

Rugby season wraps up

by The King

At this writing it becomes all too real to me; this will be my last correspondence to these pages. The rugby season is over and with that the U.N.B. careers of some fine individuals come to a close. It is my intention to address those lads here and bid them adieu!

The Saturday before last, Nov. 7, saw the Ironmen travel to St. John to take on the Trojans for the provincial title in Senior Men's Rugby. No excuses, we met a much better team; polished, skilled, and familiar together, the Trojans worked the ball well and decisively regained the Provincial crown. It is my no small feat that the Trojans, just this past weekend, went on to capture the Maritime championship by beating Halifax R.F.C. in the overtime period.

The Ironmen did not have a season in the sun - injury and the depletion of ranks by the "scare bug" rendered U.N.B. vulnerable. But alas, here is not the time or place to excuse, we had a fun season, the base is set for next year, many positive elements surfaced this year. The leadership of Croucher, the promise of Murchison and the strength of some determined scrum pigs will carry next year's team. The scrum half positions decisively filled, Reeves proving his worth time and again. Carry on the tradition fellow Ironmen and reap the rewards of such camaraderie!

There were low points of this season that bittered the taste buds, that's competition! But we had our moments, some not on the pitch and some not public knowledge. When we look back on this year we'll remember with fondness, the swift running of

Clarke, the banging of Dave Hurry and the elegance of the dance between Harquiel and Donald!! No the year was not a loss my friends, the memories will see to that, and more rugby games will take the place of those that sour the tastebuds. It gives me great pleasure to have been able to toil with you, the likes of Johnstone and Shimpel, Hurry and the Troll, Son-God and Gordo you all added to my game and build my respect for the sport. Rugby, I have learned, is a sport of animals played by gentleman, you all are those.

Who in their days will forget "Bud" - how could he so overwhelm the days activities, and the nights as well.

Yes, it is with a sense of sadness that this article is penned, but I will smile in my memories of my time with the U.N.B.R.F.C.

This past nite (Thursday as of this printing) we gather for our awards banquet, here is where further memories are made. Coach Bob will award those outstanding of this season, and one last time we gather to form a solidarity. Hopefully, as you read this you will smile or laugh at the past nites antics. Look forward to the Spring when the snow melts and the academic year closes out - the South calls once more - "Its Spring Tour" Virginia? Washington? Wherever, the Ironmen will form again and rugby will prevail! Its been great! Thanks!

Congratulations to the U.N.B. Old Boys who defeated some obscure team from the Valley in Nova Scotia to win the "B" division title for the Maritimes. Well done lads! In the immortal words of Kenny the Gardener - "We put our shorts on and we gave er'!"

Fourth and long Sports commentary by Jamie Colvin

Leave it to the CFL to provide the "fumble" of the week. They have recently unveiled plans to expand the league, not a terrible idea in its own right, however they plan to place 3 of the 4 expansion teams in the United States. This is an absurd idea! Commissioner Larry Smith has undoubtedly missed the point of retaining a Canadian element to the league. Smith stated that what was unique about the game, was the rules themselves, and by retaining these same rules the game will retain its unique identity, whether it is played in Saskatchewan or San Antonio. Come on Larry, we do not buy that for a minute. Even if the rules of play remain the same, a change of one rule (that has been in effect for over 50 years) will change the face of the game forever. This rule states that 20 of the teams roster spots must be filled by a Canadian. Try to tell fans in Sacramento, San Antonio or Portland that the majority of players must be Canadian. A tough sale to say the least.

Canadian expansion is what the ideal solution would be, however one must ponder if this is feasible. A team located in the Maritimes would certainly make the league more Canadian, but could a town the size of Halifax support a team. This is a looming question when teams fold in cities the size of Montreal. What the league needs, before any expansion, is to stabilize the existing franchises. Nobody wants to support a league that always seems just one step away from the grave. Just this year the BC Lions came within a hair of folding. At one point the players wondered if they would see another pay-check. Even the Toronto Argos, who have the greatest population to draw on, ran over 3 million into the red. McNall and friends (easily the richest owners) have made it clear that this can't continue. If owners like this fail to make it, who in their right mind would invest in the league. There is little doubt that the league is suffering from a serious image problem - much housecleaning is needed before any expansion is even contemplated.

Staying with football, the Buffalo Bills showed that they still are the dominant team in the AFC. Critics were quick to jump off the bandwagon when the lost 2 in a row and looked to have no chance of catching the Miami Dolphins. Well the Bills had the last laugh by beating the Dolphins 26-20 in a Monday night tilt at Joe Robbie Stadium in Miami. This gives the Bills a 2 game cushion and leaves Miami looking for a wild-card berth. Look for the Bills to beat Dallas and win the SuperBowl that they have blown in the past two years.

