

Volleyballers ready to roll into playoffs

MEN / Tigers bronzed at Laval

BY CARMEN TAM

The Dalhousie Tigers' steady progress this season was rewarded with their third consecutive bronze medal at the prestigious Laval Tournament in Québec City over the long weekend.

Some of the top teams in Canada were present, including the Université de Sherbrooke — ranked sixth in the CIAU, the University of Windsor, and McGill University.

The host squad from Laval won the tournament over rivals Université de Sherbrooke. The Rouge et Ore, ranked number one in the nation, won the 1996 Dal Classic here in Halifax in late January in similar fashion.

The Tigers, the only representatives from the Atlantic conference, swept Limoilou Collège in straight sets, 16-14, 15-13, and 15-6 to take third place. Captain Jamie Mallon totalled 20 kills and 11 digs while leftside hitter Terry Martin chipped in 13 kills and 12 digs.

Mallon, a fourth-year veteran, racked up a team-high 75 kills and 48 digs en route to the Tigers' bronze medal victory. Showing he can play both offence and defence, Jason Trepanier added 54 kills, 41 digs, and seven services aces. Both members provided exceptional passing in the tournament for Dal.

Also showing good all-round abilities were John Hobin, who tallied 36 kills, 30 digs, and eight stuff blocks, and last year's AUSA all-star Terry Martin, who had 33 kills, 17 blocks, and 27 digs.

Matt Hartlen, continuing to improve with every game, had 35 kills, while setter Scott Brake was a defensive force for the Tigers with 38 digs.

"It was a good tournament, a lot of our second and third string guys got to see some playing time against Laval and Sherbrooke, which shows our confidence in our bench," said 1995 CIAU Rookie of the Year Terry Martin.

The Tigers' next home showing is at the Dalplex over Reading Week when they host an AUSA Tournament. This tournament will conclude the regular season with the AUSA Championships at the end of the month.

Dalhousie is currently in first place in AUSA standings at 5-1. The Tigers will meet the University of New Brunswick Varsity Reds this weekend in Fredericton.



WOMEN / Overpowering offence grounds Eagles

BY SHANNON MORRISON

At home or on the road, the Tigers are unstoppable.

Dalhousie's women's volleyball team clinched first place in the AUSA conference standings after sweeping the Université de Moncton (UDM) 15-7, 15-8, and 15-9 on Sunday at the Dalplex.

The Tigers jumped out to a 6-1 lead in the first set and never looked back. UDM attempted to keep pace with the home side, but even after a bad pass or broken play, the Tigers would rebound with solid defence.

Dalhousie took a 9-3 advantage when the Blue Eagles deliv-

ered them a free ball. The Tigers took advantage of the situation as Christine Frail nailed an offside set from Michelle Aucoin straight to the floor.

The visitors couldn't put together an offensive attack as Dalhousie served aggressively to keep them on their heels. A couple of blocks by the unbeaten Tigers helped to finish the opening set at 15-7.

The second game began as a mirror image of the first as Dalhousie led 6-0 before the Blue Eagles got on the scoreboard. A couple of broken plays from the home team and a stuff block by UDM allowed the Blue Eagles back into the match at 8-4.

The momentum swing was short-lived as Dal's Jenn Parkes connected on a quick hit from the middle position. The Tigers reached 14-7 and after multiple side-outs, finally closed out the second frame.

In what would be the final set,

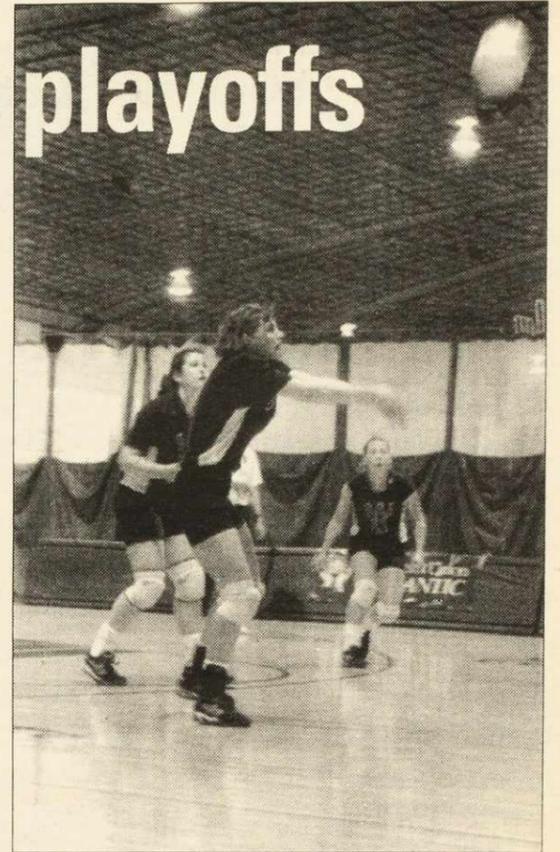
the two teams played a much closer game. Dalhousie mixed up their attack, utilizing all positions on the court, including Kim Hilchey coming out of the back-court for a couple of crucial kills.

A final score of 15-9 completed the sweep for Dalhousie as UDM couldn't withstand the pressure of the Tigers' attack.

