

Blazers Losing Streak Is Over

by Ron Cameron

It seems that the UNB Red Blazers have finally turned a corner in their struggle to be playoff contenders in the fledgling NB Ladies Hockey League. After losing their first nine league starts, the Red Blazers finally broke through with a win as they downed the Port City Flyers 5-1 at the Aitken Centre last Sunday.

The Red Blazers dominated the game. Penny Brown put them up by a goal two minutes into the first period and they didn't trail the rest of the way, leading 2-0 after one and 3-1 following period two. Brown, a rookie, was the big gunner of the day as she tied a team record (held by 6 players) with a four goal game. April Jost had a single goal. Veteran centre Chris MacLeon had three assists for the Blazers. A former UNB player, Jennifer Ricker, had Port City's lone goal. Nicole Breau went the distance to pick up the win in nets.

After a dismal start to 1990 that saw the Blazers run their goals against to 46 in just 7 games, UNB has held their past three opponents to just six goals. "It's important to look after your own end first," says UNB Coach Mike Power.

"Earlier in the season we would get sloppy in our end and be down 3 or 4 goals in the first period. Game over. Now, the team stays in games, and the younger players realize they have a chance to win." The big outburst by Brown also helped? "Yes it did. We have kind of been waiting for Penny to break out. She is big and fast, and she can really shoot the puck. We were starting to think our expectations were too high, but she definitely showed her stuff against Port City."

The win was doubly important in that Port City is one of three teams UNB has a shot at to nail down the league's last playoff spot. With 8 games left on their schedule Power believes that 3 or even 4 more wins are a must to be in March's Championship tournament. "Our first half schedule was a lot tougher than our second half, 5 of our remaining 8 are against the teams we are trying to catch, so our fate is in our own hands."

The Red Blazers continue their home stand at the Aitken Centre this Saturday at 5:00 PM when they host the undefeated Moncton Right Spot, and then Sunday at 2:15 PM when the visitors will be the Clement Cormier Caviliers.

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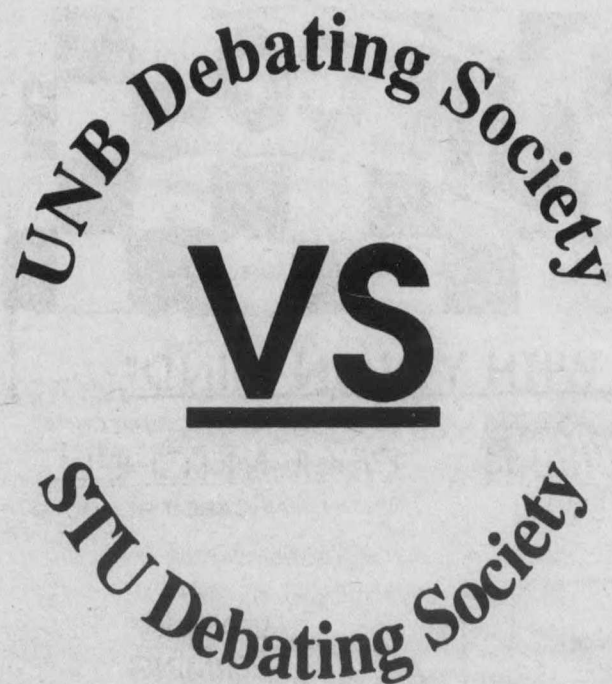
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