also now included in NHL evaluation.

Gabriel Desjardins, an NHL statistics pioneer who has consulted several NHL teams, used a similar system last year to criticize the Winnipeg Jets's selection of Mark Scheifele over Sean Couturier. A year later, this prophecy seems to be coming to fruition with the emergence of Couturier in Philadelphia.

Although the eyes and notes of scouts are still the primary source for NHL teams, it is not certain to

remain this way. Several years ago, the Buffalo Sabres even switched to a primarily video-based scouting system, but its success is still being determined. PUCKS is a video system used by 16 NHL teams, including the Calgary Flames, combining detailed video organization with statistical analysis. While many scouts have said that video is at best supplementary, the growth of PUCKS may suggest otherwise.

The Flames, along with a few other teams, have also recently employed Decision Lens, an outside analytics system to help them more precisely rank wild-card players. The Flames used this to help draft undersized but skilled forward John Gaudreau, who currently plays for Boston College, in the fourth round of the 2011 draft. The season after his draft, Gaud-

reau was named Hockey East's MVP and helped Boston College win the NCAA Frozen Four tournament in his freshman season. The selection of Gaudreau in a shrewd, risk-free spot is a symbol of a different priority with the Flames in recent years. Faced with bare cupboards, the Flames have attempted to prioritize offensive skill since 2007.

Prior to this, the Flames drafted a third and fourth line projected player far ahead of his consensus ranking, Kris Chucko in 2004. Advanced methods and analytics are only part of the reason for this — Jay Feaster has only been general manager for two years, after all. However, heading into a tumultuous era in franchise history, it seems undeniable that the Flames will need all the help they can get.

The Flames show why teams

might resort to new, untraditional approaches to the draft. Despite being a team that spends a lot and therefore expects to win, the Flames have gradually declined to their present limbo between mediocrity and basement-dwelling. One key reason is a lack of value in younger players. Part of this stemmed from former GM Darryl Sutter's aversion to younger players, but this occurred in conjunction with poor drafting.

What is clear from PUCKS and Decision Lens is that Feaster recognizes the Flames's past problems, and perhaps sees a need to modernize in more ways than one. How this will clash or integrate with traditional scouting methods is still to be determined. However, if the Flames embark on their second rebuild phase, history suggests change can only be a good thing. If it works for the Flames, they might be a case study for modernization in scouting and drafting.

While the image of a scouts determining NHL hopefuls' futures based on instinct alone might be fading, statistical and video analysis is paving the way for a new drafting system. The Flames have generally failed to draft well and get little value for younger players, but may see an improvement in young stock if stats instead of gut feelings are used to choose prospects. The NHL will likely have to adapt to the changing landscape of statistical analysis or risk becoming irrelevant.

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Congratulations Faculty of Arts graduates of 2012! You have accomplished a great deal in completing your degree. We are confident you will go on to make meaningful contributions on your next chosen path. We wish you all the best as you embrace the opportunities and exciting challenges that lie ahead. – Kevin McQuillan, Dean

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To our nursing graduates and newest alumni: congratulations and best of wishes on your convocation from the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Calgary! We share your pride and excitement in this achievement and look forward to your leadership in health care where your talents will benefit the wellbeing of Albertans and Canadians. – Dr. Dianne Tapp, Dean

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