

York athlete vaults into limelight

by Josh Rubin

If York pole vaulter Doug Wood smoked, he'd be a happy man right now.

After all, the 25-year old Canadian record holder is heading to Havana, Cuba for this summer's Pan American games.

Wood, who set the national standard of 5.60 metres two years ago, was named to the Pan-Am squad in June.

The Cuban sojourn is but one stop on a busy summer schedule for the world championship and Olympic veteran.

Currently, Wood is taking part in the World University Games at Sheffield, England. Also on Wood's agenda are Tokyo world championships at the end of August.

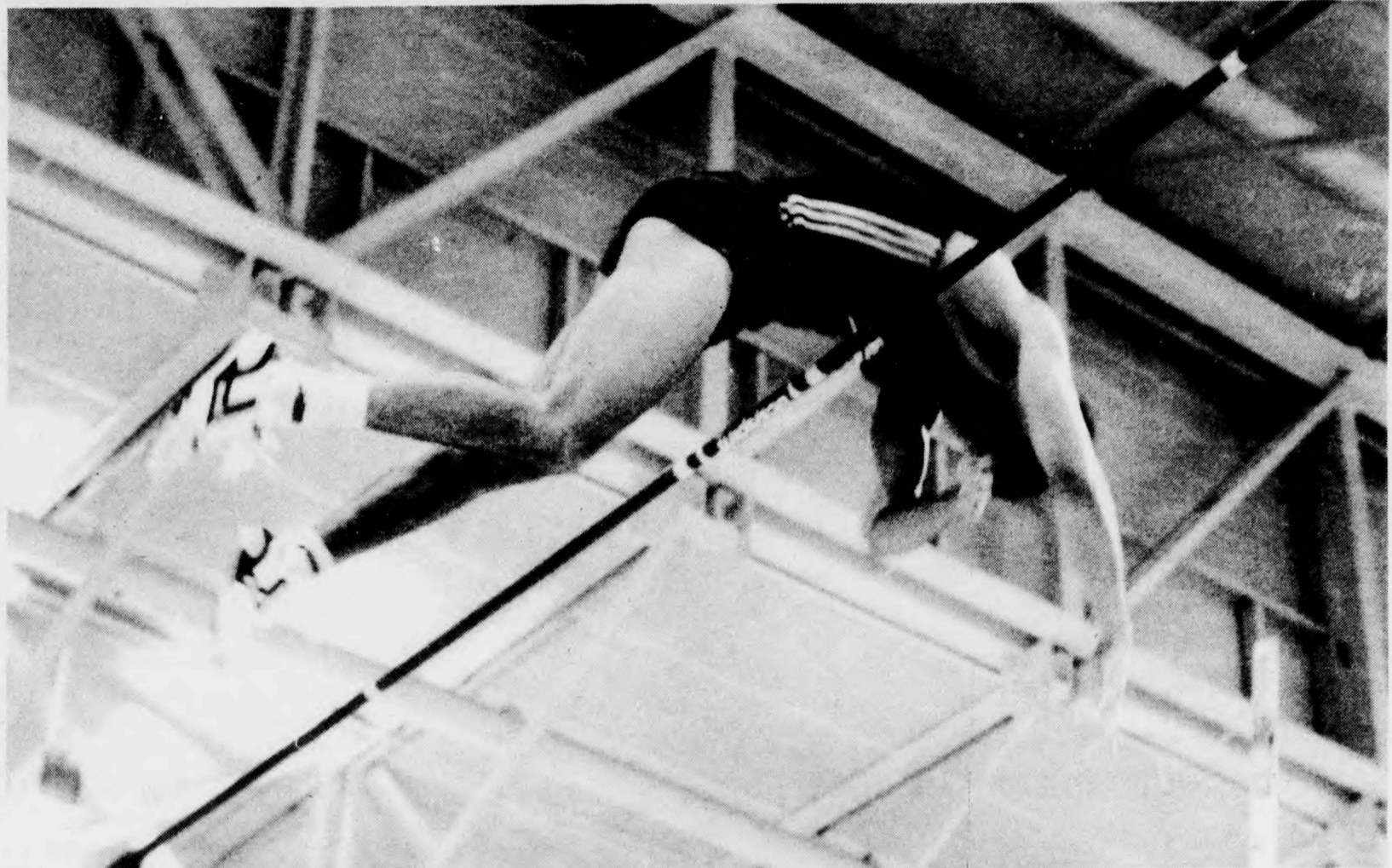
Wood is hoping for some big things this summer after having what he called a "not-too-intense season last year."

Following the '89 season, when he set the Canadian record at the outdoor national championships, Wood had a bit of a letdown in 1990, and could only manage a vault of 5.45 metres by the end of the year.

Those results were disappointing for Wood, who had been ranked as high as 14th in the world.

A mid June leap of 5.50 metres at the Pan-Am qualifiers came as somewhat of a relief then, but Wood said he still has some work to do.

"Now I have to start jumping 5.50 consistently, then hopefully I can land



Up and over: A new attitude brings vaulter Doug Wood back in fine form.

a bigger one," said Wood.

Wood says the key to consistency is a tough mental discipline, something which he says he didn't have

last year.

"The only thing that's changed this season is my attitude," said the 25-year-old Wingham native.

If Wood performs consistently this summer, he feels some higher vaults are ahead.

"I'd hate to think I couldn't vault

5.80 [metres]. Physically, I feel I'm capable," said Wood, adding that most pole vaulter don't reach their peak until they're 26 or 27 years old.

Hibbert digging for Olympic gold

by Josh Rubin

Alan Nolet got tired of playing second fiddle to Curtis Hibbert, so he did something about it — he beat him.

Nolet finished ahead of the world gymnastics championship veteran during the Canadian national team trials held in York's Tait-McKenzie building two weeks ago.

