

Slip, slipping away

Tigers drop three in five days

BY TERRY HAWES

Any momentum that was gained by the Dalhousie Tigers Men's Hockey team fell completely apart last week as the black and gold lost all three games they played to remain firmly in the basement of the Kelly Division.

Last Wednesday, the St. FX X-Men ran out 8-6 winners in Antigonish while the home confines of Memorial Arena were not kind to the Tigers as both St. Thomas and Moncton strolled to comfortable victories.

The results leave Dalhousie with a 4-14 record (and 2 overtime losses), it also means that the team has won just two out of their last eleven. This week, the Tigers play crosstown rival Saint Mary's on Wednesday at Alumni Arena and then travel to Wolfville for a Saturday Night match-up with the Acadia Axemen.

St. FX 8 Dalhousie 6
(Jan 19)

The X-Men scored three third period goals to get past the Tigers in a game marred by a punch-up between the clubs late in the first period.

With just 56 seconds left and Dal ahead 1-0, Tigers forward Ben Gustavson became involved in an ugly incident with Jamie Wentzell and super-pest Dean Stock. Gustavson received a roughing penalty, but Wentzell got a triple minor for his actions and Stock a double minor.

It got even worse as the blue and white levelled the score at the 19:46 mark through a Yannick Evola marker. On the play, Tigers goalie Scott Gouthro was upset at the treatment he received in the goal crease prompting defenceman Lanny Laroche to leave the bench. Laroche was promptly thrown out of the game and eventually received a suspension, head coach Shane Easter picked up a two game suspension for allowing Laroche to leave the bench.

For all the rough play, there were plenty of goals and the Tigers actually led 6-5 early in the third period on a marker from Chad Kalmakoff. However, X responded positively and tied the match at six through Paul Andrea.

Dalhousie were deserving of a point but were left heartbroken with 1:34 to go as Guy Loranger fired home the winner. Dean Stock added the insurance goal to give Xavier an important victory as they fight for second in the Kelly Division.

Game Puck: X forward Yannick Evola with a goal and three assists was the force behind the come from behind victory. He set up the winner and the insurance

goal to give X two valuable points.

St. Thomas 5 Dalhousie 2
(Jan 22)

The hottest team in the AUAA came to town on Saturday Night and demonstrated why they have all the tools to win it all come playoff time in March.

St. Thomas came out like they were the fresher team and took the match to the Tigers showing more speed to the loose pucks and as a result, the Tommies came out of the first period by four goals to the good. Rookie forward Mike Hanson converted a rebound from teammate Dan Preston at 6:27 to start the onslaught.

With Dal's Brian Surette in the box for interference, the Tommies got back to work and went two up as Hanson's initial shot was stopped by goalie Neil Savary, only for Dave Campbell to poke the rebound into the wide open net. Savary was clearly upset with the vulnerability of the Tiger defence and slammed his stick to the ice in disgust, the STU bench promptly taunted him saying 'when it rains, it pours Savary.'

You would think the boys would have learned their lesson, but only 58 seconds later, Derrick Pyke took a roughing penalty sending STU to the power play again. Preston stepped in from the blue line to score and increase Savary's misery. Before you could name the four Atlantic Provinces, the Tommies scored 25 seconds after Preston's marker as Craig Miller made a nice move to beat Savary to the left-hand corner.

Dalhousie were the better side in period two, but continued to take stupid penalties. Lonny Gelinas and Stephen Donaher took penalties 15 seconds apart and only fine penalty killing from Dan Tudin prevented the game from getting completely out of hand.

Finally, Dal got on the board late in the period with a power play goal from Pyke, the right-winger had all day to slip the puck past Tommies goalie Stu Dunn.

The black and gold continued to press early in the third but found Dunn impossible to beat. A turnaround shot from Marty Johnston was turned aside brilliantly as the former Summerside Capitals player stuck out his arm to stop a certain goal.

"Stu Dunn played one heck of a game especially in the second and third periods when we played a more defensive mode," commented STU coach Derryl Reynolds after the match.

It was effectively over at the 7:52 mark as Hanson scored his second of the night off a rebound from a Dave Reynolds shot. Jan Melicherik scored a consolation goal with just over five minutes left



photo by Christian Laforce

Tiger on ice: a tough week and some not-in-the-rule-book roughing left the Tigers with three losses.

to make the score a little more respectable.

"The team seems to be clicking at the right time, we know we have the players, it just comes down to whether we can gel, hopefully this will continue through the playoffs." Smith noted.

Game Puck: STU forward Mike Hanson was the main contributor on this night with two goals and an assist as the Tommies took the early lead and never looked

back.

Moncton 6 Dalhousie 3
(Jan 23)

Different day, same result for Dalhousie.

The Tigers once again gave up four first-period goals, tried to fight back, but fell short to the defending AUAA Champions.

Denis Aucoin, Ben Gustavson and Jason Metcalfe responded in the second period to

bring Dal back to 4-3 entering the third period. The comeback ended as Christian Drolet and Luc Cormier each scored their second markers of the contest in the third period to ice the victory. Remy Allard and Deny Gaudet also scored for Moncton.

Game Puck: Blue Eagles forward Mario Cormier picked up three first-period assists, including two on the power play as Moncton took control of the match early.

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