

Sports editorial

The name game part 2

by: Frank Denis

Did you hear the news?

Last Thursday the UNB Board of Governors approved the motion that, beginning in September 1993 all varsity teams will be known as the Varsity Reds.

The announcement closes a file that was opened in the 1970s by then athletic director Malcolm Early. Early pushed for one UNB nickname across the board, but faced several roadblocks including lack of funds and staunch opponents.

Second year Dean of Phys Ed and Recreation Terry Haggerty got the ball rolling again last summer when it was announced that the school would drop individual team nicknames in favor of one. After a student vote, an alumni vote and votes from various committees and boards, Varsity Reds won with over 60% of the vote.

The idea to go with one name is a good one. Yes, UNB will lose it's distinction of being the only university to use a different name for each of its sports teams. But that loss should hopefully be shadowed by the profits the school stand to make from the selling of apparel with a UNB logo on it and the respect Varsity Reds brings to the school.

In order for it to be a profitable decision the university needs to put together a competent marketing team that can come up with ideas on how best to sell the name Varsity Reds.

By that I mean they have to decide just what a Varsity Red is. Chances are pretty good that as far as a symbol goes for the name, a beaver will be used. Lord Beaverbrook is a prominent name in the province and here at UNB. In fact the two beavers in the UNB crest are in his honor.

Many people on campus, including varsity athletes were surprised with the announcement. Sure they had been expecting it, but it was the suddenness that caught all of them and myself off guard. After a poster and newspaper campaign announcing the vote for the new name in October it was widely believed that when the final decision was made it would be a well publicized affair. As a Phys Ed student I spend most of my time down at the LB Gym and last Friday came and went just like most Friday's come and go. That evening I heard on CIHI radio that Varsity Reds was the new name. That night I asked a few people who have an interest in the UNB sports scene and they said that it was news to them.

On Saturday I picked up a Daily Gleaner and saw that only story they had about it was in the form of a press release. A varsity name change is a moment in UNB history that should be made into a big deal. It is something to celebrate. For now and ever more UNB is "Home of the Varsity Reds." Be proud of it. Let people know about it. Let the other universities know about it. Now is the beginning of the UNB Varsity Reds tradition. UNB can now use its nickname in order to gain more athletic recognition across Canada.

A few examples of lack of athletic recognition in the past come to mind. Last year when UNB hockey goaltender Chris Somers was one of three nominations for most sportsmanlike player in the CIAU, he was listed as the goalie of the UNB Red Shirts instead of Red Devils. Just a few weeks ago the McMaster student newspaper *The Silhouette* listed that the UNB Bombers were the 5th ranked hockey team in Canada.

Then there's Dalhousie University who, perhaps, knew something no one at UNB did. When the Red Devils played there on January 24th, Dalhousie printed tickets with "Dal Tigers vs. UNB Reds" on them. Is it irony or is it because they didn't know what the UNB hockey team was called? My guess is the latter.

From the world of the ludicrous and absurd comes this story; A wrestling promoter in Calgary, in an attempt to make money, decided to have a wrestling match in a ring surrounded by barbed wire. Instead of the usual ropes enclosing the ring barbed wire was used. While I acknowledge that wrestling is fake this was not. There these guys were (no one I had ever heard of) throwing each other into the wire with blood coming from every which way. One guy even took his opponents head and dragged it along the wire for 15 feet. The story was covered and broadcast by the CBC and showed the audiences reaction. Needless to say most just sat there in stunned disbelief. Anyway since the match the Alberta government has stepped in and said that there are to be no more barbed wire match.

In other related wrestling news it was sad to hear that the legendary Andre the Giant passed away in Switzerland last week. Andre was in his forties. I remember seeing Andre in Montreal wrestling King Kong Bundy and wondering how anyone could be that big. Andre could not play the piano because his fingers were so large that one would push down three keys. We'll miss you Andre.

If you looked closely at the CIAU top ten the past couple of weeks you would have noticed that the University of Winnipeg is ranked number one in Men's and Women's basketball as well as Men's and Women's volleyball. What's more surprising is that Winnipeg only has four teams competing at the CIAU level.

Coming February 19th

Brunswickan Sports section
preview on UNB teams heading
to AUAA Championships

Only in Bruns Sports... Where the **ACTION** is

Pepsi/Pizza Hut Player Profile

Brian Wilson #4

UNB Red Devils hockey

5'11" 195 lbs Age: 22

Defence, BPE 4

Accomplishments: 5 years with the Red Devils

Hometown: Fredericton (Barker's Point)

Hobbies: Skiing, Mountain biking

Photography

TV Show: Coach, Beverly Hills 90210

Favorite Team: Barker's Point Old Timers

Favorite Athlete: Marty Wilson

Future Aspirations: Find a job

People don't know I... ' hate to walk places.'



Brian Wilson

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