

SPORTS

Men's soccer Tigers take bronze at Nationals

BY KATHLEEN MATTHEWS

For Dalhousie fans, the best of the best didn't win CIAU soccer gold this weekend, they won bronze. Dal ended the 1997 season finishing third nationally and proving that there is more to winning than scoring the most goals — it is heart, character and team spirit.

Dal beat last year's silver medalists, the University of Western Ontario Mustangs, 4-0 on Friday, lost a close match 1-0 to UBC Saturday, and rebounded with a gutsy performance Sunday to take the bronze 2-0 over York.

CIAU action opened with two matches on Thursday. UBC beat Western 1-0 in a lacklustre performance, and York won a close game over McGill 2-1.

Dal started off CIAU action

with an impressive 4-0 win over the Mustangs. Both Dal and Western started off apprehensively as play went end to end with only a few scoring chances on both sides. Dal had numerous scoring opportunities but were unable to capitalize on their chances. Western tried to get things going but Dal's defensive lineup of Graeme Allardice, Marc Rainford, and Chad Denny were unbeatable. Dal also used the free kicks to their advantage as Allardice was on the mark with every ball but first half ended scoreless.

Dal opened the second half with a goal in the first two minutes, as Emmanuel Gaopotlake pushed past the defense to shoot a beauty just inside the box as the keeper went down. Minutes later, Stuart Cochran belted one into the net, putting Dal up by two.

Dal dominated the half with well-executed balls and constant pressure up front and, in the 49th minute, Cochran scored Dal's third goal off a great pass from English.

"They were alright — poachers' goals I call them, eighteen-yard drivers," said Cochran. "I just got them in the back of the net. The ball broke free on the first goal and I just slid it underneath the keeper. The second goal, Paul [English] put a great ball through to me, and I basically just let loose on the right foot again and it found the top corner of the net."

Things got rough with yellow

Troy Wood ended the half by scoring a beauty at close range off an excellent cross.

The second half saw some of the tournament's best soccer with Dal and UBC battling for every ball. Dal came out strong and settled the ball well. English and Fraelic continued to hustle as Dal created many scoring opportunities but were unable to capitalize.

Player of the Game honours

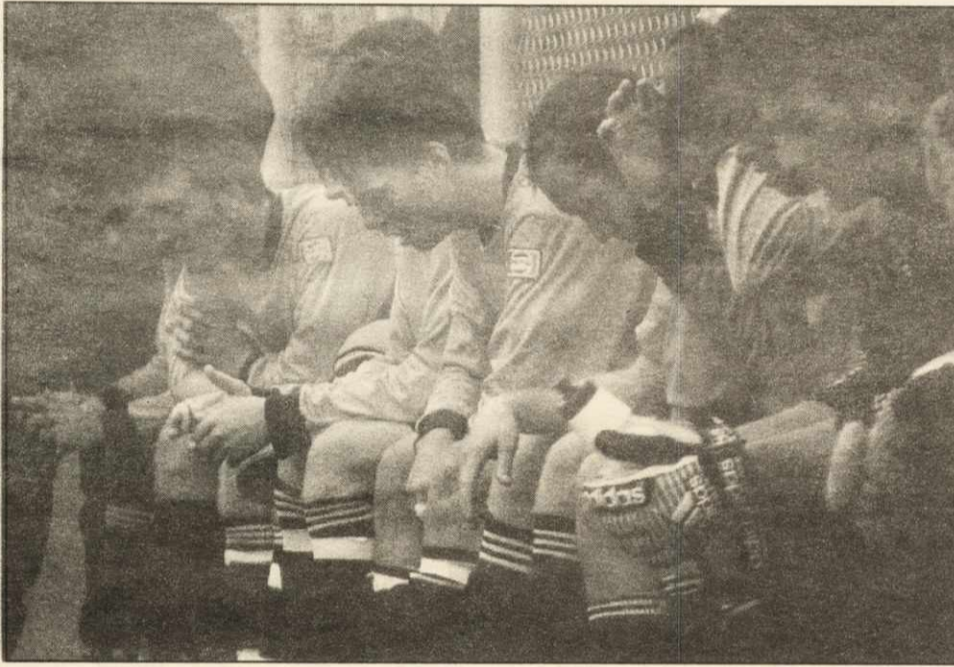


Photo by Ryan Lash

cards on both sides but Dal kept the momentum. In the 75th minute, Marco Cesario battled the opposition for the ball and won, putting Dal's fourth in the top of the net to round out the scoring. Player of the Game honours went to English consistently.

"Again, the boys kept the momentum going from last week in the AUAs," said English. "People just stepped up one hundred per cent from the regular season, and they just kept that momentum going."

Other action on Friday saw the St.FX X-Men down the York Yeomen 2-1 thanks to a couple of lucky goals and some excellent saves by X-Man keeper Jackie Chisholm.

Dal played their second game Saturday against UBC in very cold, wet conditions. After a day off, UBC came out strong, challenging every ball with speed and precision. Dal seemed a bit tentative and, even though they continued to be solid in back, they couldn't settle the ball on the slick surface long enough to find the net. In the 37th minute, UBC's

went to Rainford for superior defensive play in back. UBC's Simon Daniels also received Player of the Game honours. With this loss, Dal moved on to the bronze medal match and UBC the gold medal match on Sunday.

