

sports and recreation

Bain selected Canadian coach-of-the-year

Yeomen basketballers finish third in Canada

By Bruce Gates

HALIFAX (Special) — York Yeomen's third-place overall finish in the CIAU national basketball finals held at the new Halifax Metro Centre last week capped off a highly successful (33 wins, 5 losses) season for the team, and although they did not win the national title they gave every indication of being a team to be reckoned with in the future.

"I'm happy it's all over," said coach Bob Bain, who was selected Canadian Coach of the Year just before the finals began, "but most of all I'm happy because we had a great season".

It was a great season for the Yeomen but also a great season for Canadian University basketball, as a record crowd of over 10,000 watched the host St. Mary's Huskies upset the defending champion Acadia Axemen 99-91 Saturday night in a thrilling climax to the three-day playdowns.

That afternoon, the Yeomen secured third spot by winning their final game of the year: a come-from-behind 94-81 decision over the Victoria Vikings who had lost a close one to St. Mary's Friday night.

SHOOT-OUT

In the first half, York and Vic had a shoot-out with both teams running end to end for baskets. As an indication of the pace of that half, not one time out was called by either side, and Yeomen centre Lonnie Ramati netted 20 points on his way to a game high of 26.

Chris McNeilly filled in for Paul Layefsky at the forward position and played well there, scoring 11 points overall. McNeilly actually found himself in a dual role during the last two Yeomen games. He played a big of centre in York's Friday night loss to Acadia and on Saturday found himself playing Layefsky's regular spot. Layefsky injured his right knee against Acadia.

By the end of the first half, York found themselves trailing Victoria 55-47, and were trailing in shooting percentages, averaging only 48 per cent from the field compared to Vic's 64 per cent.

"We had a long talk about

defence before the second half began," Bain said, "and I thought in the second half we played our best half all year".

Bain was probably right. The Yeomen rightened up defensively and scored 14 unanswered points in the first four minutes to take a six-point lead. Vic never regained the lead after that and York eventually built up their winning 13-point margin.

The tougher defence showed in Vic's scoring statistics: Yeomen held them to just 26 points in the second half and Vic's shooting percentage dropped to 46 per cent.

PELECH SOLID

Bo Pelech played a solid defensive game for York, scoring 14 points, many from outside, and breaking up assorted Viking plays; Lonnie Ramati used his size to total 11 rebounds, Dave Coulthard provided 20 points and Chris McNeilly sank 11. Three Yeomen, Ted Galka; Harry Hunter, who played his final game as Yeomen; and Paul Jones, scored six points, and Ron Kaknevicus netted five. For Victoria, Billy Loos scored a team high of 20 points.

The win was a happy moment for the players and salvaged something for the Yeomen after their 82-71 defeat at the hands of the powerful Acadia Axemen.

Coach Bain said after York's unimpressive 84-74 opening day win over Bishop's Gaiters Thursday afternoon: "If we played that way against a team like Acadia, we'd get blown out by 20 or 35 points."

As it was, the Yeomen did not get blown out, but some early game jitters and foul trouble cost York a shot at the title.

Before an evening crowd of over 7,000 — most of whom were cheering for Acadia, both teams came out ready to play.

Because Acadia plays an aggressive brand of ball, coach Bain decided the Yeomen should adapt their style to keep pace.

"We're a finesse team," Bain said afterward, "and when we played their style we had to give something up".

What York gave up by having to

resort to aggressive ball were three fouls on Lonnie Ramati with under 10 minutes gone in the first half. That put York's big centre in foul trouble and forced Bain to sit him out. In Ramati's place Bain inserted 6 ft. 3 in. Chris McNeilly, who "did a hell of a job at centre". During the last 10 minutes of the first half, McNeilly picked off four defensive rebounds — somewhat of a feat against the like of 6 ft. 7 in. Victor Soares and 6 ft. 6 in. Alvin Jessamy.

But since York's offence relies heavily on getting the ball to their big man, Ramati, having him out of the game put the Yeomen in trouble.

YEOMEN KEPT PACE

Despite the loss of Ramati — and then forward Paul Layefsky, who twisted his knee — the Yeomen were able to keep pace with Acadia, and they actually pulled to within four points near the end of the half, but they couldn't hit that key basket to turn the game around, and Acadia pulled out to an 11-point halftime lead: 37-26.

In the second half York started to turn the game around. They outscored Acadia 7-2 after less than three minutes of play, but they could not put any pressure on the Axemen by pulling closer on the score board. The closest they came was six points.