As much as everybody would have liked to believe that the Toronto Blue Jays were Canada's team, the clubs most recent moves in the expansion draft prove otherwise. The Jays left off their 15 man protected list an outfielder with star potential, by the name of Nigel Wilson. Wilson an outfielder with a good glove and better bat with enough pop in his bat to say goodbye to "Mr. Spalding" an impressive number of times. What makes Wilson more unique to the Blue Jays, is the fact that he was a Canadian, from Ajax Ontario. The Jays found spots on their protected list for 4 catchers, yet could not fit Wilson into the roster. This is a mistake. A Canadian element on the playing field is sorely missing from the Blue Jays, and Wilson could have filled this void - something like Larry Walker in Montreal. Not a fair shake for your loyal fans all across Canada Pat Gillick.

Can anyone believe the Montreal Canadiens? A team that has won most of its games in the past several years by boring opposition teams to death, is now playing the most exciting hockey seen at the Forum since the 1970's. The Canadiens are easily the surprise of the year. When Savard hired ex-Red Wing skipper Jacques Demers many scoffed, and when Demers promised to bring back offensive minded hockey, people were left wondering how? This was a team with no offensive stars, the additions of Bellows and Damphousse helped, but still this was like coming to a gunfight with no bullets! Certainly players like Keane, Carbonneau and Lebeau would not pull up the offensive slack, yet these players along with some of the rookies are thriving under this "run and shoot" offensives style that Demers has instilled. Time will tell if they are for real.

On a final note we turn to the ring. The heavyweight boxing scene is now bordering on respectability. Champions who clearly do not belong have been disposed of. Firstly there was Buster Douglas who had no right in taking the belt from Mike Tyson, and then the opportunistic Evander Holyfield, who was not a real heavyweight. His title defences were comical against the likes of Larry Holmes and George Foreman, two fighters who were slightly past their prime to put it mildly. With Boves victory over Holyfield, and the emergence of legitimate contenders like Lennox Lewis, a degree of legitimacy has returned to the ring. Look for Canadian gold medalist Lewis take the title and hold it for a long time, (or until Mike Tyson gets out of the crowbar motel).

UNBelievable sports
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Vanier Cup '92

by Michael Smith

The Canadian University Football Championship is here, and once again a powerhouse from the Atlantic conference is contesting the prize. But the path to the cup is blocked by an imposing force from the Ontario-Quebec conference. This Saturday, at 4:00 P.M. EST, the #1 ranked St. Mary's Huskies face the #2 ranked Queen's Golden Gaels.

While the Huskies may possess an undefeated record, their wins have come against weak eastern opponents, and the surprising Calgary Dinosaurs. The Gaels, on the other hand, avenged their only loss of the season by humbling Bishops, and turned back the powerful Guelph Gryphons.

In terms of history, both these teams share a tradition of bittersweet success. This is the third trip in five years to the big game for the Huskies, and the

lack of a national title remains a haunting image. In the same period of time, the Gaels have reached the final four three times, but it was not until last week's victory that their own demons were laid to rest.

The bad news for St. Mary's is that the Gaels are peaking at just the right moment. Their offence can come at opponents from the ground, with Hec Creighton nominee, Brad Elberg, or from the air, not to mention Jamie Galloway, the most dangerous kicker in the C.I.A.U. The mighty "GOLDRUSH" defense should create havoc in the Huskies' backfield, and is averaging three interceptions per game in the playoffs.

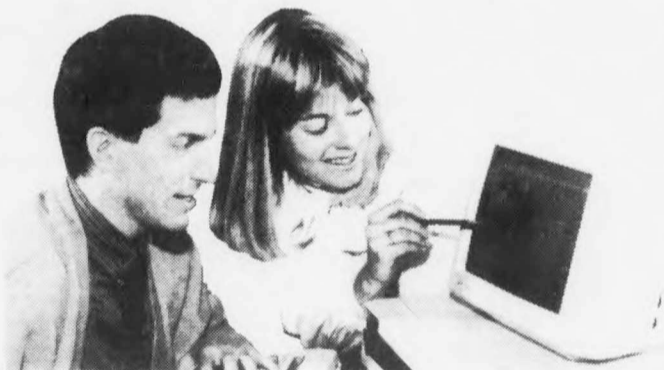
Many apologies to all the SMU supporters here at UNB, but while the game may be close, the Vanier is heading to Kingston this Saturday, in the victorious arms of the Queen's Golden Gaels.

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