

■ ELECTION

# Two key ridings

Looking to witness a political bout in Edmonton during the federal election?

Best look to Edmonton Centre, being touted as virtually the only Alberta riding where there's a chance of an upset.

In the 2006 election, Conservative Laurie Hawn ousted longtime Liberal MP Anne McLellan from the riding by 3,609 votes.

It was a major letdown for the Liberals, as McLellan had served as MP for four terms since 1993.

But new Edmonton Centre Liberal candidate Jim Wachowich is confident he can bring the riding back to the Liberal fold.

"We think we can give the Conservative candidate here a run for his money," he said yesterday.

**Wachowich said the last election** — where the Tories swept all 28 of Alberta's federal seats — is not an example of proper democracy.

"It's not healthy for democracy and it doesn't create the dialogue we need."

Another riding to watch is Edmonton Strathcona, where NDP candidate Linda Duncan is again taking on Conservative incumbent Rahim Jaffer.

Jaffer won the riding in 2006 by 4,856 votes, with Duncan coming in second.

"I say it's going to be an even closer call, except it's going to be me winning this time," said an optimistic Duncan yesterday.

Duncan says she will close the



WACHOWICH: READY FOR A FIGHT

gap this time because of her hard work and unfulfilled Conservative promises.

"They have not lived up to their commitments on health care, environment and economy."

Jaffer said it's always close in his riding due to strong candidates.

"I always go into it as if it is going to be tight. We work really hard from the first day to the last day."

Jaffer took some flak from other candidates during the 2006 election

who claimed he took the riding for granted, particularly after he failed to show up at a candidate forum where several hundred voters were gathered.

He rejected that criticism yesterday, adding he's never away from Edmonton for more than a week at a time.

"Most people say they see me around. I think there's a lot of things we have done and I'm proud of our record."

— Kristy Brownlee, 24 hours



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