

Ironmen look for weekend sweep

by Bones
Brunswick Sports

Tomorrow the Ironmen second and third sides travel to UPEI to play the Panthers, while the first team take on the Loyalists in Fredericton.

The B squad are coming off a 20-17 win over the Mt Allison Mounties, which saw the forwards display their dominating capabilities. Of the four UNB tries, three were scored by forwards.

Leader of the pack Eric Ednie tied the match at five a piece after the Ironmen stole a five yard scrum from the Mounties and drove it over the line for the try. Winger Mark Braidwood took a pass from Glen Mellor to put the Ironmen up 10-5, and then helped add five more to the tally by popping the ball to supporting flanker Paul Mysak who dove in for the try ten minutes later. Weak play by UNB allowed the Mounties to come back and claim a 17-15 lead. Centre Harold William then executed a brilliant kick and chase which helped set up the Ironmen pack. The forwards then stormed into the Mt Allison pack and over the try line where hooker placed the ball down for the winning try as time expired.

The skills displayed and the experience gained on Saturday boosted the confidence of captain Hal Brothers, "After focussing on fundamentals over the past week and seeing how our players developed into their roles we should soon be able to enter a match playing our

style of rugby rather than facing an opposition."

The strength and skill exhibited by the UNB forwards, highlighted by the demolishing power of locks Chris Turkenkopf and Ken LeDrew, which when combined in tackles virtually sawed opposition players in half, gives them the advantage in tomorrow's match. While the Panther backfield is faster than that of the Mounties, the talent displayed by the Ironmen backs is more than capable of handling this threat.

As Ironmen hooker Kray Robichaud commented, "If their play against STU is any indication of the team they are, we should be capable of manhandling them."

Following the second team the Ironmen thirds will face a rematch of Saturday's 17-13 victory over the Panther's second team. Captain Yuri Thomas led fellow backs Martin Gillis and Brian Crothers as each posted a try in the winning effort. The ferocious play of forward Neill Britt guided the UNB pack en route to success in continually providing solid ball for the backfield.



Ironmen take out Panther. Photo by Bill Jackson

In tomorrow's game the third team looks to continue developing talent and introducing players to the game. "The depth of this club is amazing," said captain Thomas, "over fifty different teammates played this weekend. These numbers are what's going to allow UNB to remain the competitive side it is." With the strong co-operation between the forwards and

backs displayed on Saturday, the Ironmen should be able to repeat their success.

The Ironmen first fifteen did not fare as well on Saturday, losing a 28-0 match to the Maritime Champion St. John Trojans. Undismayed, captain John sparks looks forward to tomorrow's game against the Loyalists, "Individually, we are better than the Trojans. what cost us the

match was the fact that we had only been together a couple of weeks... Now that our teamwork is starting to click...(and)... after seeing the possibilities against the Trojans, I believe this weekend could see the start of a very successful season."

Helping UNB along will be animosity held between the two teams. Having lost the semi-final match to the Loyalists last year, the Ironmen are eager to revenge themselves. Of special importance, will be the ability of the forwards to play aggressively in securing the ball as, according to eightman Dave Murchison, "It's always a tough, physical game against the Loyalists due to the inner city rivalry."

In combination with the forwards, the strength of the backs and their ability to play a hard match, will play a decisive role in containing the Loyalist attack. Along with strength, the speed of wingers Dean Plant and John Bujold is a continuous threat that will prove hard to handle. These factors should enable the Ironmen to claim victory and start working towards the championship.

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