

POLITICS AS USUAL: Thanks for the Memories

By Alison Collins-Mrakas

Well folks, this is my last column.

I was going to make next week's column my last but as next week's paper will be published on May 2nd ? the day after the start of the Municipal election period begins (which is May 1st, for those that don't know already), I am calling it a day with this column. As my regular readers know, my practice during the last municipal election was to temporarily put a cap on the pen, shut down the laptop and stop writing my column for the duration of the campaign season. And I will be doing it again for this campaign.

My regular readers know that I don't write about municipal politics, so I could, of course continue to write about the provincial, national and international issues of the day. However, as the silly season has already begun in earnest, in the interest of my own sanity, I'll just take a bit of a breather. Who knows, maybe I'll start a blog?

As an opinion columnist, I write about what I think are important issues; what I think are the important takeaways from the day's news. As folks know, I have some pretty strong opinions on many things, for better or worse, depending on your point of view. And I admit that more often than I'd like, my opinions veered towards a bit of a rant ? especially when the topic of politics in sports reared its ugly head. And for that I offer a bit of a mea culpa, a half-hearted one though.

Issues around fairness and cheating in sports really drive me mad.

In particular, the hypocrisy of the powers that be, in their statements about fair play and drug free sports. What a load of hooey. Just recently, a Canadian female weightlifter Christine Girard was awarded a bronze and a gold Olympic medal from the Beijing and London Olympics (respectively), because all the medalists before her finally got caught as drug cheats.

Well, as I have said before, it's wonderful that she is finally getting the medal she deserves but nothing can compensate her, or Canadian sports fans, for missing that moment of glory and pride that winning a gold medal brings.

Getting what's rightfully yours, after the fact is just not good enough. The IOC does little if anything to enforce the rules and ensure that all athletes are competing on the same level playing field. Only the IAAF is sticking to its guns about drugs in athletics.

I guess that was a bit of a rant. It's fitting that I will end my columns with one.

I have enjoyed writing about politics these past six years. It has been truly exciting. Given the state of governance locally, provincially, nationally ? and especially internationally ? there is never a shortage of topics.

The US election of 2016 provided a particularly rich vein of topics to mine. And it is the gift that just keeps on giving. Though it's a gift many would like to return.

Thank you to all my regular readers for your comments, your questions, your criticisms and your best wishes.

I have appreciated them all.