Hilchey was named player of the match with 12 kills, a service ace, and three blocks. Frail contributed 13 kills and three blocks, while Parkes added nine kills, two aces and four blocks.

GAZETTE PHOTOS BY DANIELLE BOUDREAU

It was their 14th straight league victory this season and the team will use their match against Mount Allison on Sunday at the Dalplex as a final tune-up before the AUSA championships.



On the rebound

MEN / Dal gains needed confidence

BY ANDREW COOK

The Dalhousie Tigers men's basketball team took the short bus ride down Robie Street on Wednesday night and walked out of the Tower with a narrow 78-70 victory over the St. Mary's University (SMU) Huskies.

In a game which appeared to be more important to the Dalhousie players and coaching staff, the Tigers had their most impressive road showing of 1996. In typical fashion, SMU played the Tigers hard, putting a mild scare into our fans, only to falter down the stretch against Dalhousie's veteran squad.

In what has become a familiar story to men's basketball supporters, Brian Parker again left fans drooling with his vast array of shot-clock-beating, fall-away jumpers, and his uncanny no-look passes — passes which somehow always seem to lead to an effortless score by a teammate.

The game was filled with runs by both sides with SMU's players fuelled by the emotions of their home fans and Dal players willed on by the fear of dropping their third road contest in their past four. What eventually won out for the Tigers was the very apparent maturity of their back-court wearing down the freshmen duo started by SMU.

Statistically, the Tigers looked lopsided with Dallas Shannon joining Parker as the only players to score in double figures. Shannon notched his third double/double in as many games with a solid 12 points and 10 rebounds. Parker was the underlying force throughout the game, marking 27 points on 10 of 20 shooting from the floor and a perfect four for four from the line.

The most notable difference in this game for Halifax fans was seeing virtually the entire Dalhousie entourage on the court together. With the notable exception of guard Kevin Bellamy, this was the first time local viewers have been given the opportunity to see all of the Tigers play in a game together.

If one image should be taken from this contest, it certainly should be Shawn Planke being subbed off late in the game with a smile on his face. Anyone present, who knows Planke's dedication to rehab over the past two months, can appreciate the joy he still finds in playing the game.

"I guess two months off makes you hungry," said coach Tim McGarrigle. "And after what he has gone through, any playing time would be a bonus for him."

While it was a first versus last scenario in terms of league standing, the pressure lay clearly on the shoulders of the number four ranked team in the country. The Tigers needed to build up some confidence on the road and they did.

In getting through this road block, the Tigers now face their stiffest challenge to this point in the season when they begin the week in Wolfville, battling Acadia. This game will certainly have added meaning with the Axeman out to avenge their debacle here in the Dalplex on January 17.

"It's a big game, with a win we could regain first place," said coach McGarrigle. "And in the event of a tie [in the AUSA standings], having beaten them three times will help us out."

WOMEN / Recharged Tigers wallop Huskies

BY ANDREW COOK

It was just one of those days for our women's basketball team.

One of those days where the built-up anger and frustration all comes out and works in a positive manner. Nothing could go wrong last Wednesday as Dalhousie stormed the Tower and came away with a 73-57 victory over the Saint Mary's University (SMU) Huskies.

The frustration stemmed from last week's loss in the Cape against UCCB. The loss dropped Dalhousie from the ranks of the unbeaten and it was a much needed wake-up call for each of the girls.

The game at SMU truly belonged to Dal from the opening tip. Using an inside-out attack, the Tigers shot a solid 48 per cent from the hardwood. The defence was just as impressive in not allowing SMU's all-conference guard Jadranke Crnogorac and her troops to get on track.

"We set a defensive goal as a team before the game," said coach Carolyn Savoy. "We wanted to hold them under 60 points for the game and we reached that goal."

The Tigers' powerful front line pounded SMU on the boards by a 36-21 margin. Carolyn Wares led the way, yet again, continuing her dominance with 13 of those 36 rebounds.

Wares also posted a game high 27 points, which currently places her third in the AUSA scoring race. She stands third in the CIAU in rebounding.

With Wares handling the inside chores, Jackie Fleiger again took care of the shooting end of things, dropping in 12 as the only other Tiger to reach double figures.

Also making a strong contribution were reserves Sue Parke and Jody Euloth, who helped the cause with nine and four points off the bench, respectively.

"It was a real team effort with the added production we got off the bench," commented coach Savoy. "Our bench players not only gave us a high quantity of minutes, but really, high quality minutes as well."

The Tigers appeared to have the Huskies' number, forcing SMU players away from their strengths by trying to put them in positions where it would be difficult to score. Coach Savoy, though, is quick to point out that her team's focus is not on their opponents, but on themselves.

"After our loss, we really focused on playing well, showing some enthusiasm and getting better as a team," said Jan.

Road win in hand, Dalhousie now looks towards the Axettes as they prepare for a trip to Wolfville on February 8. With Moseychuck still on fire and Cape Breton closing fast, each game takes on increased significance over the remainder of the schedule.

"Right now we are still working towards one of our pre-season goals and that's to finish in the top two in the league," noted coach Savoy. "Acadia always plays tough against us with their tenacious defence, so this one will be big."

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