



Coming from behind...

# Dal Tigers stick it to the X-Men

by Gordie Sutherland

Last week the Dalhousie Tigers put together two exciting come-from-behind victories to earn a semi-final berth in the Atlantic Universities Hockey Conference Playoffs.

## Dal 6, St. FX 5

The Tigers (10-9-2) finished the regular season in second place and therefore began their best-of-three quarter-final series last Wednesday in Antigonish against the third-place (9-11-1) St. F.X. X-Men.

In that contest, defenceman Tony MacAulay scored the winner at the 5:57 mark of overtime to lift the Tigers to a 6-5 victory.

Other Dalhousie scorers included Kelly Bradley and Bill Wiseman with two apiece and rookie scoring machine Mike Griffith with a single.

Ben MacIntosh, Peter Lisy, Allan MacIsaac, Dave Synishin and Peter Gallagher replied for the X-Men, who were outshot 33-30.

The Tigers trailed 4-3 after two complete periods and the X-Men added to their lead with a goal midway through the third. Dalhousie finally responded with two goals in the last six minutes of play. Mike Griffith notched the equalizer with just 15 seconds remaining on the clock.

League Rookie of the Year Pat McGarry played goal for the Tigers while Ian MacIsaac did the same for the X-Men.

## Dal 7, St. F.X. 3

On Saturday, the Tigers returned to the Dalhousie Memorial Arena and, despite a slow first period, came back to crush the X-Men 7-3.

The X-Men, who were outshot 30-27, played a very physical first period. The Antigonish team seemed to be using a dump-chase-and-bump kind of style. Whatever the technique, it paid off early as veteran Allan MacIsaac

gave the X-Men a 1-0 lead at 9:26 of the opening frame. Dave Synishin added to Dalhousie's first period problems with a tally at the 18:37 mark. Peter Desmasta scored the only other X-Men goal late in the third.

The Tigers regrouped during the first intermission and came out flying in the second period. Dalhousie exploded for two goals in the first 61 seconds and added a pair of powerplay goals over the next 13 minutes. Tiger winger George Wilcox credited the offensive outburst to the team's line combinations. "Coach Darrell Young has put together some good lines," said the former Hull Olympic (major junior). "It's not necessarily the best players that are going to play together and get the goals. Coach Young puts guys together who are going to create a smooth flow."



Wilcox centres a line with wingers Craig Morrison and Kelly Bradley. All three players scored a goal each and as a trio accumulated seven points. Other Tiger marksmen included Alan Baldwin, Mike Griffin, Brian Melanson and Scott Anderson.

St. F.X. coach Jim MacDonald elected to pull starting goaltender Ian MacIsaac after Anderson potted Dalhousie's fifth goal of the second period. Swedish native Andres Hogbert replaced the overworked MacIsaac, who had faced 13 shots in 16 minutes. The Tigers dominated the period, holding a 14-2 shots on goal advantage.

The second half of the game was extremely rough and featured several cheap shots. "It's going to get chippy," said Wilcox. "They know they're up against the wall and we're coming right at them. Tempers fly, sticks go up, and there is pushing and shoving, but

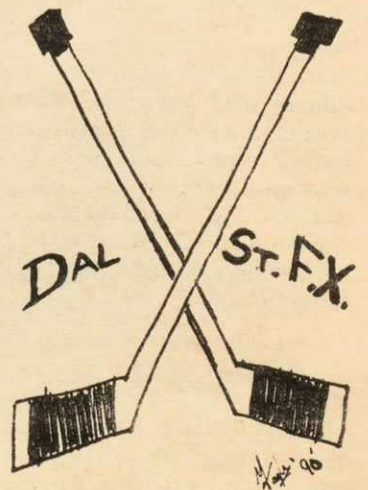
it's all part of the game." With the win, Dalhousie advances to the league's final four. The Tigers will cross over to play the top team in the MacAdam division — the Moncton Blue Eagles, ranked fifth in the nation. The other semi-final pits the Acadia Axemen (16-5-0) against the University of Prince Edward Island (13-8-0).

The Moncton and Dalhousie match-up is a repeat of the 1988-89 season's semi-final. Last year, Moncton won the third and deciding game of a hard-fought series.

The Black and Gold are on a roll and have lost only one of their last eight games. Wilcox is hoping that the Tigers can continue to ride the crest of their late-season wave. "We had a couple of big wins in the Lobster Pot. It definitely builds the morale of the team, because it shows we can play with the best and we've shown it all season," he said.

"We have lost some pretty poor games, but against the better teams we've always been there and we'll always be there. I think with the momentum we have going now, it's going to be tough stopping us."

The series opens on Wednesday, February 28, at the Dalhousie Memorial Arena. On the weekend, the action shifts to Moncton, where the second and third (if necessary) games will be played.



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Submissions due March 23, by 3 pm.

