

Dal rowers make splash in Boston

by Paula Jardine

Four oarswomen from Dalhousie finished third at the Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston this past weekend.

The lightweight women's crew of Kim Oxner, Alexa Bagnell, Kirsten Campbell, Stacey Nicholson and Paula Jardine, racing for the Halifax Rowing Club, placed third out of 22 crews behind the US National team.

The men's foursome of Frank Hassard, Kurt Stevenson, Justin Levy and David Nordhoff also did well.

The Charles is the largest single-day regatta in the world. It's traditionally the last regatta of the year.

The trip to Boston is an annual pilgrimage for rowers. Four thousand rowers participate while 250,000 spectators line the shores of the Charles River to watch.

The course winds through Cambridge for three miles, passing through the heart of the Harvard campus. The start is up at Boston University, right at the point where the mouth of the Charles River opens up into Boston Harbour. It then winds its way, like a corkscrew, under seven bridges and around five corners.

The women got a late start on the season. The club lacks suitable equipment so the women were not able to train with a coxswain in the boat,



Dalhousie was well represented at the Head of the Charles regatta last Sunday in Boston. Pictured are the men's four just after their race. From the right are Dal students: Frank Hassard, Kurt Stevenson and Justin Levy. Dave Nordhoff is a naval officer and cox Katie Clarke (not pictured) attends Mount St. Vincent They finished 15 out of 48. The women grabbed bronze in a competitive field.

PHOTO: PAULA JARDINE

The race started at 12:30 on Sunday afternoon. There was mayhem on the start line as 44 men's crews and 22 women's crews milled around waiting to begin. We were to start in the middle of the pack, 14 out of 22.

Finally the crews started to leave the line, one every 10 seconds. Going into the start it was apparent that the crew immediately in front was slow. I

tried to give them a little extra room to begin with so that they wouldn't slow us down. We passed them as we came out from under the first bridge.

There was a strong head-wind off the start line but as we turned around the first corner, it became a cross-wind, pushing us across the course. I tried to keep the hull of my boat as close to the

buoy line that marked the course as possible without going over the line. It was nerve-wracking. If I missed a buoy, we would incur a 10 second time penalty.

For the next mile, we were chasing after the crew in front. We finally caught them just before the trickiest corner on the course — the Weeks

footbridge turn which joins the two halves of Harvard's campus. The coxswain would not give way. We passed under the footbridge. The bow of our boat was alongside the stern of the boat in front, so close we were almost touching. I told the women to take the pressure down a little and I took the boat wide to get around the crew, angry

that I would have to. I had right of way but if I wanted to go past this crew I was going to have to push past.

Our oars clashed together as we went past. The crowd on the bridge let out an audible gasp — collectively hoping for a full scale collision, I was sure.

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Men's soccer split in New Brunswick

by Angel Figueroa

It has happened to even Manchester United. The only thing is that while United is clear of the pack in the British FA race, and are the obscene favourites for the Wembley crown this year, a ridiculous loss would have hardly made it suffer in its overall composure — save for some lost pride.

But the rather ridiculous 1-0 upset which the Dalhousie men's soccer team experienced at Mount Allison on Sunday, October 24, means more than just a bit of lost pride. Apart from the embarrassment, with the loss goes a first place tie with Saint Francis Xavier, a chance at winning the league, and no hope at all in hosting the Atlantic playoffs.

Yet, by virtue of a 5-0 victory the day before — which was much more in character — Dal earned its berth for the Final Four. The charismatic rout came at the expense of the University of New Brunswick who, incidentally, were in better shape than even Mount Allison before the start of Dal's weekend road trip. Go figure.

