

# Sports

## Tigers finding wins are going to be hard to come by

by Sandy Smith

The Dalhousie hockey Tigers are quickly finding out just how hard it will be to make this year's play-offs. Only three of the five teams in their division will make the post season play and Saint Mary's, Saint F.X., Acadia, and the Universite de Moncton are the other teams in the division; formidable foes to say the least. The Tigers discovered just how formidable this past week as two of their three games came against the front runners. Sunday the Tigers played well for two periods holding the Blue Eagles of Moncton to a 2-2 tie but got buried in the third and lost the game 5-2. The team lost to Saint Mary's last Wednesday by a similar score. In the other game, the Tigers recorded their first win, a 6-1 triumph over the UPEI Panthers.

In the Saint Mary's game played last Wednesday at the Forum, it was local speedster Moochie Friessen who did the Dal squad in. It was late in the second period with a score 3-2 for Saint Mary's and Dalhousie pressing on the powerplay when one of the Huskies picked off an errant Tiger pass and sent Friessen breaking away towards the Dal goal with not a defender in sight. Friessen swooped in on goaltender Harlon Wronko and fired a snap shot to the top corner that was in and out before you could say "that will probably be the turning point in the game." Friessen rounded out the scoring with another blast early in the third period to make the final score 5-2. Paul Jeffrie and Tom O'Dwyer scored the Tiger goals.

While Wednesday's game was a fast, briskly played affair, with both teams playing at mid-season form racing from end to end, Saturday's game against UPEI was a dull and listless one. The Tigers had plenty of opportunities to open the game up, but only Brian Gualazzi was able to make good on his scoring chances in the first period. He scored two goals, the second being a virtual carbon copy of the first. Both came on the powerplay, both were assisted by Shawn MacDonald, and both found Gualazzi parked to the side of the goal where he simply put centering passes into the open net.

The second period was one of missed opportunities for the Tigers, and, as is so often the case, the visitors, who had been outplayed, narrowed the gap to one goal late in the period to make it a real contest for the third period.

The final frame was a fortunate reversal of the trends displayed earlier in the match. While Dal had outplayed the Panthers but was unable to score frequently in the first two periods, UPEI seemed to have the edge in play over the



Shawn MacDonald in action against UPEI — "he'll score a bundle"

HIGGINS/DAL PHOTO

Tigers in the third period, yet the Tigers connected well around the Panther goal scoring four times. Kevin Zimmer, Paul Jeffrie, Gary Saleski, and captain John Kibyuk all scored to make the final score 6-1.

Shawn MacDonald added four assists to the one he earned Wednesday against SMU in a fine offensive performance. Coach Peter Esdale believes, "Shawn is creating the offensive opportunities for himself, he's just not finishing them off. When he does, he'll score a bundle." Paul Leck also looked good against the Panthers, playing very steadily on his blueline post. The game also marked the return of Chuck Tuplin and Ken Johnson to the line-up. A three week probationary period with the team has apparently been waved in order for them to return.

The last of the three games was played Sunday afternoon against the powerful Moncton Blue Eagles in Moncton. The Tigers played well for two periods according to Esdale, playing to a tie at two after forty minutes. The Tigers, however, "ran out of steam" in the last period Esdale said,

and lost the game 5-2.

"We lost the extra energy you need to play in a road game of that magnitude," Esdale mentioned, but also added "the team is playing disciplined hockey...when we learn that the game is sixty minutes long, we'll be in there."

Rick McCallum and Shawn MacDonald scored for the Tigers in Sunday's loss.

The team hits the road this weekend with games Friday against Saint Thomas, and Saturday against UNB. These games are most important for the Tigers as the need to win almost every game against the teams from the other division if they hope to make the playoffs. The depth of the division in which the Tigers play is vividly reflected in the case of the Saint F.X. X-Men. They have proven themselves to be a fairly good team, they have beaten Dal in exhibition play, yet they are 0-4 having lost twice to Moncton and twice to Saint Mary's. This weekend is a case of the dreaded 'must win situation' for the Tigers.

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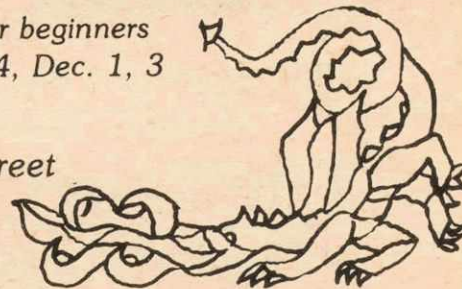
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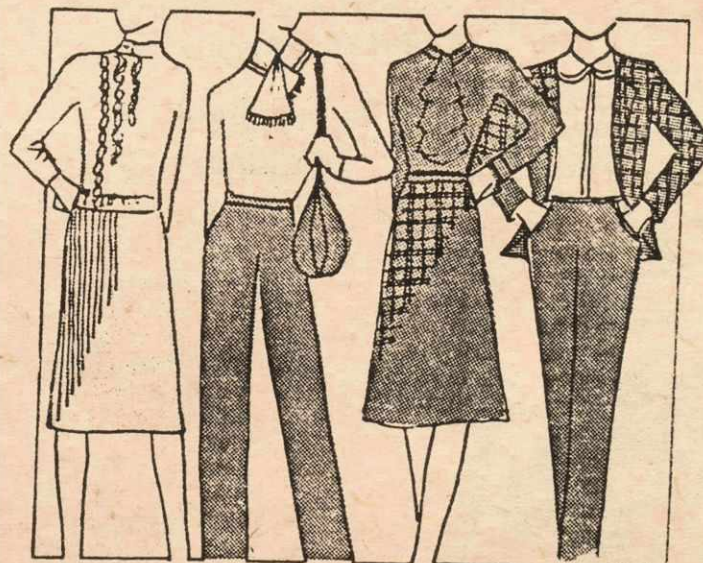
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