



CRAIG ROBERTSON/SUN MEDIA

Left to right: Nikola Bobicic with Sasha Kamkin, Dominic Kahn and Natalie Grant, and Peter Bulski and Kristina Bliakharsky train for wife-carrying yesterday.

## She ain't heavy — she's my wife. Spouse carrying, starring a boy named Margo, comes to Toronto

This being Pride Week, I have to ask:

Is the Canadian Wife Carrying Championship open to same-sex couples?

"No problem," says organizer Dominic Kahn, 40.

"They just have to decide who carries whom."

I suppose that is true of all couples.

So, the noble sport of wife carrying finally has come to the Big Smoke.

There's a race on Centre Island today, a tuneup for the revived national title meet in August.

Sport? Go ahead. Try carrying the missus while she whips and curses you.

What else is new?

Now try it while running 53.5 metres in high summer

championships are in Sonkajärvi, Finland.

The Wayne Gretzky of wife carrying is Margo Uusorg, 27, a muscleman from Estonia.

When your parents name you Margo, you make damn sure you are big and strong.

Uusorg has romped to five world titles, with various partners.

Various wives?

### Stagger 'round course

The rules are loose on this point, even beyond the same-sex issue.

She can be your wife or your girlfriend or anyone for that matter.

It helps if you know her name. So you can yell, "Stop squirming, Inga!" as you stagger around the course.

wife carrying, launched the national championships at Tillsonburg's fairgrounds on Canada Day 2002.

Feminists in the nearby metropolis of London got their backs up.

They ranked at the sport's link to Rankainen the Robber, whose 19th-century band carried women from rival villages.

"Barbarian," the feminists said.

Rick scratched his head. A piggyback race is wife abuse? But he charged ahead. In 2003, Tillsonburg high school sweethearts won the North American title in Maine. A Toronto couple won a top event in Michigan.

But when Rick, 52, had a heart attack two years ago, the

their hearts out on day one of the Viking Boat Festival. (See photo, P. 24.) Wife carrying is new to the fest.

A handful of carriers and "wives" practise in a nearby field for today's demo contest on the Island.

At least 30 couples have signed up. (It's not too late. See [wifecarrying.ca](http://wifecarrying.ca)).

### Don't drop her

As if you need motivation to sweep a lady off her feet, first prize is her weight in beer.

And the demo is a measly 100-metre sprint with a water hazard.

You are penalized 15 seconds for dropping your "wife," though that will be the least of your worries if you do.

Kahn hopes to draw celeb-

Belinda Stronach around a wife carrying course.

Kahn will carry Bayside staffer Natalie Grant, 18. I have ten to add Natalie wraps herself around Dominic only for competition purposes.

"It's a bit silly," she says "but all in the spirit."

Both are top rowers and fit as any Finn.

They will use the Estonian Carry, favoured by champion such as Margo Uusorg.

Natalie hangs upside down with her legs around Dominic's shoulders and her arm around his waist. (Gosh, that brings back memories.)

Other methods include the fireman's carry and piggyback.

A ball and chain is optional.