

# University refs brook no insolence this season

BY MICHAEL CONNORS

(CUP) - Coaches and players in university hockey have to be a lot more careful of what they say around officials this season.

Under a new zero-tolerance policy, hockey referees in the Canadian Inter-university Athletic Union (CIAU) are authorized to strictly enforce rules penalizing players and coaches who don't show them proper respect. Arguing with an official over a close call or even indicating disapproval with body language can result in stiff penalties.

The CIAU is following the lead taken by the AUAA which introduced zero-tolerance for all of its sports this year. The policy was in response to an on-ice attack of a referee by several Universite de Moncton players last season.

"It's a simplistic way of dealing with the problem [of harassing officials]," said CIAU executive vice-president Mark Lowry.

According to Kevin Cameron, the AUAA's executive director, the AUAA had been working for several years to end the problem of yelling at officials, particularly in hockey and basketball.

"We felt as an association that we needed tighter controls on the verbal interaction between players and officials," Cameron said.

Coaches and athletes in the AUAA are nervous, however, that officials have been given too much power and that the new zero-tolerance policy in fact means zero-accountability. Many are unsure of what an official will consider disrespectful behaviour.

In hockey alone, three coaches and four players have received suspensions as a result of the policy, for infractions ranging from throwing debris on the ice to slamming a stick in frustration.

The incident that attracted the most protest was the three-game suspension of Greg MacDonald, an assistant coach at St. Francis Xavier, for apparently muttering "nice call, ref" following what he felt was a blown penalty call against Dalhousie last December.

"For zero-tolerance to work, there has to be some common sense involved by the officials," St. FX hockey coach Danny Flynn said in a report in The Globe and Mail. "In most regards, it's been excellent. But we've had a couple of incidents throughout the league, and we've been involved in one, where perhaps the official used it more as a show of power than anything else."

Cameron admits that perhaps the particular penalty involving MacDonald shouldn't have been

called. "There have been some growing pains," he said. "It's a matter of interpretation on the part of the official. I still haven't heard the referee's side of the story."

Cameron believes that there has been very little abuse of power on the part of officials, however, and that the policy is working effectively. "We've definitely seen an improvement," he says. "In the case of players, if you keep penalizing them, it doesn't take much for the message to get through."

While zero-tolerance only applies to hockey in the rest of the country, Lowry said the CIAU is considering it for all other sports, despite concerns about its arbitrary nature.

"It may not always be fair," Lowry said. "In any kind of standardized set of rules there will be problems. The bottom line is it's the referee's interpretation."

In the AUAA so far, the only complaints about the new policy have been coming from hockey. "Hockey's a whole different area because you're dealing with grown men," says Memorial University's women's basketball coach Doug Partridge. "It's not 19 and 20-year-olds like in basketball. A lot of these guys who are playing are 24 and 25."

## PROFILE

# LaPointe leads by example

BY GREG WHITE

Like most great hockey players, Martin LaPointe started playing the game at a very young age. While most two-year-olds were learning to speak and walk, he was on the ice.

The 23-year-old native of Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec credits his two uncles for getting him involved in the sport that would make up such a good part of his life.

"They got some skates for me, brought me to the rink, and I started skating," says LaPointe, a third year student-athlete at Dalhousie.

LaPointe played most of his Junior A hockey in Quebec before travelling across Canada to play his final junior year in British Columbia with the Penticton Panthers, who have graduated such hockey superstars as Paul Kariya, Brett Hull, and Andy Moog.

At 20 years of age, the athlete had to choose where to continue his hockey career. "School was very important and I knew that after junior hockey I was going to play college hockey somewhere," says LaPointe. With a number of offers from some of the biggest programs in the United States and Canada, he finally settled on Dalhousie.

He is a speedy, skillful defenceman whose offensive contributions have brought him a lot of attention. He led all AUAA defencemen in scoring last season and is second this year behind Acadia's Paul Doherty. Anchoring the best power-play in the league,

LaPointe has netted 31 points thus far, including 13 goals.

