

Sherbrooke captures gold at Dalhousie Classic

Men's team struggles for bronze

BY GAZETTE STAFF

In many ways, the 21st annual Dalhousie Volleyball Classic will be remembered for why teams weren't in the finals, as opposed to what teams did well when they got there. In what has become a frustrating season over the past four weeks, the Dalhousie Men's Volleyball team continued their inconsistent play and almost cost themselves a medal in their final match on Sunday.

In a tournament that traditionally Dal does quite well in (4 time gold medallists and multiple final appearances), the Tigers stumbled, tripped and backed their way into, an overall, poor showing on the weekend. Highlighted by another "mechanic's nightmare" of a performance in the final pool game on Saturday, Dal was humbled and was left shaking their heads after the wheels fell off again.

Friday (the day school wasn't cancelled and then it was — yeah, that day) started out very well for the Black and Gold as they laid a beating on a poor York Yeomen side. The Tigers took the match in three games and were looking forward to a match up against Sherbrooke in the Friday night feature. The Tigers showed that they were not the same team that were embarrassed on the rock just a few short days ago, as they took the talented team from Quebec to a fifth

set, eventually losing. They came away from the game, however, with their heads held high, realizing that Sherbrooke can be beaten. "We were a few executions away from a win," said Coach Dan Ota. "We'd like to get another crack at them"

Saturday's match-ups put Dal up against Queen's and then the feature match against Western. The day did not start out too well for the Tigers. Everyone one in the gym knew that the game against the Golden Gales was virtually meaningless, however, the rumor shouldn't have traveled into the Tigers dressing room. The boys came out flat, even with the shake-ups on the starting line up that coach Ota experimented with. Key outside hitters Ryan Andrews and Josh Muise were benched in favor of Eastern Shore's Jeff Stevens and Saskatoon native Jared Rieger. Likewise, Dave Cox was subbed early in the game for Sasho MacKenzie in the setter's position. Even though, they were able to come away with a win, the taste was bittersweet and caution filled the air in anticipation of the Western clash. Ota went back to his usual starting six for the night-cap and it looked as though it worked as Dal took a 2-0 (games) lead. Both games were close but the Tigers were still having trouble executing and were struggling from behind the service line. In a close third game, the Mustangs narrowly beat out Dal and the

momentum of the match started to sway. The fourth game wasn't as close as the third and that set the stage for yet another fifth set performance. Well, in a few short words — the performance sucked. Western cruised and the match ended fittingly with a Dalhousie service error.

Therefore, the Tigers were relegated to the bronze medal match against York. If the game didn't

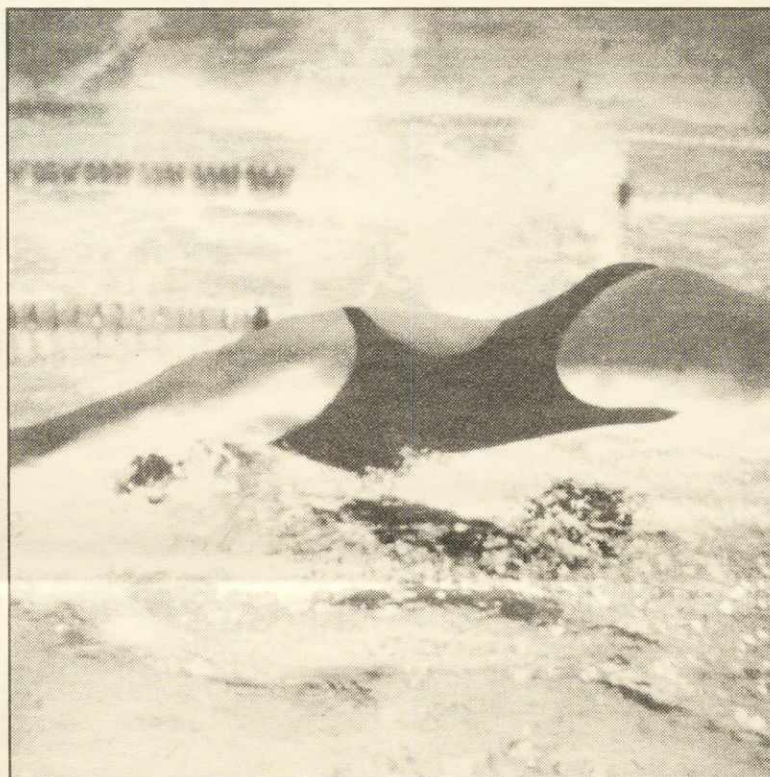
mean that much to anyone, the boys weren't doing a good job of hiding it. For a team that is begging to have some one step up emotionally and give it the kick in the ass they so desperately need, no candidates are running in that riding. Fourth year setter and team captain Dave Cox had a couple of key plays at the net late in the match to ensure the five-game victory.

The Tigers get back into

AUAA play this weekend with two home dates on Saturday, January 29 and Super Bowl Sunday at the Dalplex. The Saturday match features the return of the Moncton Blues Eagles, back in town on their comeback tour, first serve goes at 2:00pm. On Sunday, the Tigers take on UNB at 1:00pm. Both games are important with the up-start MUN Sea-Hawks breathing down Dal's neck for top spot in the AUAA.

Final countdown for Dal swimming

BY SCOTT SANCTON



Dive in: AUAA Championship approaches, Tiger swim teams' training intensifies.

The AUAA Swimming Championship meet is drawing near. With less than three weeks remaining until the competition in Fredericton, the men and women's teams are in the midst of final preparations.

The teams recently returned from their annual Christmas training camp, held this year in Barbados. 36 athletes participated in the 12 day camp. They swam over 100 kilometres — almost four times the normal workload for such a time period.

However, it wasn't all work for the Tigers. The team celebrated the New Year together in Bridgetown, Barbados' capital city.

On their return from the training camp, the tired and somewhat tanned team kept up the pace. The team competed in the annual Metro Invitational Swim Meet at Dalplex. Tigers Chris Stewart and Amy Woodworth had a strong showing, winning both male and female high points awards, respectively.

This past weekend, the Tigers were scheduled to finish the dual meet season with a road trip to UNB and Mount Allison. While inclement weather forced the cancellation of the UNB competition, providing the Tigers with their first day off since leaving for training camp. The teams did travel to Mt. A on Sunday. There, three-event winner and co-captain Angela MacAlpine led the female Tigers to a 73-30 win over the Mounties, winning ten of eleven events. On the men's side, Chris Stewart triplecrowned in the 50m freestyle, the 100m freestyle, and the 400m individual medley, helping the men to a 65-39 win. The men took top place in nine of 11 events.

The majority of the team will conclude their heavy training this week and begin their taper next week. The Tigers will compete at Dalplex this weekend in a short dual meet with local age group swimmers, beginning at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, January 28. The AUAA Championships will be held at UNB in Fredericton on February 11-13. CIAU Championships will be held in Guelph from February 25-27.



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⁶Ends Jan 2 ¹¹Week of Jan 3 only ¹⁴Week of Jan 24 only

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