



Olympic Gymnasts at Dal

Although practiced by relatively few people in Canada, Olympic gymnastics is one of the most popular sports in many countries. There are probably less than 2,000 serious participants in this country while Japan, Russia, Germany, U.S.A., Switzerland and others have 100,000 or more. This immense popularity is recognized in the Olympic Games where no less than 42 medals are given for this sport alone and in the Tokyo Games, it was a gymnast who took the Olympic oath.

The modern style of gymnastics was developed in Germany in the nineteenth century as an antidote to a general lack of physical fitness. Indeed, one of the finest ways to become fit in youth and to keep fit into middle age and later is by practising this sport. There were, in fact, several com-

petitors well over thirty at Munich. In the German national championships there is even a class of competition for men over sixty!

Gymnastics is an all-round sport for men and women. All physical aspects of the body are developed, namely agility, speed, flexibility, grace, a general control of movement and endurance and strength. This is done by the use of various apparatus: rings, parallel bars, horizontal bar and side horse for men, balance beam and uneven parallel bars for women, and vaulting and tumbling for both. Gymnasts begin their training with exercises designed not only to develop posture and carriage but to safeguard muscles and other structures from sudden and unaccustomed strain. Basic work on the apparatus follows, which consists mainly of

swinging. When the gymnast is proficient in this, individual movements are learned; nearly all gymnastic movements, elementary and advanced, are derived from swinging exercises. The competitive routine consists of several movements joined harmoniously together.

However, gymnastics is much more than a sport. In competition, the difficulty of a routine counts for only one third of the available judging points; one sixth of the points are awarded for certain elements which must be part of a complete routine; the remaining points (one half) are accounted for by evaluation of the form, technical execution and aesthetic content of the exercise; thus, gymnastics is an art form.

Gymnastics is friendly; frequently members of opposing teams will assist each

other in the performance of difficult movements or in learning new exercises. Apart from experience and results at a competition, the opportunity for gymnasts and coaches to exchange ideas is invaluable. Gymnastics can also afford a personal education, teaching self-confidence, self-discipline and perseverance; as a result it gives satisfaction in the knowledge of work well done, even for those who are not winners.

Olympic gymnastics at Dalhousie is characterized, as in many places, by small numbers of very interested participants. Hence, teams are small but impressive. Coach of the men's team is Jim Hoyle, former member of the Canadian team. Two team

members, who each stand a good chance of becoming collegiate number one in Atlantic Canada, are fourth year man Steve Fenerty and freshman Tom MacAskill, who was last year's Atlantic novice winner. The girls are coached by former Minnesota State champion Jukka Laitakari. Among the team is fourth year student Nancy MacDonald, who competed successfully for Dalhousie last year. Two first year students whose rapid progress bodes well for the future are Debbie Day and Alison Griffith.

Competitions this year will be against other Maritime Universities, culminating in the A.I.A.A. championships at Moncton on February 10.

Basketball Tigers, Young, Talented

The youngest Tiger basketball team in ten years surprised many local observers with their 3-2 pre-Christmas conference record. Now with the tough Bluenose Classic behind them they are ready to undergo the busiest league schedule ever. The conference schedule is up to eighteen games from twelve so basketball fans have four league games with St. Mary's and three games with Acadia to look forward to. January 23 sees Dal against Acadia in the Halifax Forum and January 27 the Tigers meet the Huskies at the Forum, both games are at 8:30.

A win in either of these games would be considered an upset but the inexperienced Tigers have the enthusiasm and desire to keep any contest interesting. Coach Yarr feels that if the Tigers attack consistently with their pressing defense and the Dal fans support the team vociferously the Tigers will be contenders for a play-off spot. The four top teams in the seven team conference proceed to a post season tourney to decide the Atlantic representatives for the National championships.

The young team is led by veteran all-star guard Albert Slaunwhite who is providing the

leadership for the young squad. Bruce Cassidy, a freshman has impressed fans with exceptional hustle and determination on the boards. Bob Blount, a sophomore, and one of the most creative players ever to wear black and gold, is exciting fans with his amazing assortment of moves on the way to the hoop.

This young team tends to improve every time out and if the goal of reaching the play-offs is attained, anything could happen in a single elimination play-off. Be a Tiger supporter; join the chanting crowd, DEFENSE... DEFENSE... DEFENSE.

In this way it is hoped that the picture that emerges will clarify the situation for all concerned and perhaps foster a climate of renewed interest in sport at Dalhousie.

In addition to this proposed series, watch for news of upcoming events concerning tournaments, games, clinics and related items from all levels of the campus sport world.

Sports Viewpoint

by Joel Fournier

For those sports-minded members of the faculty and student body, it is obvious that for some time now the Gazette has not been producing a comprehensive report on athletics at Dalhousie. This omission was certainly not an oversight on the part of the editors and the statement is not meant as a criticism of the Gazette staff, rather it is a reflection of what I consider the lack of interest in sport generally at Dalhousie.

This apathetic state could very well be attributed to the

seemingly confused or muddled University policy regarding the athletic situation on campus, a condition propounded by the local news media.

I feel the time has come for a clear and concise definition of University thinking on the matter by those concerned.

With this in mind, it is the intention of your correspondent, to present in succeeding weeks, statements of policy from the administration, the athletic department, the coaches of various teams and hopefully from some of the athletes involved in the program.

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ATHLETIC EVENTS ON CAMPUS

Fri., Jan. 19

at 8:00 p.m. **HOCKEY** STU at Dal.

at 9:00 p.m. **WRESTLING** Ude M and MUN at Dal

Tues., Jan. 23

at 8:00 p.m. **HOCKEY** SMU at Dal

at 8:30 p.m. **BASKETBALL** Acadia at Dal (men) (Halifax Forum)

Sat., Jan. 27

at 2:00 p.m. **BASKETBALL** UPEI at Dal (women)

at 8:30 p.m. **BASKETBALL** Dal at SMU (men) (Halifax Forum)

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