The second half score was a 45-45 tie, but York's bad first half had done them in. In rebounding, Yeomen totalled 39 offensively and defensively compared to 40 for Acadia, and in overall shooting percentage, York outdid the Axemen 41 per cent to 36 per cent. In all, Acadia poured 90 field goal attempts at York hoops and made 32 while York was good on 30 for 73, but York's shaky start in the first half, coupled with Layefsky's injury, foul trouble for Ramati and Bo Pelech, and early problems on the board hurt their cause.

BEST SHOT

"We gave it out best shot," a subdued coach Bain said. "We didn't get that many breaks in the game, but I guess you've got to make your own breaks and we didn't."

"Acadia is very tough up front, and we're not as quick as they are in the forward positions. At times we weren't playing that well on offence, but I'm really proud of the way we played."

The entire team worked hard. Paul Jones hustled and pressed Acadia players, Mike Willins played hard when he was out there as did Harry Hunter, Chris McNeilly added 8 points while subbing for Ramati, and when Ramati came back, he sank 12 points and picked up eight rebounds. Bo Pelech had a great game on defence and offence. He hauled down 10 defensive rebounds, tipped in five on the offensive and sank 14 points. Dave Coulthard led the team with 24 points, followed by Ted Galka's 6 points and 5 by Ron Kaknevicus, who played well in place of Layefsky, who potted two points before he was injured.

Victor Soares, York's nemesis all night, scored 24 points for Acadia, followed by Mike Hazzard with 19.

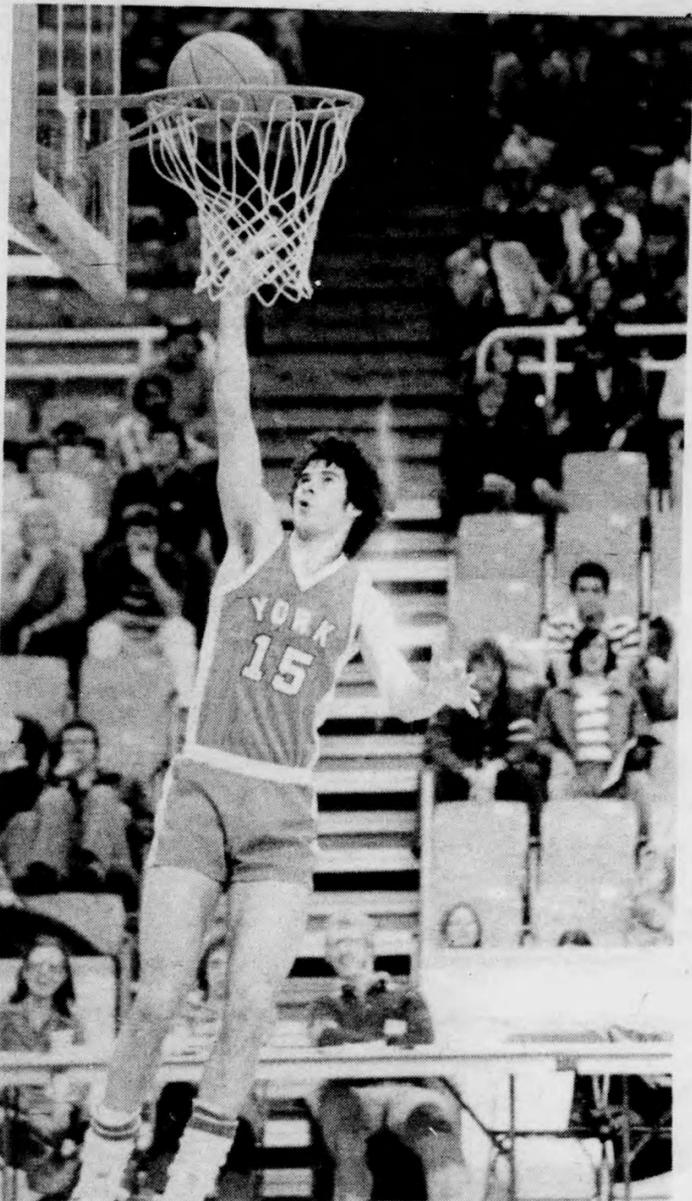
Before dropping their only game to Acadia, the Yeomen beat the Bishop's Gaiters 84-74 Thursday afternoon.

What was supposed to be a no-contest game resulting in a York rout turned into a closely contested struggle.

Inconsistent shooting plagued the Yeomen all game, and it was not one of the team's better games on offence of defence. To illustrate what kind of game it was for the Yeomen, the smaller Gaiters out rebounded York 36-33.

