

Mandryk a woman for all seasons



By Carol Thorbes

A self-confessed learning addict, SFU graduate Regan Mandryk (above) admits finding time to pursue her ever-growing list of hobbies while fulfilling her academic goals is an endless challenge. But the Winnipeg born athlete and musician manages to do it, and excel in her academic work at the same time.

"There are always conflicts between classes and my athletic and musical pursuits, which have always been a big part of my life. I need to constantly reign myself in to focus on a few things at a time," says the bagpiper, pianist, trumpet player and rugby player. While she's pursuing her PhD in SFU's school for computing science, the Burnaby resident currently limits her extracurricular activities to playing golf, hockey and the harp, and singing.

The graduate of the International Baccalaureate program at Winnipeg's Miles MacDonell collegiate started her doctoral studies two days before defending her Masters of Applied Science thesis. Mandryk obtained her MSc in SFU's school of kinesiology in June with the highest grade point (GPA) average possible in graduate studies 4.0. Her cumulative GPA, including her undergraduate work in mathematics at the University of Winnipeg, is

4.08 out of a possible maximum of 4.33 points.

While Mandryk's pursuit of recreational activities is eclectic, the focus of her academic work is very specific. "I love math and want to apply it to something where I can see benefits to humanity. I went to work with SFU kinesiologist Christine MacKenzie for my MSc because she conducts research in human-computer interaction where the applications affect people in their daily lives," says the two time recipient of Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) awards.

During her masters work, Mandryk received a \$34,600 NSERC award to help her supervisor, MacKenzie, develop computer icons and manipulation tools that simulate human movements in virtual and real environments.