

VIEW FROM THE CHEAP SEATS

by Mark Savoie

Almost all professional athletes who come out of the university ranks came out of an American institution. Very, very few, came out of a Canadian university. The only one I can think of off hand is John LeBlanc, and he's only in the AHL, one step below the coveted NHL.

For football, basketball, and baseball this is understandable. These three sports can be considered truly American, and as a result they are placed at a much greater grassroots level than they are in Canada. The same can not be said for hockey. The grassroots level for hockey in Canada is much greater than it is in the States, as a result most of the talent in the NHL comes from Canada.

Hockey, unlike football and basketball, does not rely on the university system to supply their athletes. More like baseball, hockey drafts its players from wherever they can be found and puts them into a minor league system, with only the very best jumping straight to the NHL.

It used to be that virtually all of these players came from junior hockey, as did Gordie Howe, Maurice Richard, and Bobby Orr. These days junior hockey remains the main source of hockey talent; examples being Wayne Gretzky, Mario Lemieux, and next year's Eric Lindros. But now added to the junior hockey players are the Europeans. With the fall of the Iron Curtain we'll now be getting even more European players than ever, and junior hockey's importance will decline even further. You can almost hear Don Cherry ranting and raving about this.

The last important source of NHL talent is the NCAA, the governing body of American college sports. Recently, players such as Pat LaFontaine and Mike Modano have been #1 picks coming out of the NCAA. No CIAU player has ever, or will ever, with the present system, be drafted as high as #1.

The reason for this is simple: athletic scholarships. American universities have them, Canadian universities don't. If a hockey player wants to get an education as well as play hockey, then he goes to the States where his education will be free. It's simply economics. As a result, the very best college hockey players go to the States, where they'll be able to get a free ride.

Officially, this free ride does not exist in Canada. As I understand it athletic scholarships are against the rules here north of the border. That doesn't mean that there aren't violations occurring. Although I have no evidence that it was the case (and am not interested in acquiring evidence, it being too depressing a topic), the scuttle butt around campus was that many of the players on Don MacAdam's UNB Red Devil squad that nearly won the national championship in 1983-84 were students in name only. Classroom attendance was infrequent by these players, and the tale is that several of them dropped out of school and joined a semi-pro league in the States immediately following the close of hockey season here. Again, I have no proof; and again, I am willing to let the matter rest without making formal accusations or searching for proof.

However, I am by no means in favour of athletic scholarships. While the system in use for the CIAU can be circumvented and corrupted, the abuses of the scholarship system in place for the NCAA are vast and myriad. SMU (Southern Methodist University) had their entire football program scrapped by the NCAA because of their infractions, UNLV's basketball program is under constant surveillance, and the list of teams under suspension from bowl games or post season play is long.

But to me, what is even more worrisome is that the athletes are there for one reason, and that is to play their sport. School is often a distant second, if it's second at all. Once you start giving students a free ride only if they play sports it calls into question the whole purpose of universities. Universities are intended to supply an education, not to win football, basketball, hockey games, etc. When the football team is deemed more important than the math class universities have bastardized themselves to the point that they put their mandate in serious jeopardy.

This is an inevitable evolutionary step inherent in the scholarship system. For this reason I applaud the CIAU and Canadian universities for continuing to refuse to allow athletic scholarships. By doing so we have retained our integrity as academic institutions, and to me that is the bottom line.

Red Devils win two on Island Big test this weekend

by Frank Denis

"Our team is not going to win any games by scores of 5-1 or 6-2, we're going to win 3-2." Those famous last words were by UNB Coach Mike Johnston following a 2-2 tie to Moncton two weeks ago. So just one week later what does his team do; they go over and play the always tough UPEI Panthers and beat them twice by similar scores of 6-3. Perhaps that is an indication of just how well the Red Devils hockey team can play.

In the opening game of the weekend series on Saturday, the Red Devils played very disciplined and Johnston says the key to their win was the number of penalties UPEI took. Many UPEI players found themselves serving 10 minute misconduct penalties and as a result it hurt the Panthers game plan. At the same time UNB kept their focus and took advantage of the power play opportunities by scoring 3 goals. Scoring for the Red Devils on Saturday were Dominic Niro with two, Murray Nystrom, Joey McTamney, Jim Landine and Shane Easter. Replaying for UPEI were Brian McCullough, Brent Thompson and Rich Little.

Sunday's game was similar, but the penalties were a little more evenly distributed to both teams. The Red Devils power play continued to take advantage of their opportunities as they scored yet again; 3 goals. The goal scorers for UNB Sunday were Nystrom, Gord Christian, Niro, Steve Kippen, Ken Murchison and Rob Boldon while Tony Gallant,

Thompson and Little accounted for UPEI's three goals.

