

SPORTS

Deadline for stories is Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. Sports Desk 453-4983

Raiders host #1 team in the country

Split weekend games against UPEI

by Anand Irrinki

After putting on a good show last Saturday, the UNB Red Raiders look to be back on track. This weekend, UNB faces the #1 ranked team in the country, St. FX and then play Dalhousie. With a weekend sweep UNB could vault back into play-off contention. Raiders play St. FX Saturday at 8:00 pm and Dalhousie on Sunday at 3:00 pm.

The Raiders last game against St. FX was not entirely successful. If the Raiders wish to beat the X-Men there can be no slip-ups. This includes coaching decisions, players shooting and intensity, lay ups and hitting all the important free throws. Bobby O'Brien and Vinod Nair will have to contain X's big men (Richard Bella and company), while Duff Adams must shut down Danny McFarland.

On offense, UNB will have to show patience as well as stick the open jumper. If all the pieces fit, UNB may just get its second win over St. FX.

Sundays game against Dal will be no cake walk. The last time UNB played Dal, the Raider defense must have been sleeping. Dal put 102 points

on the board and that was too much for UNB. In order for UNB to take down the Tigers, they must get a balanced offensive output. The other key will be shutting down center Dean Thibideau. The Raiders can win another ball game if they play their cards right.

While we're talking about winning games, how many of you saw UNB thump UPEI last Saturday. If this was the first Raider game you saw, you might even think that UNB could beat Duke (not!).

On Saturday, UNB used a cutting/slashing offense and stifling defense to lead them to an 88-65 victory. There were many notables during this game, including Curtis Robinson's breakaway dunk (bet you were scared) on the first play. UNB shot 56% from the field, 63% from the land of three and 94% from the line. With these kinds of numbers it's no wonder that UNB dominated the game.

Another interesting fact is that the Raiders big men took more shots than their perimeter players. This means that UNB softened up the UPEI defense by banging

inside and when their outside men were open they kicked the ball back out. One final note is that UNB finally had some balanced scoring. Four of the five starters scored in double digits. Bobby O'Brien led the way with 29, while Yaw Obeng added 20. UNB's Duff Adams, who replaced the injured Alex Kidney, only scored 4 pts, but his play on defense overshadows this. Adams slowed down UPEI's Mark Cameron (who could stop him) and helped to guide the team when on offense.

If Saturdays game is classified as great then the only adjective describing Friday nights game is awful. UNB lost by a score of 101-92, but the score is not indicative of the way they played. At one point UNB trailed by 17, but to their credit they came back to within four points before giving the game away. UNB's nemesis was shooting.

The team shot 35% from the floor. How many ways can you spell BAD! The only thing that kept UNB in the game was it's ability to bang home some 3-pointers. Yaw "down town" Obeng was 4 for 5 while Duff Adams shot 3 for

4 from the 3-point line. UNB had some major problems during this game. One of those was that they missed 6 lay-ups in the second half alone. They played no defense (especially on Mark Cameron) and had no intensity at the beginning of the game. On defense UNB could not put back to back stops together. Even when UNB had UPEI shooters off balance, they would foul them so they could get to the line. All in all, UNB's performance on Friday was dismal.

With UNB on a one game roll, who knows what will happen this weekend. So instead of watching Hockey Night In Canada on Saturday come see the Raiders take on St. FX at 8:00 pm in the LBR Gym. Since there's no more football, your Sunday afternoon should be free and the Raiders are playing then as well. UNB plays Dal at 3:00 pm.

Next week: Mid-term grades.

Lady Reds and Rebels win big

by Graham MacDonald
Janet Lloyd

The Lady Reds and the Rebels volleyball teams proved last weekend that they have what it takes to win under gut-check conditions, having won all their respective matches against some tough competition.

The Lady Reds are breathing a sigh of relief. Both of their matches against Acadia, a team with which they are very evenly matched, went to five games and rally point. The girls were tough when it counted and they pulled off both game five's, with Carla Mason taking the AUAU player of the match Saturday, and Monica Gaudet taking the honors Sunday.

The Lady Reds are a totally re-vamped volleyball team. Gone is the offside oriented 5-1 system, and in its place is a 6-2 system that has more of the girls playing in their natural position.

Carla Mason and Gina Dickinson, who had previously been playing offside and middle respectively are now anchoring the power hitting

Karen MacLean has come off the bench to add much needed height in the middle, and Monica Gaudet has moved to the setter's position.

That leaves only Tia Toner (middle) and Carrie Maher (setter) playing their first term positions, but everyone seems more at ease; comfortable with positions they've been playing for years.

This weekend, the Lady Reds are off to Antigonish to play St. Francis Xavier on Saturday and Sunday, and it will be interesting to see if this restructured team can provide results there.

The Rebels have undergone much of the same changes as the Lady Reds, with pretty much the same results. Although their on-court positions have not changed, the team's roster underwent some stabilizing changes over the holidays, and now everyone is settling into a productive groove.

