

# sports

## Four funerals and a wedding

by Sam McCaig

Something old, something new, something borrowed, something black and gold.

Marriage, hockey-style.

Darrell Young is hoping for a successful union of his returning hockey Tigers and his talented cast of recruits.

Like most newlyweds, each party will spend the first little while learning the intricacies and oddities of their new partner. Also, there will be plenty of high-sticking, cross-checking and scoring.

However, unlike most newlyweds, this couple's ultimate goal is a CIAU championship. And hey, if a few Axemen get run over along the way, it will only add to the marital bliss.

Something old

Starting in goal, second-year netminder Greg Dreveny - last year's CIAU rookie goaltender of the year - is back and eager to return to his position between the pipes.

However, he has a pair of obstacles in his way.

Firstly, he was tagged with a three game suspension by AUSA officials for his own unique way of clearing the crease late in last year's final playoff game versus the Acadia Axemen. On a more serious note, Dreveny has experienced some hip pains that potentially might keep him out of action for a longer stretch than his self-induced three-game vacation. However, according to coach Darrell Young, the initial prognosis is promising.

"Dreveny is undergoing treatment right now; hopefully it won't be a nagging injury," Young stated.

Moving on to returning defencemen, the news is very good. All-star defenceman Kevin Meisner has decided to do his MBA at Dalhousie. What this means is that Tiger fans will be able to enjoy Meisner's contributions to the cause for one more season.

Meisner will be joined by third-year monster Allan Cox, speed-demon James Bugden, stalwart Trent Gleason, and sophomore Jeff Letourneau.

Offensively, Mark Myles and Corey MacIntyre will be expected to lead the veteran's goal rush. Their efforts will be supplemented by those of speedster Mike Polano, sophomore Tyler Naugler, juniors Dan Holmes

and Kevin Ryan, senior Keifer House (who is making a comeback from last year's career-threatening leg injury), and rough-and-tumble winger Marc Robillard, of whom much is expected.

"Marc may start the season with (Mark) Myles and (Corey) MacIntyre. It is an opportunity for him to show that he can jump up his level of play; if he doesn't produce, he has no-one to blame but himself," remarked coach Young.

Something new

Lots of new faces on this year's squad.

Starting in goal, former Cole Harbour Colt Steve Pottie had an impressive camp and is expected to take over the workload while Dreveny is suspended and/or injured.

"Steve is more than capable - he has been to pro camps with New Jersey and Ottawa. With Dreveny out for the first three or four games, Steve has a chance to step in and really prove himself," Young said.

Also making the team as a netminder is former St. Mary's Husky Randy MacLean. He spent one season in the SMU goal before coming to his senses and deciding to lace them up for the Tigers.

Perhaps Dalhousie's greatest recruiting success occurred on the blueline. Leading the way is Mike Johnson, a Halifax native who has spent the last two seasons toiling for the Ottawa 67's of the OHL. Johnson - who nearly earned himself a minor-league contract while attending a pro camp last month - is a 6'3, 205 pounder with offensive instincts.

Also beefing up the defence is former UCCB Caper Brian King. He was considered to be the Capers' best defender and at 6'5, 235 pounds, should be able to keep goal crease traffic at a minimum.

From the junior A loop in British Columbia comes Quebec defenceman Martin Lapointe. He is one of two players to join the Tigers after being offered the chance to play with the Maine Black Bears of the NCAA. Finally, first-year student Pat Russell from Oakville, Ontario has cracked the squad after spending last season playing junior A in Toronto.

On the forward front, the Tigers have many bodies that will attempt to fill the void left behind by the departures of players such as Joe Suk and Ken MacDermid.

Slick-skating Dany Bousquet from Montreal is the other new Tiger to

pass on the Black Bears for the chance to play for Dal. He spent last season smashing Paul Kariya's points record in the British Columbia Junior Hockey League - he totaled 76 goals and 76 assists in just 60 games.

Steve Maltby is not exactly a fresh-faced rookie, but it is the twenty-three year-old's first time as a Tiger. After playing at Yale University for three seasons, Steve decided to don the blades for Dal while working on his MBA.

Our out-of-towner this year is Ulrik Bengtsson from, you guessed it, Sweden. He's very skilled and should be able to carry some of the goal-scoring load.

Tim Hill and Marc Warner are both first-year forwards with ample junior experience. They're billed as good up-and-down players with an offensive flair.

Others wearing the black and gold for the first time are Aaron Karmazyn and Mark Alexander. Both players have Halifax ties: Alexander being a native of the city, while Karmazyn spent last season skating for the junior A Mooseheads.

As in, they've borrowed our rightful position as AUSA champions the past few years and it's time we got it back.

So, is this the team to do it?

"This team is a better skilled one than we've had here at Dalhousie in the past three or four years. This doesn't mean they're a better team. We've had a big turnover of people, it's hard to say how good we're going to be. When you go through such a change, it's going to take time to bring everything together," commented Young.

Well, when it comes together, how do we stack up against the rest of the league?

"We should be able to compete for top honors in the league. Acadia has improved, the whole league has improved. It's going to be tough to repeat last year's record (19-3-4)," said Young.

In other words, no promises, but...

"We hope to be playing in March. The sun's been rising on Acadia for the past few seasons and it has to eventually fall. Hopefully, when it comes up again, it will be shining on us."

In reality, fans, alumni and the like have the hardest job. Stuff like going to games and cheering for the Tigers is tough, I know, but we gotta do what we gotta do.

If you went to any games last year, you know that they're a rocking time (does AC/DC's mega-hit "Thunderstruck" ring a bell?). Of course, Acadia provided the most intense matches, but walking out of the rink after the Tigers demolished some scrub team is a pretty good feeling too.

If you go to Dal or are just a fan of the Tigers, you're lucky because we have a good, competitive team and an exceptional hockey program. So don't jump on the bandwagon in February when the Tigers are getting ready to roll through the AUSA playoffs get down to the rink as much as you can throughout the season. That way, when we do take it all this year, the satisfaction will be that much greater.

Your first chance to see the Tigers in action is an exhibition game at Studley arena this Saturday at 2 pm against the Acadia Axemen.

Happy Thanksgiving, enjoy your turkey and all the fixings.

Something borrowed  
Acadia.

Something black and gold  
This is where the rest of us come



Winger Mike Polano eyes the upcoming season.

PHOTO: MIKE DEVONPORT

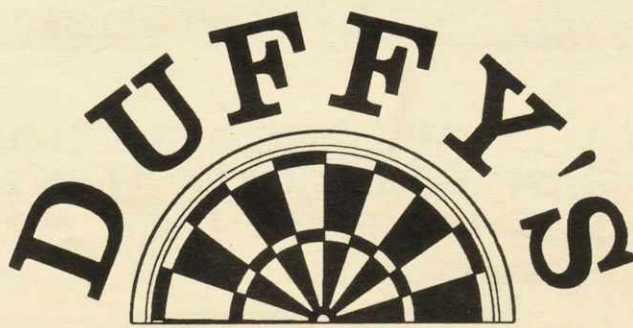
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