Red Devil defenseman Brian Wilson believes the key to the weekend sweep was goaltending. "Chris Somers played great for us on Saturday and then Scott MacDonald came back and put together a strong performance on Sunday. We didn't start the games very well and they kept us in there until we got our act together and played the hockey we are capable of". Johnston agrees with Wilson. "UPEI's goaltending was shaky at times and when our goaltenders were called upon, they really came up big especially in the third period of both games when UPEI began to rally".

Heading into the two weekend games in Charlottetown the team was ranked 10th in the country. Following the wins the team has moved up and is now ranked 7th the highest they have been since 1984. Coach Johnston says it's nice to be

ranked but believes it doesn't do too much for his team. "I think we're pretty realistic about it. We know where we can go and what we have to do to get there. If we work hard every game we should have a good chance of coming out with a win."

This weekend the Red Devils will face one of their biggest challenges of the first half when they play Acadia and Dalhousie on Saturday and Sunday respectively. Game time on Saturday is 8 p.m. while Sunday's game begins at 2 p.m. Both are at the Aitken Centre. CHSR Radio will be broadcasting the Acadia game on Saturday live. Former Red Devil Scott Bridges will do the play by play while Paul Arsenault will be doing colour. Be sure to tune in if you can't be there.

Just a reminder about admission prices for all UNB Red Devil home games: Adults \$5, Seniors \$3, Students \$2, 12 and under free, UNB/STU students free.

CHSR 97.9 FM

Presents

Red Devils

VS.

Acadia Axemen

Saturday, December 1 7:55 pm

Devils Hockey... only on CHSR

Raiders lose tough battles

by Kirk MacDonald

ELLIOT RETURNS

To see Brian Elliot return to the L.B. Gym and the Raiders after a serious knee injury more than a year ago was like seeing your hero rally his energy and return to the battle field after being all but defeated. The only problem was that the battle against both Acadia and St. Mary's was lost; though only in the final seconds on Sunday.

The Raiders just couldn't hold on to their early second half lead over last year's AUA champions from Acadia, but their effort will have sent tremors throughout the other maritime university teams; not to mention poor Acadia head Coach Dave Nutbrown.

UNB vs SMU

Saturday's game versus St. Mary's had a few shaky moments as the Raiders played at home for the first time in a month. UNB lost this first game of the regular season 97-91.

Bobby O'Brien, playing for the first time as a Raider, and Elliot, finally given the trainer's O.K., both contributed but were erratic at times. Brian managed only 4 points while Bobby added 16 points to Duff Adams game high 17 points.

The game was lost midway through the first half; with SMU in a game, the Raiders just stood around the outside and failed to execute their offence. The result was a quick 10 point lead for SMU. Coupled with the let down was Glenn Reads' rare shooting dump and lots of fouling of the sharp-shooting SMU players. One bright spot for the Raiders was Jamie Watt connecting for 10 second half points. Jamie seems to have installed a new keen sense of purpose.

For St. Mary's, Jason Darling, Chris Rewarth and Brian Thompson all scored 22 points.

UNB vs ACADIA

The Raiders game last Sunday against the Acadia Axemen was truly a battle. The fans had a great time as the teams traded baskets the whole

game and there was plenty of good tough basketball.

In the first half both teams shot well from outside with Adams and Read knocking in clutch 3 pointers for the Red Raiders.

Bobby O'Brien of UNB and Joey Walker of Acadia engaged in a rebounding war under the hoop. Both men are very physical players and the odds were even until Elliot got his chance on the court and became the most respected and biggest "big man". The only scoring Brian did was with 1 second left in the first half to put the Raiders ahead 40-39 but his ability to set solid screens is second to none.

Brian started scoring early in the second half while Adams fenced a couple Acadia turnovers and collected some points thanks to Yaw Obeng's accurate passing. This put the Raiders in the lead and it looked like they would roll on to victory. But Acadia fought back, thanks to Ted Bryne's shooting, and tied the game

again with 10 minutes left. Then Jamie Watt fouled out and the Raiders again couldn't execute their plays to get a good shot. It seems there was a time when the posts, Brian and Vinod Nair, should have received the ball inside but shots were taken from the outside and missed. Down the stretch, Nair and Adams both canned free throws to keep it close but within the last 30 seconds so did Acadia's Eric James and Ted Bryne to secure the win at 82-78 for Acadia.

Glenn Read had an excellent game scoring 21 points while Brian Elliot made his mark with 10 points and 9 rebounds and Jamie Watt added 13 points. For Acadia, Lee had 22 points and 14 rebounds, Eveleigh had 19 and Byrne 10 points.

AWAY AT UCCB

The Raiders travel to Cape Breton this weekend to face UCCB, the league's new addition this year but no push over.



Glenn Read makes the play for the Raiders

Red Devils to M...

by Brad Traver

The UNB Red Devil hockey team will start their first tournament weekend, when the Colby Tourname... been working hard preparing for the anxious to get their belts.

Coach Mike... year not to enter league because of that showed up practices. "We show up and we best to set up an... This way we do the girls get as playing experie... we were in a lea...

Heading to... and his assistan... their team has winning. "We

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