

SPORTS and RECREATION

EV SPENCE

The consummate athlete



Peter Hsu photo

By MYLES DAVIS

In these days of over-paid, under-talented professional athletes whose only effort comes from lugging home their pay at the end of the week, it comes as a pleasant surprise to find out that there are still a few talented athletes who feel the glory days of past years can become a reality in the 70's.

Ev Spence is one of those.

Spence is perhaps the finest all-round athlete at York. The tall, muscular physique; the effortless speed and agility; the cool composure in the midst of a championship battle: are all there in Spence. Ken Corfield, a former student and Yeomen football player, calls him "The athlete's athlete".

Two years ago, Spence won the athlete of the year award at York, aside from gaining a berth on both the OUAA rugby and basketball all-star teams. But unlike many other university athletes, Spence is not just the consummate campus jock.

"As far the campus jock thing goes though, I really don't know about that," says Spence. "I just go out there and do what I'm supposed to do, and that's play the sport I'm involved in, and get to my classes on time".

Spence came to York four years ago, primarily because he disliked the hustle and bustle of the downtown U. of T. campus. As he explains: "It's a much more relaxed atmosphere here at York. With the number of cars and people downtown, you get a very tense feeling."

Spence is not unlike most other students. Now in his fourth year, he is majoring in physical education (with hopes of someday teaching the subject), and minoring in mathematics. He's usually quiet and composed, giving as much thought to his next lecture as to his next game.

With the amount of time he devotes to practice, one may well ask about his social life.

"My social life is a little lean right now because of the time I spend in practice (about 10-15 hours per week), so I don't really get that much time to go out," he says. "As for studying, I try to get it done in between classes during the day. I guess I do have a pretty tight schedule."

Aside from his involvement in sports, Spence wants to work with younger people, between the ages of nine and 12. "I think Canada's key to becoming prominent in international competition, lies in the development of sports ability in younger kids. Physical education is almost completely lacking at the public and junior high-school level; I don't think the kids are taught enough in that area. The reason Canada is such a proficient nation in hockey is that the first thing kids learn to do here is skate and handle a hockey stick."

"Right now, the federal government has grants which they give out to the top athletes to help them improve their skills. In other words, money only goes to the 'elite' of Canada's athletes, whereas the kids from 'down under' don't get anything."

Many athletes of Spence's calibre would undoubtedly call themselves 'naturally gifted'. Perhaps they're right. For Spence, however, the road to personal success has been, if not extremely long, certainly a most trying one. He feels that hard work, more than anything else, is the key to athletic prominence.

"I remember one of the coaches once telling me that if I worked harder than I had to, then my skills as a ballplayer would improve. In high school, I used to go to the school at night whenever I had the chance just to play basketball. The slogan 'practice makes perfect' is one which I've always tried to keep in mind."

Coaching is another aspect of sports which Spence feels strongly about. "I'd have to say coaching is a much more difficult part of the game than playing. I've seen situations where the five best high school basketball players in the city have been on one team, yet they've lost a championship because they weren't coached properly; they weren't moulded into a cohesive unit. The coach is the man who has to get everything together for his team."

Spence looks at the sports scene in this decade with a more optimistic eye than most, and feels that in many areas, vast improvements are being made. "All you have to do is look at a few changes that have been made in basketball recently, such as the institution of the 30-second clock, to realize that efforts are being made all of the time to upgrade the quality of the game."

This is the age of super-stars and just plain ordinary super-stars. Spence is one case of a star that qualifies for that distinction, both on and off the playing area.

Yeomen sweep weekend game; rebound from early 3-0 deficit

By TONY MAGISTRALE

Two victories over Queen's Golden Gaels on the weekend moved the York hockey Yeomen into a second-place tie with the Laurentian Voyageurs in the tough Eastern division of the OUAA hockey league.

Playing at Queen's, the Yeomen dumped the Gaels by scores of 4-3 on Friday, and 6-1 on Saturday.