The trials were the final section of a three-part qualifying series.

Despite his second place finish at the York meet, however, Hibbert still didn't clinch a spot on Canada's six-man active roster for September's world meet in Indianapolis.

Only the top four gymnasts after the qualifying series know for certain they'll be going to Indianapolis.

The final two spots have yet to be determined, but Hibbert is almost certain to be chosen by head coach Harvey Fink, leaving J.P. Kraemer, Scott MacDonald and Shaun Jaikaran to battle it out for the final spot.

In addition to Nolet, who has been brilliant throughout the qualifying series, gymnasts already confirmed for the active roster include Davide Bardana, Rob Doyle and Mike Inglis.

Still, it wasn't the gymnasts who were wearing the biggest smiles after qualifying.

York coaches Maasaki Naosaki and Tom Zivic were heartened that the number of current or past York athletes who may be going to Indianapolis is three. That's almost half the roster.

In addition to Hibbert, who trains here under Naosaki's watchful eye, York may be represented by both J.P. Kraemer and Scott MacDonald.

For Hibbert, the world championships offer a chance to regain the form he had when he won a silver medal at the same meet in 1987.



Not a second fiddle: Nolet finishes ahead of Hibbert.

Hibbert also has an ulterior motive to finish high in Indianapolis.

"If I do well, it could really help my sponsorship for Barcelona," said Hibbert, referring to next summer's Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain.

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Coach realistic as Rockets fly

by Josh Rubin

Though the North York Rockets are flying high, Fiorigi Pagliuso has his feet planted firmly on the ground.

As head coach of a Canadian Soccer League outfit in the midst of a nine game unbeaten streak, Pagliuso has reason to be happy.

Pagliuso says people shouldn't be too surprised by his team's success of late.

"It's a matter of confidence, and right now we're playing very confidently," said the Rockets' head man.

Confidence was the least of problems as the Rockets beat the Toronto Blizzard 3-1 last week for their first road win against Toronto since 1988.

The predicted roles of the two teams were reversed.

Toronto, fresh off a five-for-one deal for ace striker Justin Fashinu, couldn't convert their chances into goals while the usually punchless Rockets scored three or more goals for the second straight game.

But despite beating the heavily favoured cross-town rivals, the veteran Pagliuso is wary of celebrating too early.

"We've still got 14 games to go," said Pagliuso, adding "that's 42 points to play around with."

There has also been plenty of off-field action for North York lately. Last week the Rockets obtained Kitchener defender Ian Carter in exchange for veteran CSLer Ian Bridge.

Along with new arrival Carter, the rest of the Rockets seem a fairly safe bet to make the playoffs, despite Pagliuso's caution.

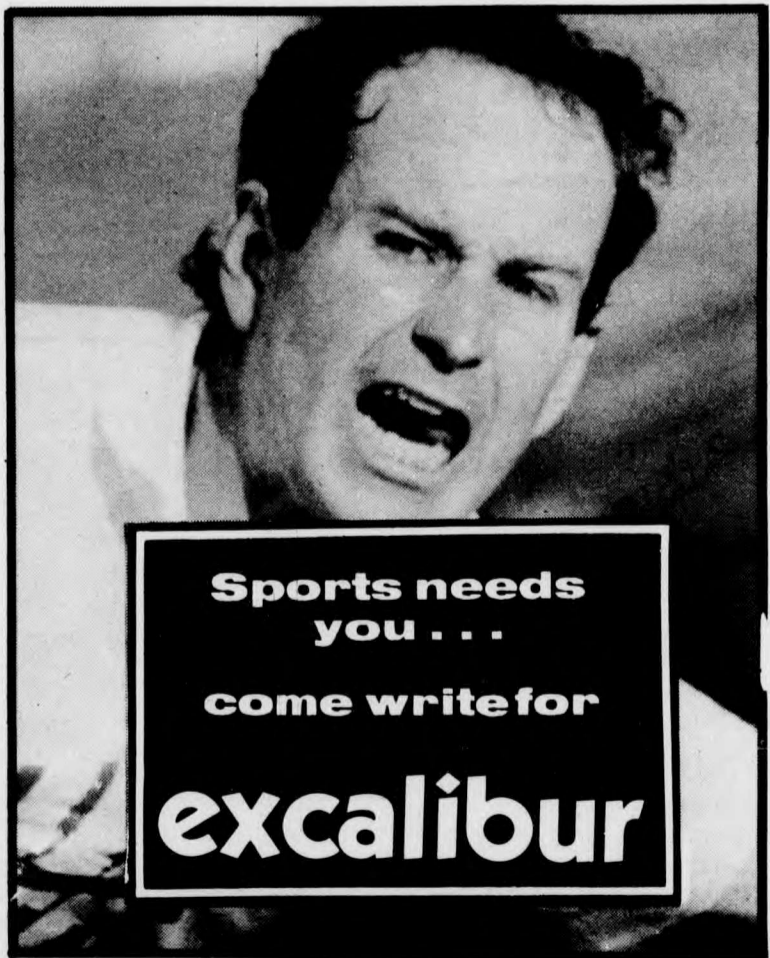
North York currently sits in fifth spot, thirteen points ahead of seventh-place Kitchener, who need to finish sixth to qualify for the league playoffs which kick off in early September.

The Rockets' recent wins have some fans wondering just how far they can go. Pagliuso says the Rockets have to be wary of letting down their guard.

"Right now, our only goal is to make the playoffs. We have to take

things a game at a time," said Pagliuso, in reference to any first place hopes North York players or fans may have.

Other good news for the club: the CSL attendance figures came out last week. The Rockets lead the league in increased attendance from this point last season. Their 103% leap is due to a coupon campaign and the Rockets' association, which includes 7 area junior clubs.



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