

Red Raiders A tough year ahead?

Size may be lacking, but UNB Red Raiders' coach Don Nelson believes his men's basketball team might have the balance to offset that disadvantage.

Just exactly what Nelson has in store for the Red Raiders fans might be unveiled tonight, with the Red Raiders hosting Loring Air Force Base of Maine in the first of two weekend contests. Tonight's tilt gets underway at 7:30 in the Main Gym, with the same squads squaring off Saturday afternoon at 2 p.m. also in the Main Gym.

"This is a good opening opportunity for us," Coach Nelson said earlier this week. "They have a nice team to play, and it gives us an opportunity to see all our players in action. The objective for us this weekend is definitely to get everyone into a game situation."

UNB first played Loring last year, with the Raiders taking victories by scores of

117-92 and 116-77. Despite the wide margins, Nelson sees the possibility of the two teams playing against each other quite often in the years to come.

"They have a good assortment of players, since it is an army base and people are transferred in and out," he said. "With the right one or two additions, they could be an awfully good ball club."

As for the Red Raiders, Scott Devine is nothing more than a name in the team's history books, having graduated after giving stellar service as the team's point guard. He will be replaced at that position by Fredericton native Mark Newell, a sophomore with freshman Mike Sherrard providing backup.

"Mark will definitely start for us at the point guard position," Nelson said. "All he needs right now is a little more confidence in his own ability and then he should do a fine job for us."

And Mike Sherrard, at five feet, 11 inches, is one of

the bigger guards we've ever recruited from Ontario."

At the two-guard, veteran Scott Nicholson of St. Stephen is looking for a solid year after showing steady improvement throughout the last season. He will be backed up by Bill Young, a member of the squad two years ago, and Andy Hayward, who played for the Fredericton High Black Kats one year ago.

"Andy was the outstanding high school basketball player last year...I don't think you will get any argument from anyone on that," said Nelson.

The small forward position provides Nelson with a pleasant problem, with veterans Don McCormack and Tony Walker both more than capable of playing there. Both will see plenty of court time.

"When we need outside shooting, Don will be in there, and when we need help under the basket, Tony can do the job," Nelson said. A third player at that

position is Tom Gillespie, a freshman who played with Hayward at Fredericton High last year. Nelson said many people considered him the second-best player a year ago.

At the big forward position, Nelson has Chris McCabe, the only American on the team and the top field goal percentage shooter in the AUAA last year. Last year saw McCabe score 613 points, making him only the second player in UNB history to score over 600 points in a season. His backup will be Ed Crowe, who Nelson describes as the most pleasant surprise this year.

"Last year, he seemed to be the square peg in a round hole," Nelson said. "We couldn't find the right position for him. But he has a tremendous amount of ability, and this is only his fourth year of basketball."

Finally, the center position has Phil Guthrie and Dale McIsaac vying for the starting role, with McIsaac's

6'6" height making him the only big man on the team. Guthrie, a natural center, is back at that position after an experiment last year to play him on the outside.

"At 6'3", we thought Phil was too small for center last year, so we moved him to the outside," Nelson said. "But he was never comfortable there so we decided to move him back."

For Nelson, the big edge this squad has over last year's edition is the bench strength, with the long time coach of the Raiders ready to use everyone this year. That wasn't possible in 1982-83.

"We want to utilize our quickness and speed this year," Nelson said. "From what I've seen, the players seem to be very intense individuals...they never seem to quit."

The Red Raiders only two league games before Christmas are in Sackville against Mount Allison November 25 and 26.



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2. The implementation of a student ombudsman.
3. The implementation of student leaders sitting on government boards to get better student representation.
4. Pushing for a wet and dry stamp for pubs and socials.
5. The creation of new meal plans for on and off residence students when Beaver Foods contract comes up for renewal.

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