

sports

Men's soccer set to peak after losing to SMU

by Angel Figueroa

Things are starting to settle. While boasting the best record in the Atlantic league, Dalhousie men's soccer sits comfortably atop the East Division standings with but a sole game remaining in regular season play. After going undefeated in seven games, Dal amassed a whopping 27 goals for and only two against, nabbing the division title for the third year in a row and earning the right to host this year's AUAA championships while defending it. *Impressive or what?*

But let's not get carried away. Really, all that shogwash and doesn't mean a bloody thing. A game's game, and winning them all can make you lose perspective. But giving up one or two, well hey, now that's healthy. It provides for a good shot in the arm.

Take Saint Mary's. On Wednesday, October 21, it gave Dal a good dose of reality — in the form of a 2-1 loss for Dal's first of the season. It was

a tight contest, with many brilliant plays coming from both sides of the ball, but as it was played at home and on astro-turf, it was an advantage that SMU was able to capitalize. This was a game which was the super-match of the season, one which SMU fought tooth and nail to win — partly for survival, and partly to avenge the 4-0 loss to Dal in the season-opener.

Dal midfielder Andy Wheeler opened the scoring in the 22nd minute, after pitching a fine curler into the upper corner of the net from just outside the penalty box. Keeper Trevor Chisolm was tested to his limits during the subsequent counterattack, and answered with a couple of fabulous saves at the 30 minute mark.

But SMU found the equalizer shortly before the end of the half, and then the go-ahead goal from a free kick in the 52nd minute, leaving Dal to muster all it had to try to tie it up again. Despite a barrage of attacks that out-shot SMU 15-6, it couldn't,

and was left to ponder that feeling it was so good at making others feel.

Overcoming the emotion, Dal surged to a 2-1 victory over the University of New Brunswick on the following Saturday. Here was a game in which hunger and discipline were the catch-words, as a rejuvenated team dealt a convincing blow to the top team of the West Division. Two outstanding players for Dal were striker Colin Audain, who scored both goals, and defender Rob Adams, whose merits earned him AUAA player-of-the-game.

Skilful passing and footwork by both striker John Richmond and midfielder Craig Janc set up Audain's opening goal in the 20th minute. UNB answered with the equalizer on a blitz in the 38th, which sent Dal into a nostalgic panic. But relentless pressure got the job done, as the victory goal came in the 58th minute.

Gosh, was it ever a beauty. Taking control of a loose ball at centre field, Richmond fed it to Audain, who brought it into the box while beating

two defenders, before passing it back to Neil Sedgwick up field. Sedgwick then redistributed it to Janc on the wing, who delivered a stunning cross on the volley, targeting Audain perfectly on the run inside the crease to smash it home. (This one is definitely shortlisted for this season's top five goals.)

Mount Allison on Sunday became Dal's third opponent in five days. Having met each other in the championship finals of 1990 and 1991, tensions were high, and a showcase of skilful, but bumpy soccer left most of the game lost to attrition, which nonetheless ended 1-0 in favour of Dal. Ironically, the lone goal was similar to last year's championship goal, as Craig Janc mimicked the circumstances for a skilful shot that beat the UNB keeper in the 60th minute.

Rookie work-horse Geoff Axell, whose dynamic talent finds himself either on the defensive line or at midfield, put in his best game of the year, earning him AUAA player-of-the-game honours for all his work.

Dal is now 9-1-0, and will be aiming for the double digits when it plays Saint Francis Xavier in Antigonish this weekend for the last game of the year.

Reflecting on the past three games, coach Ian Kent was quick to put that initial loss into perspective: "If you know anything about peaking, you always go down a little before rising to your potential. The St. FX game is a tone setting game, one where we'll test out our tools in preparation for the following weekend [at AUAA's]. That, of course, is where we aim to peak."

Men's East Division					
	W	L	T	GF	GA
Dalhousie	9	1	0	30	5
St. Mary's	7	1	2	24	6
Acadia	4	4	2	8	12
St. FX	1	4	5	8	11

Men's West Division					
	W	L	T	GF	GA
Moncton	5	4	1	14	15
UNB	4	4	2	16	14
Mount A	3	6	2	15	25
Memorial	2	6	2	12	21
UPEI	2	7	2	9	27

Women's Conference					
	W	L	T	GF	GA
Dalhousie	6	1	3	31	8
St. Mary's	6	1	2	23	6
Acadia	4	2	3	15	7
Mount A	4	0	4	22	4
UPEI	3	3	2	9	6
Memorial	3	4	3	25	21
St. FX	1	6	1	5	15
Moncton	0	10	0	3	64

Trip

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After pre-game festivities, including a flag procession, the playing of the national anthem, and presentations of County momentos to the captains, game time it was. Starting for Dal were hard-hitter Everett Rose, playset Chris Schwarz, and middle blockers Anton Potvin and Kirk Yanofsky. The roster was completed by the Villeneuve brothers, Paul and Eric (Paul is older and also the captain so I had to mention his name first. Apologies, Eric).

With both teams playing well, despite the lack of sleep coupled with abundant travel miles, the Tigers clawed to an early 10-6 lead. With timely substitutions in the form of defensive specialists, Alex Lai and Mark Burley, and service ace Dwight Whynot, they persevered, taking game 1 by a close 17-16 margin.