In Friday's game, Queen's fought tooth-and-nail with the Yeomen in building up a three-goal lead at the end of the first period. In the second, however, breakaway goals by John Fielding and Rick Martin put York back in contention. Then, before the five-minute mark of the third period, Doug Sellars tied the game at three apiece. Bob Wasson scored the winner for the Yeomen with about ten minutes remaining.

The 4-3 score was indicative of the close play in the game, and of York's goaltending. Peter Kostek appeared shaky in the first period when he let in three goals, but rebounded to shut out the Gaels in the final two periods.

For two periods on Saturday, it began to look like York and Queen's would battle in a manner similar to that of Friday's game.

No scoring took place in the first period, and at the end of the second, York barely held on to a narrow 2-1 lead.

The third period, however, proved to be a different story, as the Yeomen took complete control of the game, scoring four unanswered goals to skate off with a 6-1 decision.

Brian Burch led the Yeomen with two goals, while Ron Hawkshaw, Aidan Flatley, Peter Titanic, and Roger Dorey each notched singles in the victory.

York beats Blues, 88-71

The York basketball Yeomen had on their springiest running shoes Friday night, out-rebounding the Varsity Blues and shooting their way to their fourth straight victory in regular season play.

Led by their top shooter, Romeo Calligaro, the Yeomen pulled down 41 rebounds to Varsity's 26, enabling them to beat the Blues 88-71.

The victory strengthened York's hold on first place in the OUAA's eastern division and upped their record to 4-0.

York trailed 42-35 at the end of the first half, and at one point in the game, were behind by 12 points. In the second half, however, the Yeomen rallied, scoring 46 points to 29 for the Blues.

Calligaro, who is rapidly gaining the reputation as a trigger man in York's explosive offense, scored 33 points on the night. Ted Galka, also a big shooter in recent games, added 14 points, while Ed Seibert, Chris McNeilly and Ev Spence each netted over 10 points.

Brian Skyvington scored 17 points for the Blues, who are now three wins and one loss for the season.

So far this year, the Yeomen are battling 1,000 in picking the right time to win basketball games. They've lost four of eight games they've played, but none of those defeats, have come in regular season play.

Last week, the Yeomen lost what could have been a heart-breaker to Laurier by the score of 101-100, but it being only an exhibition match, the York players walked off with more smiles than frowns.



Hockey Yeoman Ron Hawkshaw relaxing after victory. Hawkshaw, York's third leading scorer over the season, collected a goal and an assist over the weekend.

The two weekend triumphs may prove to be York's first step out of the depths of inconsistency. They were the team's first back-to-back wins of the season, and they give the Yeomen their present 4-3 record.

At this point the Yeomen are three points behind the division-leading Varsity Blues. A win in their next game (which is against the Blues) would give them sole possession of second place.



Dr. Labib Squash tips

The lob

We have already discussed various defensive shots which will allow you to get out of trouble when your opponent's pressing. Now we'll look at an all-purpose shot which can be used as either an offensive or a defensive manoeuvre in almost any situation.

This shot is known as the lob.

The most appropriate time to use the lob is when you are struggling to return your opponent's shot at the front of the court.

Perhaps the most important attribute of the lob shot is that you can play it successfully no matter where your opponent is positioned on the court. If the shot is executed properly, it will force him to the back of the court and, due to slow speed at which the ball is travelling, will give you time to recover and position yourself at the centre of the court.

In playing the lob, use the same stroke as in the drop shot.

Keep your racquet-face open

and swing upwards towards the ball. Don't try to smash the ball with a convincing blow; make an effort to push it up slowly, off the front wall and back over your opponent's head.

If you hit the ball too hard it will hit the ceiling of the court and you will lose the point. However, if you do not stroke the ball firmly enough, chances are your opponent will play a quick volley while it's in the air and force you into a difficult return shot.

The most effective type of lob to play is the cross-court lob.

This shot involves meeting the ball at one side of the court and hitting off the front wall towards the back of the other side of the court. If played correctly, this shot can give even the most proficient of players a difficult time in returning.

Remember to always keep an eye on the ball before and during the stroke. Keep your legs bent at the knees and stretch slowly towards the ball to insure proper timing.