The Rebels, who are playing under the threat of being eliminated from the playoffs against Dalhousie, played like they have a purpose last weekend against second place

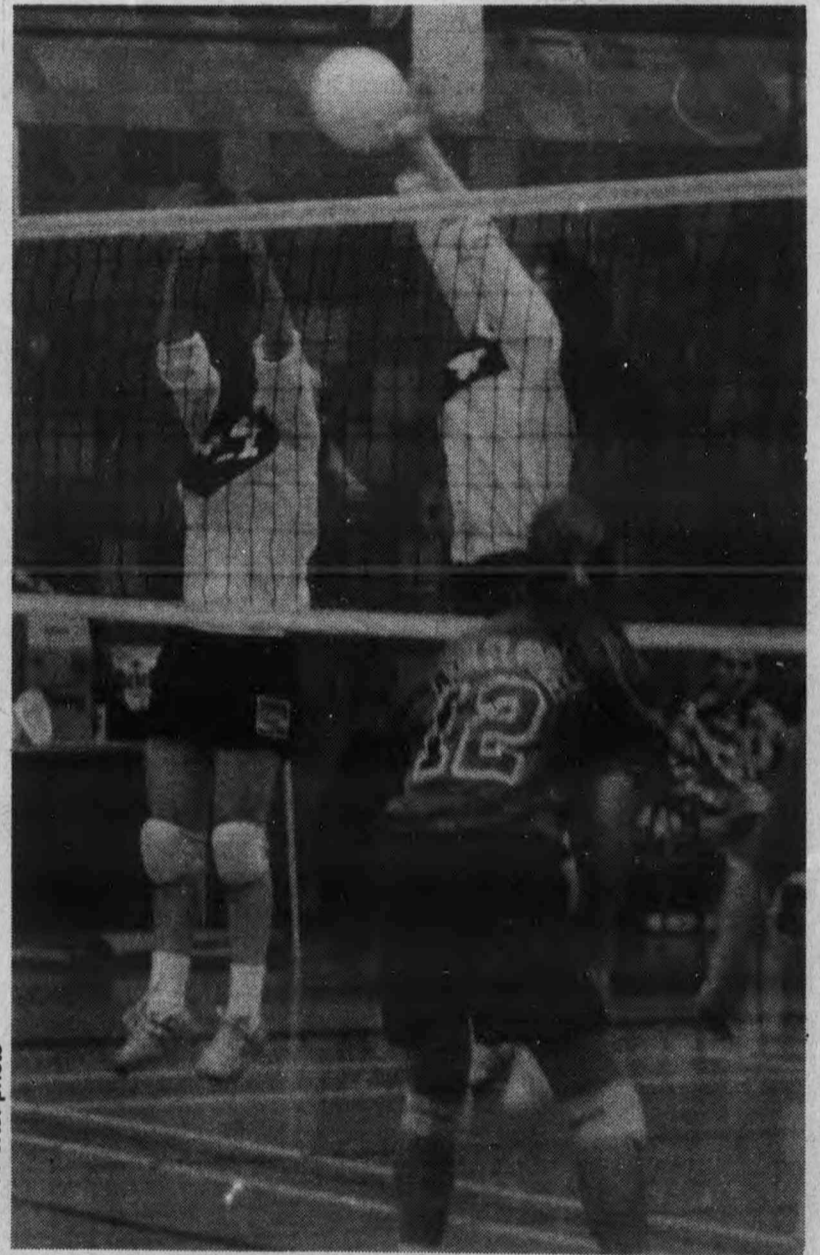
Reds Tia Toner (4) blocks shot against Acadia last Saturday. Reds won a pair of games last weekend to improve their record to 3 and 6.

Memorial University
Seahawks.

Like the Lady Reds/Acadia matchup, this was a very even contest, having gone to nine of ten possible games over the weekend. It was a see-saw battle of momentum and guts, which the Rebels triumphed in both matches.

Jason Scott, who seemed to hit every ball set the the Rebels, took Saturday's player of the Match, and big Geoff Coulter took the honours on Sunday. The Rebels now have a record of 5 and 6 which leaves them third in the league.

This weekend the Rebels are off to U-de M for an AUAU league tournament, and will play against all their Atlantic Canadian volleyball rivals.



Kevin G. Porter photo

Athletes of the week

Laura Swift of the Red Bloomers Basketball Team is the Female Athlete of the Week. Laura scored 14 points and had 9 rebounds against the Panthers in UNB's 52-33 victory. "Laura played a solid tow way game in the Bloomers win over UPEI. She played an integral role stopping UPEI's key players and contributed nicely on offense," stated coach Claire Mitton. Laura is a 2nd year BPE student from Fredericton, N.B.

Bobby O'Brien of the Red Raiders Basketball Team is the Male Athlete of the Week. Bobby scored 50 points on 16 for 31 shooting and 14 for 16 from the free throw line in UNB's 2 games against UPEI (92-101, 88-65). Bobby pulled down 8 rebounds in the second game and was chosen Pepsi Player of the Game. Coach Phil Wright emphasized that, "Bobby played with intensity, particularly on Saturday and led us emotionally. This was the first conference win over UPEI in 8 or 9 years, and illustrates we can play quality defense. He was the key to victory." Bobby is a 4th year BA student from Wolfville, N.S.