Game 2 saw streakish play, as the Dinos scored the first 3 points only to give up the next 8. Andy Durnford saw his first play of the day, responding in reliable fashion. However, Calgary evened up the tally at one apiece, escaping with a 16-14 advantage.

Good passing and communication netted the Tigers a 15-7 victory in the third round, only to concede the fourth 6-15, one in which returning player Danny Macleod subbed in, much to the delight of his parents who were in attendance. Rookies Jamie Mallon, Thane Mackay and Matt Giles were getting a feel for the highly competitive caliber of C.I.A.U. play. As Eric Villeneuve was tending to a sore thigh, a result of game 4, brother Paul was gathering

the troops in anticipation of the winner-takes-all scenario to be faced in the deciding fifth frame.

An even game throughout, with the score tied 12-12, physio Barb leaned over, exclaiming, "this is getting pretty tense- write that down!!" I didn't, but because it was indicative of the situation, so I am including it nevertheless. The result: Dal managed a 15-13 edge, and a best three-out-of-five win for the match. The Tigers had just beaten mighty Calgary for the first time in the history of Canadian men's volleyball!! The Dino-sty was no longer!!

both teams did Maritime volleyball a service

Most Valuable Player honors appropriately went to Everett Rose. As Barb distributed ice for those in need, Captain Villeneuve expressed the important role "heart" plays in the sport of volleyball. Then it was picture time, and the two worn teams grouped for the cameras.

Showers, then once again, chow time. After a nice assortment of sandwiches and pastries, the teams shuffled out of the cafeteria, but not before clearing their trays and sincerely thanking the nice ladies behind the counter (this, I thought, is very impressive, as they could have easily sneaked out, leaving behind a big mess and a few unappreciated volunteers).

I must admit, I was not as excited for the bus trip home as I was ten-or-so hours ago. After all, I knew we

would not be stopping at a Tim's (or a Big R) en route. As we assumed our previous positions and bid adieu to the small but hospitable town of Arichat, I again made note of the goings-on. Brian Rourke, seated to my left (how did he get there, and what has he done to poor Alex?) was busy computing stats from the now-completed tour. I was considering chatting up the bus driver, only to see the prominent sign "DONOTTALK TO DRIVER WHEN COACH IS IN MOTION" (what is the fine, I wondered). Calgary Head Coach Greg Ryan had everyone's attention as he played solitaire on his fancy laptop computer. Game results were relayed by mediaman Phil with the help of a high-tech cellular. Kirk and his Calgary billet were dropped off somewhere in Bedford. Others were resting up for a well deserved night out in downtown Halifax (perhaps a show at Neptune?).

It was now nearing the ninth p.m. hour as we touched home at sacred Dalplex home turf. The long trip was complete, as was the 3-day tour for the two weary warriors. Calgary had played well in foreign territory. Dalhousie was able to pride itself in having beaten the Dinosaurs for the first time ever earlier that afternoon. Both teams had done Maritime volleyball a service, sharing their high-powered skills with regions that are rarely treated to this sort of talented display. I had a great time.

Although I won't be with the guys when they leave for Manitoba this Wednesday, I wish them well, knowing that if I were there, I'd have lots to write about. Until next time, happy travels.



PHOTO: BILL JENSON

Tigers' dual victories

by Derek Neary

The Women Soccer League's Dalhousie Tigers spent the October 24th and 25th weekend in Newfoundland, where gracious host Memorial Seahawks allowed them a pair of victories.

The Tigers, coming off a loss to the Saint Mary's Huskies, took their frustrations out on the Seahawks with a 4-1 win on Sunday and a 6-0 pounding on Saturday. In Sunday's match, Kate Gillespie couldn't miss the net as she potted her 11th, 12th, and 13th singles of the season to lead the 6-1-3 Tigers. She is the run-away league leader in goal scoring. "She works very hard all the time," coach Darrell Cormier said of Gillespie. "She deserves everything that she works so hard for." Dana Holmes added the other Dalhousie marker in Sunday's conquest.

At the other end of the field, keeper Leahanne Turner turned in a rock-solid performance stopping a couple of breakaways and stealing a number of dangerous crosses. On

Saturday the Tigers took a 2-0 lead by half-time on goals by Lynne Robertson and Holmes. Gillespie notched the next two markers to put her team up by a 4-0 count. Robertson later added her second of the game and Nicole Webb rounded out the scoring in the 6-0 romp.

Cormier was impressed by what he saw and singled out Robertson, Holmes, and Suzanne Jones for their "exceptional play." The playoff picture will be clear after this weekend's games. The Tigers could face Mt. Allison, Acadia, or Saint Mary's in the semi-finals.

"This is the tightest season I've ever seen," remarked Cormier.

Dal will help to decide their own playoff fate when they take on the Acadia Axettes on Saturday October 31st. This is the final regular season game for Dalhousie and it is set to go at 2 p.m. at Studley field. Other action on Sunday included: St. FX 2 UPEI 0; Acadia 1 Mt. Allison 1. On Sunday it was St. FX 4 Moncton 0.