

Dal Volleyball Tigers victorious

In September, when formal training began for the men's volleyball team, it was a disappointing and rather strange situation. From the previous year's maritime senior championship team, only three players, Bernie Smith, Brian Cochrane and Phil Champion were returning, and the future looked dim for 1976-1977.

In the past six years, Dalhousie had been a leader in Atlantic volleyball action, capturing five crowns in collegiate as well as senior play. Although certainly due in part of the skills of the individual players, it was generally recognized that the fine coaching of Dr. Jan Prsala annually turned contenders into winners in a sport where upsets are everyday occurrences.

Again this year the team is once more a contender for both the Atlantic college championship and the senior title.

Playing with more confidence every game, the Tigers feel that by playoff time in late February they will have a stronger and more cohesive team than last year. They backed themselves up with victories against their toughest competition, St. F.X., while winning their first senior tournament of the year, the Oland Open in Antigonish last weekend.

Playing clutch volleyball when called upon, their toughest game was against St. F.X. on Friday night. The X-men were intent on revenging their 3-1 loss in games to Dalhousie last Wednesday night and with a friend-up team won the first game of a best-of-three 15-7. The Tigers

appeared unable to connect on offense or defence and in the second game they fell behind 10-1. This appeared to be the turning point as Dal, with their backs against the wall, made a string of important plays to break the X-men's attack.

Dal tied the game on the key blocking of Dave Murray and Glen MacKinnon and went on to force the deciding game. The Tigers jumped into an early 11-2 lead using a fast attack and precision setting from captain Bernie Smith, only to have the X-men tie the game 12-12 on a long string of errors by the Tigers and a few questionable calls by the referee.

Brian Cochrane and Glen MacKinnon halted St. F.X.'s attack with three brilliant defensive plays resulting in a 14-12 score for the Tigers. Although only one point was needed for a victory, it took seven serves before Bernie Smith combined with Kevin MacDonald in probably the best individual effort in the tournament, a diving short-set which MacDonald promptly spiked off a startled X-man's face, ending a two-hour-long match.

Upcoming games include home matches against University of New Brunswick, Moncton and Acadia. The match on Sunday against Acadia is an especially important one, as Acadia claimed victory by default in the first match when Dalhousie showed up one half-hour late, due to an error in the schedule given the Dalhousie team. Dalhousie won the subsequent exhibition games.



The Dalhousie Men's Volleyball Team is facing a competitive season.

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