

SFU Press Releases Collection

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Wrestler targets medical school, olympic gold

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If wrestler Shannon Samler can stay on top of her sport when she hits the books at medical school this fall, Olympic gold could be in her future.

The kinesiology major, from North Vancouver, graduates from SFU after topping her 67 kg category at this spring's Canadian National Club finals. Samler, a 12-year veteran of the sport, won without surrendering a single point.

Recently accepted into UBC's medical school, she'll spend the summer training for the world championships in Greece in November. "I'm not sure how I will juggle things once school starts," concedes Samler, who is used to the rigors of daily training. "I'll give it my best shot." If Samler can continue winning on the mat she has a chance at competing in women's wrestling at the 2004 Olympics - a first for the sport.

Samler was attracted to the sport in high school. She recalls how her first BC high school finals drew only a handful of female competitors. There are now about 200 girls competing.

Samler also participates in wrestling camps designed to attract young girls to the sport. "It's a great sport because it's just you out there," says Samler. Women have been part of the SFU wrestling team since 1994. The SFU team currently has five women wrestlers while the Burnaby Mountain wrestling club, also housed at SFU, has a dozen female members.