BEHINDEARLY

York fell behind by four early,



Dave Coulthard (not Jody Connor) leaps for two points.

but came back using a 60 per cent shooting average to build up a comfortable 13-point lead, 52-39, at half time.

But York's shooting average fell off in the second half while the Gaiters' improved, and at one point Bishop's pulled to within four points but weren't able to finish off around the basket. This allowed York time to regroup and clear the ball from play under their boards — something they couldn't do effectively against Acadia.

York built their lead back to 10 points and kept the spread for the rest of the game.

York's field goal shooting dropped to 54 per cent over the entire game, and were it not for Gaiters' inaccurate shooting, the outcome might have been closer.

"It was a lack of execution basically," coach Bain said of his team's performance Thursday.

Bishop's also defended well against York, especially Lonnie Ramati, who they held to just 7 rebounds, although he did muscle his way through for 26 points. They also isolated well one-on-one on York guards; they held high scoring Dave Coulthard, who was selected at the end of the championships as an all-star performer, to 26 points on 22 field goal attempts.

Freshmen Ron Kaknevicus, who Bain thought played well at forward, tossed in 11 points, and Ted Galka also hit double figures with 10.

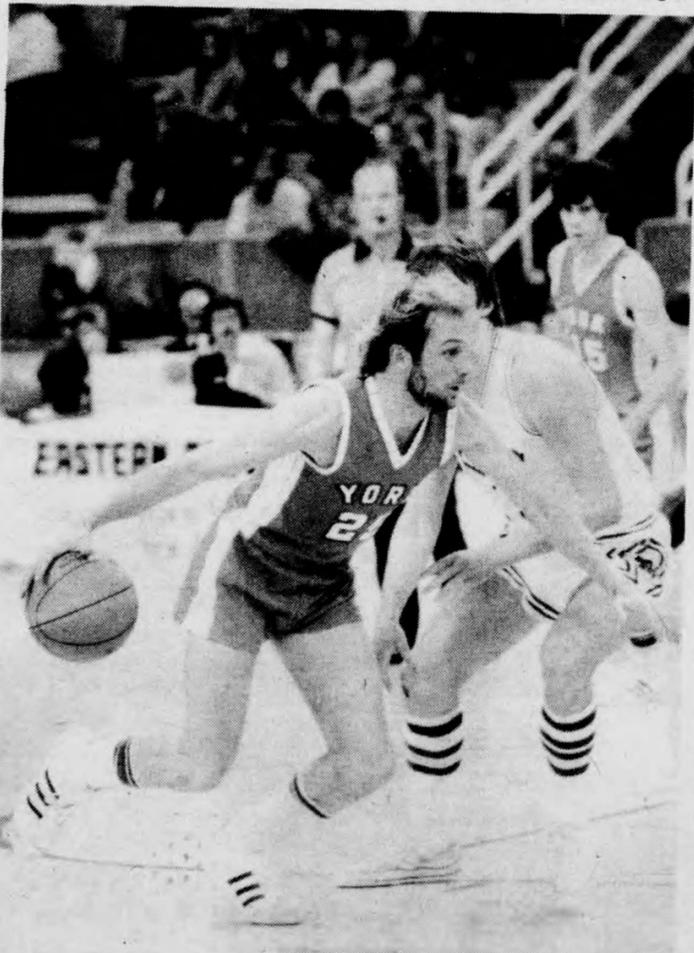
For Bishop's, Wayne Hussey netted 24 points followed by Dave Thornhill, who has a style similar to Laurentian's Charlie Wise, with 21 points.

Epilogue: Looking back over the season, one sees a York team that, no matter how they played against weaker teams, always got up for the big game. Their work at the national finals was no exception. York's loss to Acadia was a loss to a much more experienced team that has been there before. Doug Daigneault, coach of the Concordia Stingers said: "Playing at the national is like a half a season of experience for a young club." He should know. His team was there two years ago.

"Our objective this year was to make the national finals," Bain said afterward. Mission accomplished, thanks to the Yeomen players, coach, trainer Harold Cipin, manager Bill Arthur and the rest associated with the team.

And now with the experience gained from this year's finals, York could be champions of the future.

Coach Bain vowed: "We'll be back!"



Harry Hunter drives for the basket

Lovett-Doust wins silver

Chris Lovett-Doust of the Yeowomen swim team won a silver medal at the Canadian Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Association championships at the Etobicoke Olympian on the March 4 weekend. Lovett-Doust finished with a time of 2:26.71 in the 200 metre butterfly event, just 7/10's of a second behind the first place finisher.

Lovett-Doust also placed fourth in the 100 metre butterfly in the same competition. She was the only female York swimmer to qualify for the CWIAA's.