

NBA would sure help our hoop

by Philip Preville

"There are more kids playing basketball in Los Angeles than there are in all of Canada," said Bears' coach Don Horwood when asked to compare the situation of amateur basketball in Canada with that in the States.

It is a rather sweeping statement, but there isn't much arguing to be done about it.

The consensus amongst learned basketball men in the country is that the Canadian basketball program isn't particularly inferior to any other. Canadian National team coach Jack Donohue, who was in town this weekend with TSN for the Bears Invitational, will not only attest to that fact, he is living proof. His teams have won a gold medal at the 1983 Universiade Games and two fourth place finishes at the Olympics — a rather commendable accomplishment when you consider that, for all intents and purposes, only two countries ever win the Olympic Gold.

Hence, the problem to be addressed is how to get the Canadian public talking, thinking and playing basketball. There's a monumental task for you.

Allow me to share the following hypothesis.

In 1969, the Montreal Expos became the first Major League baseball team to play in Canada. The Expos were a "national" thing. Newspapers across Canada that had never given the sport a second thought were now carrying National and American League boxscores. Rusty Staub, Mack Jones and Bill Stoneman became every-other-household names. Little League enrolment across the country swelled.

It was instant sports renaissance-in-a-pouch. Just add hot water and stir.

There is a business group currently lobbying for an NBA franchise in Toronto. Could it do for basketball in Canada what the Expos did for baseball's cause?

Jack Donohue definitely thinks so. The mere mention of the idea caused his head to bob up and down enthusiastically.

"No doubt about it," he said, "no doubt about it. Kids aspire to sports, and they don't see much basketball. It seems so far away. Basketball isn't an alternative to them; the NBA isn't a dream.

"The kids wouldn't be hearing about or looking at New York or Houston, it's Toronto they'd be looking at. That's so much closer to home only because it's on this side of the border."

It appears as though such a development could put more kids out on the summer courts just fooling around, at least.

"That's where it all starts," says Donohue.

Donohue, on a smaller scale, says that keeping the top players in Canada would also help. He estimates that the number of Canadian basketball players currently enrolled in American colleges is around 50.

How much does that hurt his program?

"It kills the program.

"We never see half these kids before they leave and most of them don't come back. Lots of them are enrolled for summer semester to lighten their course load during basketball season. They don't come back to try out for the nationals. To top it all off, a lot of them don't even play down there until their third year.

"The athletic scholarships (proposed by Sports Minister Otto Jelinek) are a big step in the right direction."

Pandas nipped — late freethrow was missed

by Tim Enger

Lethbridge 58 Pandas 57
Pandas 64 UBC 36

Deja Vu.

An unclear concept at best, but something the Panda basketball team could tell you about oh so well.

For the second weekend in a row they got the close-but-no cigar treatment, losing a squeaker in the final minute of play in the Canada West Classic Tournament in Victoria.

The only difference this time is that the loss was handed to them by

the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns. Last weekend they lost to their hated rivals, the Calgary Dinies, on a controversial call in the dying seconds. This weekend's loss was a result of missed opportunity.

After fighting back from an eight point deficit at halftime, the Pandas came within two points with 1:03 left after having forced the Pronghorns to turn the ball over on a 30 second violation. They then regained possession of the ball with 53 seconds left after Lethbridge was unable to cross center court in the required 10 seconds. However, Alberta was unable to score and

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Kornak and Mike Suderman (44) hoist the champions' trophy.

photo Paul Menzies

Thursday, November 27, 1986	UBC 85	Manitoba 78
Regina 71	UBC 67	Regina 75
Saskatchewan 90	Manitoba 82	Final Alberta 65
Calgary 88	Whitworth 83	Calgary 63
Alberta 95	Bishop's 77	

Friday, November 28, 1986	
Manitoba 84	Whitworth 83
UBC 93	Bishop's 81
Semifinal: Calgary 66	Sask. 54
Semifinal: Alberta 92	Regina 73

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 29, 1986	
Whitworth 104	Bishop's 84

Final Standings

1. Alberta Golden Bears (3-0)
2. Calgary Dinosaurs (2-1)
3. Saskatchewan Huskies (2-1)
4. UBC Thunderbirds (2-1)
5. Regina Cougars (1-2)
6. Manitoba Bisons (1-2)
7. Whitworth Pirates (1-2)
8. Bishop's Gaiters (0-3)

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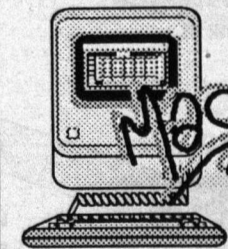
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