

## Journalist meets athlete

By "HOWIE" MARR

May is a month that means many things to many different people. It symbolizes the beginning of spring, a chance for summer sports, a time for baseball free agents to resign with their clubs, and finally, to those of us at university, it is a time when the drudgeries of academia are finally cast aside for the drolleries of summer.

Keeping the spirit of the month in mind, what better time to analyze the year in university sport from an *Excalibur* Sports Editor perspective. Come September the walls of York University will be adorned with two more national championship pennants thanks to the efforts of the men's hockey team and the women's track and field team. Both exemplify the type of quality athletes that reside at York. At *Excalibur*, we have tried to recognize the contributions of these deserving athletes. However, at the same time as we give prominence to our successful athletes we are also obligated to report on our unsuccessful varsity teams.

It is here that a problem arises between student journalist and student athlete. The role of a newspaper is not to blindly support the teams of their city; the same argument holds true for a university newspaper. The journalist goes to events and reports on the happenings. He or she is not there as a rooting section for the team they are reporting on. And while it is necessary for a reporter to recognize the effort university athletes put into their programmes, especially in the context of a full academic workload and financial problems, it must be appreciated that the student journalist is also trying to derive something from university sports.

Like athletes, student journalists, try to excel at what they do. In order to excel they need experience, and this experience comes from covering



varsity sports. When reporting university sports, the student journalist tries to be as professional as possible. Nobody would ever suggest to a hockey Yeoman or a track and field Yeowoman that he or she not do their best. Obviously nothing less can be expected from a student journalist. The best any journalist can do is to provide insights and factual evidence of a sporting event to the reader in an unbiased form. If this means telling fellow students that the hockey team was demolished by Ryerson or the track team was embarrassed by UoT then so be it.

It has been argued that we at *Excalibur* should not be critical of varsity teams and should always highlight the positive aspects of the Yeomen and Yeowomen squads. After all, they are only university athletes right? To put it bluntly this is a pathetic excuse that is usually

supplied by teams not prepared to do their best. Student athletes are not above criticism. Furthermore, the fact that varsity athletics are supported by university funds gives student journalists the right to treat athletes to objective reporting.

However, it must be noted that we at *Excalibur* must subject ourselves to the same criteria of excellence as our athletes. This means continually trying to provide competent coverage of sporting events. If we fall below an acceptable method of reporting we deserve to be blasted for it and should be by coaches, players, and fans alike.

The idea behind varsity sports is not some simple childhood concept of having fun. University athletics are competitive and as such provide a forum where student athletes and journalists alike strive toward excellence.

### Excal's athletic report card

O.K. kids. It's the end of the year and you guessed it, it's time for *Excalibur* Sports Report Cards.

#### YEOMEN

**Basketball** - Coach Bob Bain's team has certainly slipped from the glory years when they were the perennial OUAAs favourites. The team did manage to make it into the playoffs. If Bain hopes to improve this team for next year he had better get some point guards who can sink a few buckets. Jeff McDerimid had another superb year and deserves an A for his effort. **B**

**Fencing** - The team had some strong individual performances and did well at an end-of-year tournament, placing a few duellers in first, second and third spots. **C+**

**Football** - Not much has changed since the team received a similar grade in their first term report card. Coach Wirkowski appears confident that he can change the team's fortunes, but history will be working against him. The Yeomen have yet to prove they're a legitimate contender on the gridiron. **D+**

**Golf** - We didn't get a chance to see the team this year, but one wonders how they will fare without Coach Nobby, who is channeling his efforts towards the football squad. **(Incomplete)**

**Hockey** - We don't usually like to give out A+'s, but these guys were fantastic. A national championship, their fourth OUAAs title, and all under the tutelage of first year coach Graham Wise. Next year the team could be even stronger with Dave Chambers, Ex-coach of the Yeomen and Ex-coach of the Canadian Junior Champions, rumoured to be scouting for Wise. **A+**

**Rugby** - Rumour has it that they weren't very good this year. If they don't like the mark they can go ahead and appeal. **C**

**Soccer** - They had a B+ at Christmas time, but the question of what players will be coming back remains unanswered. Coach Willis did a nice job getting the team into the playoffs in his first year back as head coach. For next year, we'll take a wait-and-see attitude. **B**

**Swimming** - Sank too often in too many meets. Some talented individuals on the team with some Olympic potential, most notably Peter Darvis and Adam Robertson. **D**

**Track and Field** - A third place finish in a meet towards the end of the year helped them raise their grade. The guys could learn a lot from their Yeowomen counterparts. **C+**

**Volleyball** - Strong team provincially this year, but crapped out on the tournament level. This team requires a lot more discipline to be effective, not to mention a desperately needed injection of height. **B+**

**Wrestling** - Coach Park was instrumental in keeping the team competitive this year. Suffering from a "Concordia jinx," the men failed to defend their national title in their loss to the Stingers. Members of the team came close to being placed on the Olympic squad, as well. **B**

Don't change that channel, Yeowomen report cards next month. Same bat time, same bat channel. Pow! Zap! Bang! Bow!

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