

# SPORTS

## Dal places second in Rugby barnburner

by Andrew Sinclair

It was pretty white outside this past Saturday, but inside Truro's MacMillan Center it was all "Gra", as Graham Jones and Graham Johnson combined to score 11 of 18 Dal tries and lead the Dalhousie Rugby Club to a second place finish at the fifth annual Truro Invitational Indoor Seven-a-side Rugby Tournament. Dalhousie, the defending champions, lost to the host Truro side 5-2 in the final match of the 16 team competition.

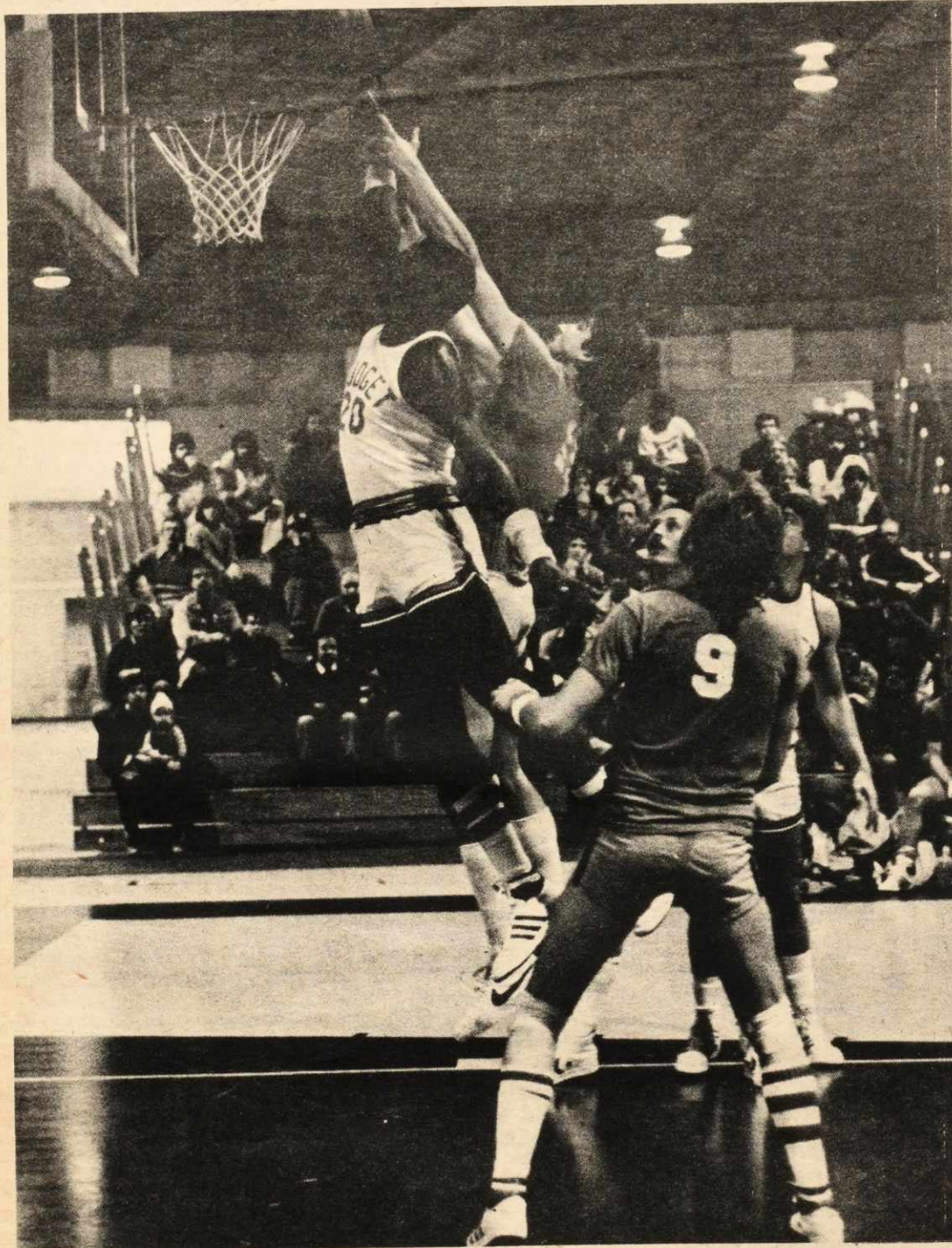
Last year's tournament saw an all-Dalhousie final, and the club fielded two teams again for this year's contest. It was soon obvious, however, that a repeat one-two finish was not to be, as Dalhousie 2 lost a close 3-2 decision to Halifax 2 in a tough first round match and was eliminated from the tournament in the second round by St. F.X. 1, losing 4-0. Indeed, for a while it seemed that neither Dalhou-

sie entry might make it to the finals, as a disorganized Dalhousie 1 team lost its opening game to the very same St. F.X. 1 squad that was to defeat the Dal seconds, the Antigonish firsts scoring two tries to Johnson's lone Dalhousie tally. In the second round, however, the black and gold settled down and easily defeated Acadia 5-1, with Johnson scoring another try and Jones calmly contributing the other four.

Third round action saw Dalhousie face a rough and aggressive Truro 3 team, but once again Dal's dynamic duo were equal to the task, as Johnson and Jones scored a try each before John Stairs crashed over the goal line and into the scoring parade to cap off a 3-0 Dal win. In the fourth round Johnson scored what proved to be the winning try in a 3-0 win over Dartmouth while big Bob Sheppard bulled his way into the end-zone for two insurance

markers.

Dalhousie continued to play tough, hardnosed rugby in the semifinals, as they ran over the Charlottetown Abbies 4-2. The first try was scored by the scrum en masse from a lineout; the second by the deceptively quick Sheppard. The winner, however, came from Dale Saxon, a rookie speedster playing his first game in a Dalhousie sweater, with Jones putting the icing on the cake. Allowed a mere ten-minute break before the final though, Dal was in little condition to meet a powerful and well rested Truro 2 side. Dominating the lineouts and using their strong running game to exploit Dal's weary defense, the hometown favorites jumped to a quick 4-0 lead, and although several valiant goal-line stands and tries by Saxon and Johnson provided brief hope for Dal and its handful of fans, a final Truro try pounded the nail solidly into the Dalhousie coffin.



Doc Ryan lays one in at the Canadian Men's Senior Basketball Championships this past weekend at DALPLEX. Ryan scored 32 points in the tournament final to lead his Budget Rent-a-Car Raiders to victory and was named tournament MVP.

Higgins/Dal Photo

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