

sports

Penn wins Excalibur tourney

By "HOWIE" MARR

The Excalibur Volleyball Classic has gradually become one of the most competitive tournaments in North America—probably too competitive for the York Yeomen.

The Yeomen had a dismal weekend, dropping all five of their matches to finish last in the eight team tournament. Penn State, the number-one-ranked team in the United States, won the tournament for the fourth time.

The Penn State-Laval match was an exciting example of some high calibre play. A large partisan crowd turned out to cheer for the Rouge Et Or in what at times seemed like a defence of Canadian sovereignty.

Laval, fifth ranked in the country, gave the Nittany Lions a tough battle.

Penn State opened things up with a quick 15-8 victory, but Laval was hardly ready to roll over. The Rouge Et Or fought back and were in control until late in the second game. Laval led most of the game, but costly net violations ended up giving Penn State all the edge they needed.

Laval stormed back in the third game, winning handily by a score of 15-10 to force a fourth, which saw Penn State jump out to a 11-1 lead as Laval looked extremely sloppy. The lead proved to be too much for Laval as they lost the game by a final score of 15-9.

After the match Penn State coach Eric Shope pointed to two things that gave his team the edge. He cited his team's "incredible defence . . . and a complicated offense that confused Laval."

Laval's Gino Brousseau was rewarded for his excellent play with the tournament MVP award. In the all-star category Penn State led with three selections: all-American Javiar Gaspar was selected for the third straight year while Robert Pierce and Chris Chase also received honours.

Pierce led the team with 35 digs against Laval, while Chase, (at 6'10" Penn State's designated wall) picked up 60 kills and 37 blocks.

Other all-stars included George Mason's Uvaldo Acosta, Victoria's David Risso, and Toronto's Edgar Lueg. Lueg set a tournament record with 65 blocks, but his Uoff Blues finished fourth, losing to George Mason in the bronze match-up.

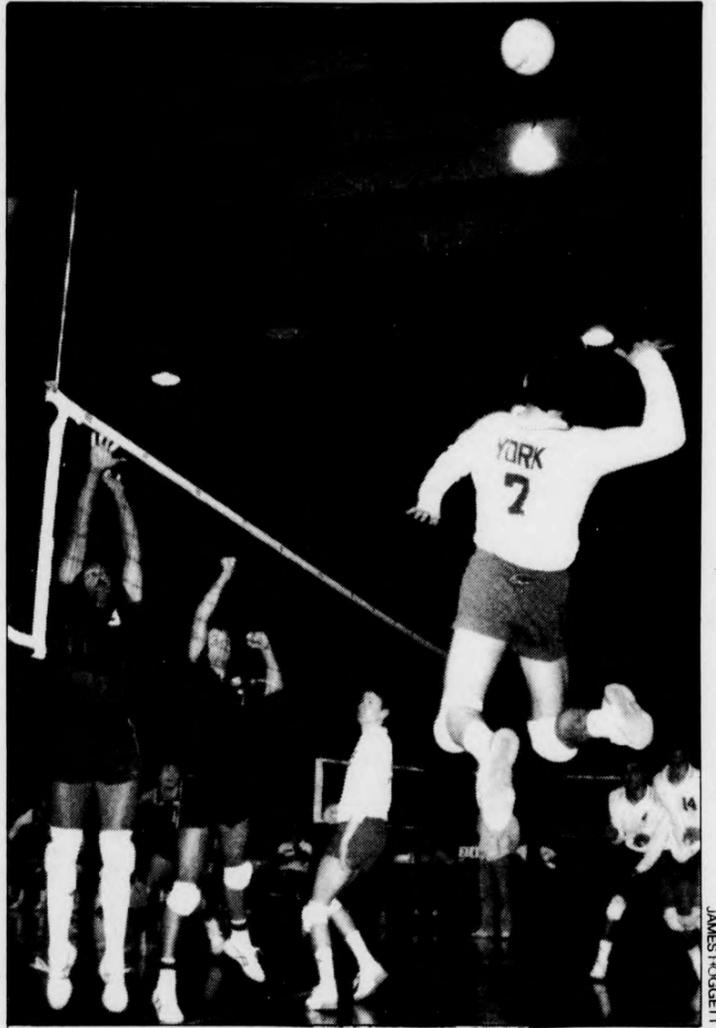
The teams were divided into two draws of four, with York grouped in a tough division with Penn State, tournament finalist Laval, and consolation winners Victoria. The Yeomen proved to be no match for any of the teams.

The number-one-ranked Nittany Lions decimated an undersized York squad. Led by Chris Chase, Penn State roared to a 3-0 victory by scores of 15-7, 15-7 and 15-5.

The Yeomen opened up the tournament against Laval and showed some signs of life, pressing the Rouge Et Or to four games. Laval won the first two games by scores of 15-10 and 15-5, but York managed a 15-12 win in the third game. The Yeomen faded badly, however, and were thoroughly embarrassed, 15-0, in the fourth.

This type of inconsistency is fast becoming a trademark for this Yeomen squad. In their match against the Victoria Vikings the Yeomen threw away the first game, 15-5, but followed with a 15-13 win. In the third the Yeomen once again showed their inconsistency in losing 15-5. Victoria finished York off with a come from behind 16-14 win. The Yeomen were in this match all the way, but simply wasted too many opportunities.

After the Victoria loss, York



NO STRINGS ATTACHED: The York Yeomen were defeated by the Victoria Vikings, who went on to win the consolation. Penn state defeated Laval to win their fourth Excalibur Classic.



BALL TO THE WALL: Bruce Dunning gets ready for the kill, but is met by a three-man wall from Victoria. The Yeomen had a rough weekend, losing all five of their matches.

Coach Wally Dyba said that he thought the Yeomen were a reasonably good team, but lacked in the mental side of the game.

"We're too nice, we're not street fighters . . . we're typically Canadian, we play for fun," Dyba said. "Fun is not going through the motions, fun is rising to the challenge and winning," Dyba added.

Leading the York squad through the first round of play were Mark Cossarin, Bruce Dunning and Jim Mohrhardt. Mohrhardt had 9 kills against Penn State and 15 against Victoria while Dunning contributed a total of 15 kills against the same

two squads. Cossarin led the way against Laval with 12 kills.

Heading into the consolation round things did not look too bright for the Yeomen. They opened up against Ball State, who, led by setter Chris Cooper of Rexdale, easily handled by Ball State 15-5, 15-7 and 15-10. The loss left them with a shot at seventh, but the Yeomen promptly blew their last chance for victory by dropping their match to Western by scores of 15-0, 15-5 and 15-12.

The Yeomen will get back to OUA A play, where they own a 5-1 record, on Jan. 19 at Ryerson.

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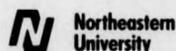
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