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View From The Cheap Seats

by Mark Savola

A Learning Experience

Last weekend I drove to Toronto with a couple of other Brunswickers to watch the UNB Red Bloomers play against the nation for the CIAU Women's Basketball Championship. I didn't have great expectations, hoping for a first round upset against Regina and then for a strong showing against Laurentian in the semi-finals. And who knows, with a little luck maybe even get a shot at Calgary in the finals. It didn't happen.

What happened was that the Red Bloomers did an excellent job of impersonation. For both of their games they played an excellent first half, and although trailing to enter the second half in both games they had every chance of winning. Similar to the Red Blazers though, they couldn't equal this performance when their opponents made adjustments for the second half. As a result the drama of the games was over long before the second half was completed.

Pauline Lordon was named as a CIAU second team all-star this year. She deserved the award, as she had yet another hell of a season in AUAA play. But when she went up against national competition Pauline Lordon was no longer special. She was still effective, but she was no longer able to put her stamp on the game like she did in local play. In fact, she was just an ordinary good player. No longer something special.

The problem for the Bloomers as a team is the same problem as that faced by Pauline Lordon. There are no UCCB's at the national level. The Bloomers faced only two teams in the regular season that might be able to perform well at the CIAU's; these being UPEI and Dal. After that there's the rest of the pack, and none of these would have even the slightest hope of success at this level.

The Red Bloomers were able to do things against AUAA schools that could not be done at the CIAU tournament. They could afford to take low percentage shots, simply because they get to take so many high percentage shots. They could afford to make several trips up to the hoop without a basket or a time out because the other team was missing players at the same time. In Toronto last weekend they couldn't afford these luxuries.

Their competitors were taller than they were, and also physically stronger than they were. The first team I saw practice at the tournament was eventual winner Laurentian. After watching them for the grand total of 30 seconds I came to the conclusion that the Bloomers were hopelessly outmatched physically and could only hope to outmatch the other teams talentwise. Needless to say the other team's had talent too.

It is interesting to note that the only player for the Bloomers to put her stamp on a game was Jill Jackson against Bishop's. Jill represented the one physical type that appeared to be missing at the tournament: that of a very small, very quick point guard.

One final note. The Red Bloomers are a very young team. If someone steps forward to fill the leadership position left vacant by Pauline Lordon's graduation, then the Bloomers will definitely be back to the CIAU's. And I feel confident that they will perform better their next time around. UPEI went all the way to the finals last year, but that was that team's third straight trip to the tournament. Should the Bloomers get that same opportunity, you can be sure that they will be much more competitive.

One has to wonder why money wasn't found for Assistant Coach Keith Comitz to travel to Toronto with the Red Bloomers. This man has volunteered two years of his time to the team, and yet he was forced to pay his own way for the most important weekend of those two years.

The CIAU gave the Red Bloomers tickets for only 12 persons. The team took all nine players, Coach Claire Mitton, a manager and a trainer. This left no room for Keith. However, room should have been found. I realize that money is tight on this campus, but we're not in the poor house yet either. For an event of this magnitude it is a disgrace that UNB Varsity Athletics did not find some way of allowing Keith Comitz to travel with the team.

Chissy Hashimoto all but won UNB Female Athlete-of-the-Year last weekend. If she doesn't win this award come the Awards Banquet then there's something seriously wrong with the selection process. Chissy's performance at the CIAU Swim Championships was the type of effort that is rarely seen from the Maritimes at the national level. Coach Bruce Fisher has done an excellent job of recruiting for the Heavers this year, and yet it is rumoured in the swimming community that his job may be in jeopardy because of situations involving the Fredericton Aquanauts.

The Jim Sullivan rink made it all the way to the finals of the Brier. Not only were these UNB students the youngest competitors at this most important of Canadian curling tournaments, but he also had more success than any previous New Brunswick rink. For individuals this young to do this well bodes well for the future. I don't know much about curling so I won't display my ignorance by talking about here...but congratulations gentlemen on a job very well done!

Sullivan - Oh So Close!

by Tim Lynch

In the sport of curling, the transition from the junior to the men's ranks is extremely difficult. Last Sunday, Jim Sullivan and his UNB foursome defied that fact as they were edged 5-4 by Ontario's Ed Werenich in the final of the Brier in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

The Sullivan rink fell behind early, but they battled back to tie the score at 4 in the ninth end with a deuce. That set the stage for the tenth and final end in which Werenich held the hammer. In fact, it came down to Werenich's last shot to decide this year's title. The Ontario skip hit and stuck for one as his team earned the right to represent Canada at the Silver Broom in Sweden later this month.

For Sullivan and his crew consisting of mate Charlie Sullivan, second Craig Burgess, lead Paul Power, and alternate Dan Alderman, the road to the final was filled with several dramatic moments. First there was the 7-6 tiebreaking victory over Jamie Schneider and his three brothers from Saskatchewan. That win vaulted Sullivan and company into a head-to-head meeting with local favourite Al Harnden. Once again, Sullivan came out on top, this time by a 5-4 count to advance to the final. Sullivan, who finished

round-robin play with a 6-5 record, had handed Harnden his first loss earlier in the week.

Sullivan is no stranger to winning. The Fredericton native is a former Canadian junior champion and world junior champion. Indeed, Sullivan is quite accustomed to winning.

The bottom line is the Sullivan rink did not win this year's Brier. However, it does

not seem appropriate to measure the team's success based on that fact alone. They were able to stir curling hearts from coast to coast. They were the talk of the campus, the talk of the city ... the talk of the country during their valiant effort to win the Brier.

Last week in the Sault, the Sullivan squad demonstrated curling skills as finely polished as the rocks which they threw.

Goodwill Tournament Successful

The Daishin Karate Club is pleased to announce a resounding success of the first annual Goodwill Karate Tournament. The tournament was held at the D'Avray Gymnasium last Saturday, March 10.

There were sixty-one competitors from white belt (beginner) to black belt. They travelled to Fredericton from all over New Brunswick to compete in the tournament which was hosted by the Daishin karate Club's head instructor, Rene Leger. "It was beyond all my expectations, and everyone exhibited goodwill and fellowship towards all competitors", said Leger.

Local university club members placed very well in overall medal presentations. Brad Daniels placed first in

sparring and Kata for white belts. Shayne Walsh placed second in sparring and Kata for white belts. Ruth McLaughlin placed second in Kata for yellow belts. Mark Walsh finished in first place in sparring for green belts and David Wong finished in third position in Kata for blue belts.

Other placings at the tournament were Donny Robinson of Oromocto who finished first in black belt sparring; Jocelyn Richard of Edmundston took first place in black belt Kata; Nicol Melanson of Moncton took first place in Women's black belt Kata and third in sparring; Trudy Kyle of Moncton took third place in sparring; and Francoise Theriault of Edmundston took first place in women's sparring and second place in Kata.

UNB RED DEVILS

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