

# SPORT

NORTH SHORE GUIDE TO THE GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

## Ready for a duel

Cap birdie blaster aims to defend home court

Andy Prest

[aprest@nsnews.com](mailto:aprest@nsnews.com)

**THE B.C. Colleges' Athletics Association badminton championships will hit the Capilano College Sportsplex courts Feb. 16 and 17 and one of the Blues is looking to protect his home turf from an old foe.**

Kiran Bogavelli, a fourth year business management student who also serves as the badminton team's coach, won the provincial title last year over Douglas's Richard Liang before Liang got his revenge, beating Bogavelli a few weeks later to claim the national crown.

In the lead-up to this year's provincials, Bogavelli says the two will almost certainly meet again in the provincial final.

"100 per cent, unless we get injured," he says. And if that final materializes it will be intense with only one guaranteed spot in the national championships available — the runner-up may be able to earn a wildcard entry. The intensity will be cranked up even more by the animosity the two players feel towards each other, says Bogavelli.

"Altogether I have played him 10 times and I won eight and he won two times. We are like big rivals, we don't like each other," Bogavelli says. "We fight a lot on line calls and the scoring and everything on court. He's kind of like a short-tempered guy."

The two play differing styles as well, says Bogavelli. "He's a fast player and he has age on his side but I have experience. He plays very fast, a very aggressive game." Bogavelli is 31 and Liang 22.

The experienced one, however, does not lack confidence, particularly playing on his home floor. "I'm excited and I'm looking forward to winning again."

Bogavelli has the resumé to back up his



photo submitted

**CAPILANO'S Kiran Bogavelli readies for a return during tournament play earlier this season. The BCCAA provincial championships will be held at Capilano next weekend and Bogavelli hopes to repeat as B.C. champion.**

talk. Last season he was named Capilano's male athlete of the year, a BCCAA first team all-star, a Canadian Colleges' Athletics Association all-Canadian, the BCCAA player of the year and the CCAA national player of the year.

This year's provincials were originally scheduled for Thompson Rivers University but the facilities at the Kamloops campus were double-booked, so Capilano stepped in as host with Langara College helping to organize the event.

Saturday will feature the team event where, starting at 9 a.m. and running until 5 p.m., each school will play matches against all other schools to determine a team champion and provincial representative for nationals. Starting at 9 a.m. on Sunday players in men's and women's singles, doubles and mixed doubles will get the

chance to battle for individual provincial titles.

• • •

North Vancouver's Anna Rice won her third senior national badminton title in commanding fashion last week in Richmond, winning four matches without losing a single game.

Seeded No. 1 in the tournament, the Handsworth grad dominated the field. In the final Rice took on Calgary's Charmaine Reid, the No. 2 seed, and dispatched her 21-7, 21-10.

That win followed victories over Grace Gao (21-3, 21-13), Elisha Liu (21-8, 21-7), and No. 3 seed Valérie St-Jacques (21-10, 21-17).

Rice, ranked No. 23, currently lives

See Rice page 49