Saturday also saw McGill battle St.FX for the remaining spot in Sunday's gold medal match. The game was scrappy but McGill won the match 2-0.

Many people doubted Dal's chances going into the CIAUs, but Sunday's bronze medal match against the York Yeomen showed why the Tigers have, once again, come this far. The Tigers who stepped out on the field Sunday were nothing like the team seen a day earlier. From the start, it was obvious that Dal was not going to let this one go.

Cochran opened scoring in the first ten minutes with his third of the playoffs. The tempo was fast and furious as Dal fought for every ball, winning most of them. The defensive lineup was unbeatable and everyone was on the move. Dal kept the pressure on and ended the half up by one.

Again Dal came out fast in the second half as Ernst pushed up the wing and got a shot off. With this kind of pressure it was just a matter of time before Dal would score another. York tried to get something going but Dal's defense were letting nothing through.

In the 78th minute English scored a beauty when Richie Tobin put an excellent ball across to Ernst who placed it perfectly up the middle. English took the pass and seemed to beat York's defense with little effort and let off a blast that found the left corner.

Even with a two-goal advantage, Dal did not let up. Several good chances came in the last minutes of the game but the outcome was obvious — Dal won 2-0 to take the CIAU bronze

medal.

Later on in the day, McGill, who finished fourth last year, took gold over UBC in an exciting 5-4 win in penalty kicks. Both sides had an excellent game, but UBC should have been able to put it away in regulation time.

The Tigers had fought hard on Sunday and were pleased with their performance.

"Only two teams get to win on the last day and we are one of them," said head coach Ian Kent. "I am very, very proud of them. The focus was on winning the gold but we refocused, and that's a good thing."

Assistant coach Darrell Cormier echoed these sentiments.

"The boys had the heart to win and the will to win — and they did."

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Women's soccer gains experience at CIAUs

BY RACHEL JONES

With 11 rookies on the team — many of them starting players — and a whole slew of second and third-year veterans, the Dalhousie women's soccer team looks to remain strong next year, and they will surely do their best to earn a chance to take another crack at collecting some metal at the national level.

The Tigers' only loss of the CIAU tournament this past weekend came at the hands of defending champions and this year's silver medal winners, the Ottawa Gee Gees. The score was 3-1, with Dalhousie's lone goal scored by AUAA Rookie of the Year, and now CIAU Tournament All-Star, first team All-Canadian, and CIAU Rookie of the Year, Mary-Beth Bowie. Bowie was also awarded Dalhousie's Player of the Game for the Ottawa match.

Dalhousie's second match-up saw the team battle to a heartbreaking 1-1 tie against the Laval Rouge et Or, a result that left them out of the medal rounds and restricted them to the role of spectator, watching from the sidelines and renewing dreams for next year's season. Julie Pigozzo's goal, finishing a cross from veteran Amy Harding around the 65-minute mark, wasn't enough to pull the Tigers ahead of Laval. Laval scored early in the first half from a penalty kick, enough to put them in the bronze medal round. Player of the Game honours for Dalhousie went to defender Petra deWaard.

Laval went on to lose 3-2 in overtime to McMaster in the bronze medal match. In the final, Ottawa narrowly missed a repeat gold medal in a 1-0 overtime loss

to Alberta, silver medalists in 1996. Gold medalists Alberta Golden Bears also received five of the 11 Tournament All-Star spots, a number seemingly unwarranted, given the close competition. Laval, McMaster and Dalhousie all received a single All-Star honour, while McGill received none.

With such high expectations, coming off a remarkable regular season record and an impressive conference playoff victory, the team can't help but feel disappointed with the tournament result. However, coach Dara Moore was, as usual, pleased with the team's overall performance, and feels the team proved that they can compete at the national level.

"In the second game, we certainly proved that we deserved to be in the tournament, which I'm not sure we demonstrated in the first game, where we were a little flat," said Moore. "Laval is a strong team, and it's unfortunate not to come out of the tournament with a victory, but I felt the girls played really well, even if we didn't put away all of our opportunities."

"It was a positive experience and most of the girls are looking forward to next year and earning the right to participate at CIAUs again. I think most of the girls realize they could have done better at this level and they look forward to proving that with better results next year."

With the heart that this team has demonstrated over this season, and with Moore's constant fine-tuning and her "You're only as good as your last game" philosophy, one has every reason to believe they will improve. soccer and sportsmanship from this young team.

Athletes of the Week



PETRA DEWAARD
SOCCER

Petra was particularly outstanding in a 1-1 tie with Laval at the CIAU Soccer Championships in Laval. She neutralized numerous scoring opportunities for the host team, anchoring the Tigers' defence. She also initiated many counter attacks, controlling the flow of the game. Petra is a first-year Science student from Port Colborne, Ontario.



PAUL ENGLISH
SOCCER

Paul scored a critical second goal against York during the CIAU Soccer Championships to secure the Bronze Medal for the Tigers. English was all over the field during the weekend, dominating opposing teams at both ends of the pitch. His outstanding contribution to the Tigers was rewarded by being selected the Most Valuable Player of the CIAU Tournament. Paul is a third-year Masters of Leisure Studies student from Middlesborough, England.