

# Team names in limbo once more.....

The following is an editorial submitted by a former sports editor of the Brunswickan Jo-Anne Jefferson. The contents are her personal opinion and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the staff of the Brunswickan.

Some things just never seem to die. Or rather, there are some people who just will not let an idea die a peaceful and natural death.

Once again the athletic teams of this university are faced with the unpleasant possibility of a name change. For those of you who are uninformed in this matter, what certain sects of the administration want to do is change all the names of the UNB teams to a singular name. They have chosen to push the 'Pioneers', because of UNB's trailblazing history in both academics and athletics.

Not meaning to put anyone in a bad light, but 'push' is exactly what some people are doing. Last year we were faced with this same question and when it was put to the athletes and the students, those people whom the name change would affect the most, the majority response was a firm NO. On top of that, a committee chosen to select a new name could not come up with one they felt to be truly representative of UNB.

All things considered, one would think that the matter was ended and the idea dropped.

Now we find that the idea had not been dropped, but rather just put in the closet until a better time arose to bring it out into the light again. The time is now but the unveiling seems to be occurring under a contradictory cloak of secrecy.

This writer has been assured by UNB President, Dr. John Anderson, that this matter will not be dealt with "hurriedly or quietly behind closed doors" and that the issue will be presented to the Senate at their next meeting April 10. So, to date, nothing final has been decided on the proposed name change. But not many people know that. It seems strange that word of this event only reached the public as a result of a news leak when the media gained access to the information ahead of time. It seems the initial idea was to simply announce the change to the athletes at their upcoming banquet.

To the interested observer, one would think that those responsible were trying to get the name change accepted without any advance public knowledge of its very existence. The fact is, almost everyone this writer has talked to recently has been laboring under the misconception that the name change is final and the teams are heretoforth to be known as the Pioneers.

I suppose the Pioneers is a nice enough name, but why not leave it to the Oromocto team that had it first? Our teams bearing that name can only mean more confusion for everyone concerned. Geographically we are located too close to Oromocto to have teams here and there going under the same handle and at the same time hope for a lack of confusion.

However, before this editorial gets too emotional, let us examine some of the pros and cons of such a name change. To begin with, the administration feels that it will aid in better identification of the university's teams in both AUSA conference and national competitions. What they want is a singular, common name. What they fail to realize is that we already have a perfectly good common name for all of our squads - UNB.

It is also felt that a common name will make it easier to design a logo for the teams. Why not base the designing of a logo on the name of the institution. There are already a number of excellent logos utilizing those initials.

Another point which has been brought up in favor of the single name is that it would assist in recruiting practices and promotion with the media. In addition to these points, the final reason they want one handle is that all of the other collegiate teams in Canada have only one title for their teams.

One might say that UNB is the last of a vanishing breed. After decades of tradition where each athletic team competed for the honor and glory of the Red 'n' Black under their own name, an influential minority comes along and wants to wipe it all out without a second thought, or without consulting those who carry on these traditions today, our present day athletes. Believe it or not, it is that tradition you remember once you leave here.

If you are not an athlete perhaps you are saying, "So what, it doesn't concern me." But you're wrong. It does. The athletes who compete for UNB are doing so in your name, not in the name of the administration who are presently making these decisions. The athlete, the student, you. These are the ones who should be making the decisions about this change.

This unique aspect of ours, the various names for the teams, could be an extremely positive thing if we want it to be. If the administration would only put half the effort into publicizing what we already have, instead of spending needless time, energy and money on promoting a new name, much of the present confusion regarding the names could be eliminated. We do not need a new name. What we do need is a well organized publicity campaign to promote our present team names.

Those in our conference already know who we are. As for being nationally recognized by a singular name, can most of you off-hand recall the names of other universities across Canada? Do you know the team name for UBC? University of Alberta? Laurentian? Manitoba? McGill? It is doubtful that most of you do unless you are really interested and self-informed. Why then do those in favor of a name change feel that UNB's new name would be better recognized?

There have been isolated incidents of confusion with team names, particularly when the Red Rebels were called the Red Shirts after winning the AUSA men's volleyball title. However, in

the same vein, the Red Bloomers were recognized in name only during the closing ceremonies of the Canada Winter Games last month.

A single name for all the teams would tend to generalize their reputations. Those teams with good winning reputations which they have worked long and hard to establish, such as the Bloomers and the Black Bears, to name only two, will have a common association of name with those teams who have not been as successful on the national scene. When you mix good with poor, you could get mediocre. Do we want to settle for that? Do the athletes?

So far all the objections against the name change presented here could perhaps be passed off as sloppy sentimentality for the hard nosed realist. The truth is, such a change will mean an unnecessary strain on already too tight athletic budgets. There are a few teams which have recently had their names crested on their uniforms, crested so that they are not removable. The only alternative for them is to discard these still servicable uniforms and purchase new ones. Can we really afford such an extravagance, all for a name change that a lot of people don't really want in the first place? It is doubtful.

This whole name change thing resurfaced again this year when it was voted on at a meeting of the Physical Education Faculty Council February 22. At that meeting it was recommended that the name of the UNB athletic teams be standardized and the 'Pioneers' was selected. This is

common knowledge for the asking. What most people do not realize is that the vote had a majority of two faculty members who are strongly opposed to a name change were not present because of timetable conflicts.

Had those three voted, it is very likely that the vote for a name change would have been no by a majority of one and never would have been brought to Dr. Anderson for approval. In such an important issue, which was not approved the previous year, it would seem only fair that these three individuals have the chance to express their opinions.

To top it all off, the Phys. Ed. Faculty Council has never determined officially what their quorum for passing votes would be. Yet they can attempt to say that this single majority vote represents the opinion of the majority? How is that possible?

All in all, a great deal can be said about the proposed change, both in favor and against. However, it should indicate something when only last year the athletes strongly opposed this same proposal. Why can't the administration understand that such a change is not wanted?

If you agree with this point of view, then let your opinions be known. Talk to your friends about it, start petitions against it to be presented at the Senate meeting in April, write a letter to the Physical Education Faculty Council or even the President. It's not too late to do something if we act now, but it must be now and it must come from you. If you care, show it.

**NO!** I do not want the present team names dropped in favour of a single name.

**YES!** I want a single name for the varsity teams.

**ATHLETES, FANS, STUDENTS, COACHES, AND PROFS**

**YOUR RESPONSE MAY INFLUENCE THIS ISSUE!**

reply via campus mail or in person to:

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