It has been two years since Dal last descended onto the pristine pitch at UNB, the same place where it defeated the Red Shirts 2-1 in a hand-chewing squeaker to claim the Atlantic Holy Grail for the first time in fifteen years. Despite there being only four current team members who could recall that glorious victory (six if you include the writer and coach), there was an air of unmistakable smugness as the players made



Star midfielder Tony Pignatiello is coming into form.

only thirty seconds of play. What followed was hare-brained soccer that tested the limits of a nightmarish upset. Not until Dal came out of its stupor in the 12th minute, with a solid strike that involved the talents of Rob Sawler, Morty Mooers and Colin Audain, was the tempo established for Dalhousie's most lopsided win of the year.

It was a masterpiece, even if all the scoring took place in the second half. What it took was a couple of quiet words at half-time from Brit captain Adrian Ibbetson, while a dozen heads were shaking at the idea of Dal being scoreless after 90 per cent of territorial advantage in the first forty-five minutes of play.

The floodgates were opened by Tony Pignatiello, who headed a beauty in the 49th minute after a 30 yard cross by Danny Burns. Seconds later, Chris Devlin stripped a pass, then brought it back into opposing territory, and the resulting play forced a corner-kick. Janc took care of placing it, and then Ibbetson headed it back into play. Pignatiello jumped up out of nowhere, and with perfect execution, he let fly a blistering shot with a scissors kick *à la Péle*. Perfect except that it was high by two inches, ricocheting off the crossbar to deny that dream goal which is a part of every player's ambition since starting the game as a kid.

UNB's only chance to get on the board came in the 63rd minute. Dal keeper Trevor Chisolm made a tough-minded save, but the ball remained loose in the 6 yard box, as Chisolm was left well out of play. A Hail Mary was

taken, but on the line was Geoff Axell to knock it away.

On the following play, rookie half-back David McFarlane brought the ball through the midfield and laid a beautiful pass to Axell, who beat a defender and entered the box, with all the anticipation of a "gola" on its way. But he was suddenly brought down, however, and Pignatiello rose up to ace the penalty kick. Clean and crisp through the middle, as the keeper hopelessly dove to the left.

Minutes later, again on the attack, Pignatiello was given a great cross by Axell from the left flank. Outclassing a defender, he jingled into sacred territory, but was robbed as the defender handled the ball. Out of the backfield came Jamie Sawler to easily put it through on the penalty kick, putting the Tigers at three-nil.

Burns made it four, after an assist by Janc, with a fantastic lob from 20 yards out. It was déjà vu: over the keeper and into the far post. It was a shot, really — not a misplaced-placed cross. Honestly.

McFarlane was again brilliant with a set-up in the third minute of injury time for Dal to round things off at five. Beating two defenders to bring the ball through the centre, he then fed it to Devlin, who coasted into the box. He then put a Wayne Gretzky move on the keeper, completely flattening him as he tapped the ball in. It was a showy finish to a showy game.

McFarlane offered his rookie insight on the formula for the victory. "The win came because we were

playing more through the midfield," he said. "Earlier in the year we were predictable because we played out wide and never played it through the midfield. This time we're doing it with a bit more success. Tony [Pignatiello] and Chris [Devlin] are really skilled players who can setup the goals we need."

Pignatiello, for his part, was ecstatic with the win.

"Today proved that on a good day, we can destroy almost any team. We played really well. We played the ball on the ground when we had to, and it was great to put on such a display.

"Now I'm hitting stride," he added, meaning that he's at 100 per cent since his horrible ankle injury in the season-opener. "And the team is hitting stride too; I think it was just perfect timing today. We're on our way now. We're playing as well now as we did at the end of last year. It couldn't have come at a better time."

Judging by the collective elation of the squad as they warmed down after the game, Pignatiello had spoken for the entire team. Things were looking good.

But ninety minutes later, at least one of the players was mincing those words, as Dal felt the painful reality of an unbelievable loss. Something happened, and Mount Allison walked away with a 1-0 win, achieving the honour of an upset that adds a bit of legitimacy to its otherwise awful record.

There are, of course, some explanations. CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

DALPHOTO: ANGEL FIGUEROA

DAL 5
UNB 0