The Dalhousie Assistant Captain is the backbone of a solid defensive core and averages an incredible 40-45 minutes per game. Assistant Coach Kim Houston comments, "Marty is definitely a valuable asset to the team. He is the leader of our defence and a key guy on the power-play. We want the puck in his hands when decisions have to be made."

On January 31, LaPointe played in his second consecutive Tim Horton's Cup AUAA All-Star Game. The media and coaches select the players to fill the rosters from both AUHC divisions, and LaPointe has been among the top two vote-getters for defencemen in both years he's been selected.

Joined by teammates Luke and Ted Naylor, David Haynes, Jeff Letourneau and Craig Whynot (who sat out the game with an injury), LaPointe and the Kelly Division all-stars fought off the MacAdam Division 7-6 to take their first Tim Horton's Cup.

Whether it's with the upcoming squad that will represent Canada at the World University Hockey Championship, or with the Canadian National Programme, there is a strong likelihood that LaPointe will be wearing national colours.

Tiger Head Coach Darrell Young is also Canada's head coach when the CIAU all-stars take on the best from the NCAA on April 4. While the roster is not due out until later this month, Houston hints that LaPointe is

"definitely a candidate out of this conference to be on that team."

When asked about the chance to play on the CIAU team, LaPointe replies that he would like to. "It would be such a great experience to represent Canada, every player dreams of that," he says.

On his future plans, LaPointe notes that "the National Team would be the best experience I could live."

"Obviously I'd like to finish school but you've got to take what you get," says LaPointe. "If they're interested in having me with the National Team, I'd like to do that next year." If the National Team doesn't work out for him, LaPointe expects to be back wearing the Tiger Black and Gold.

Watching LaPointe at the Tim Horton's Cup and around the Dal Arena it is obvious that he sees himself as a role model for younger players.

"Even though you're not a professional, those kids are watching you and you want to show them the right way," he says. "Your age, or level you're playing at, doesn't matter, they are always looking up to you." This kind of attitude is worthy of the respect and attention that is bestowed upon LaPointe and it should be commended.

Houston recognizes the value of such a player. "The guys in the room and everyone involved in the program have a lot of respect for Martin, for the way he carries himself both on and off the ice," she says. "He always has a smile on his face and that's a big asset, both in and out of hockey."



Ref's aren't taking any guff from AUAA athletes this year.

# Wrestling ready for AUAA's

BY GAZETTE STAFF

Tweedie won silver at 76kg.

The Dalhousie Wrestling Club rolled into Middleton last weekend and asserted itself as one of the premier wrestling clubs in the province.

Dal won the men's junior (17-20 years of age) team title with relative ease. Paul Lowandowski and Bret LeBlanc won the Nova Scotia Championships at 60kg and 90kg respectively. Gavin

Coach Scott Aldridge would have liked the men's senior team title, but the team didn't send enough wrestlers for this to be a possibility.

"This was our fourth event in a row," explains Aldridge, "some of the older boys needed some R and R."

On Feb. 15, Dal heads north to UNB for the AUAA Championships.

## athlete of the week

Sue Parke, Women's Basketball



This past week Sue helped Dal move into second place in the AUAA by earning Player of the Game honours in victories against UNB and St. FX. She hails from Campbell River, BC and is in her fifth year of eligibility. She stands 5'10" tall and is 22 years of age.

February 6-12

## Letter from Tiger hockey

On January 22, the Acadia Axemen visited Dalhousie Memorial Arena to do battle with the Dal hockey team. The game was a sell out, that's not unusual for an Acadia visit, but this time, the arena was sold out to our fans, and not the town of Wolfville. For the first time in my three years as a Tiger, our student body was loud and obnoxious...great job!

Due to great fan support from our friends and classmates we battled and came out victorious. If there were times when we felt down, you guys picked us back up. All of you played a huge part in our victory...thanks again! Hopefully, you will all come out of hibernation again and show your support for the remainder of the season. Let's continue to create some spirit and pride here at Dalhousie!

Many thanks from your Dalhousie Hockey Tigers.