

Overtime By JoAnn Sherwood

A numbers game

Rankings are a funny thing. They show sports fans just how two-faced we can be. If we agree with the rankings, we think they're great, but if the rankings don't favour a team we like, sports fans tend to become critical. The problem is that most people don't know how the rankings are determined. They don't even care until they have a reason to question the system. Many coaches don't completely understand how the CIAU rankings are tabulated.

Each of the six conferences across Canada appoint a delegate to evaluate a varsity sport. The CIAU collects the scores weekly and sends the information out to the "top ten people". They use the statistics to rank the university teams in their designated sport all across the country. Points are awarded on a scale of ten points for a first place ranking to one point for a tenth place ranking. The CIAU then evaluates the six opinions to come up with the official weekly rankings.

"It's a numbers game in how people perceive performance," says Wayne MacDonald, director of intercollegiate athletics at Dalhousie.

All teams are influenced by all six evaluations. If a team maintains the number one ranking for a good part of their season, even if they do lose to an unranked team, the number one team will not drastically fall in the rankings if they have amassed enough ten point weeks. The losing would have to be perpetual in order to drop a team to the bottom of the rankings.

Last week many of us were asking, "HAVE YOU SEEN THE HOCKEY RANKINGS?" Dalhousie, ranked ninth the week before, had beaten the third ranked University of Moncton. The following week, Dalhousie had moved into seventh place, but Moncton had moved into second. The CIAU office explained that this was because number one ranked York had

been beaten by an unranked team. York automatically dropped to third spot, pushing everyone else up one spot.

Moncton did not fall in the rankings because the position they were in allowed them to total more points so far this season than the fourth place team who would have jumped ahead of Moncton. Could anyone explain that mathematical formula to me?

Because of the cost involved, the only time the committee discusses the statistics are at the beginning of a sport's season and when they are compiling the rankings that will determine who will compete against who in the CIAU championships.

MacDonald stressed the importance of out-of-conference play. These tournaments give the delegates a better chance of evaluating how teams from the other conferences stack up against the local teams they are more familiar with.

Women's basketball in the AUAA suffers in the rankings because of a lack of out-of-conference tournaments. UNB and Dalhousie are the only two women's teams who have been ranked because they are the only two AUAA teams who travel to play games. A team like UPEI, who have a 6-1 record, certainly should be ranked but since they didn't participate in tournaments outside of the region, no one really knows how they would do against a Western team.

Another inconsistency is the fact that some conferences have more teams or less teams in a particular sport than the other conferences do. For example, has Quebec only has four university hockey teams. It must be simpler to evaluate four teams rather than the 16 in the Ontario conference or the ten in the AUAA.

MacDonald says, "It's important not to completely distort the rankings. Usually, beating a ranked team moves you up while losing to an unranked team moves you down."

Verbek rejoins Dal

Though the Acadia Axemen handed the ball over 22 times, they still managed to defeat the Dalhousie Tigers 84-59 in a game played Saturday in Wolfville. The win increased the Axemen's lead in the AUAA standings, while making the Tigers' chances of making the playoffs look more dismal.

Acadia coach Dave Nutbrown felt the game was an improvement over the last time the Axemen defeated the Tigers, at the Metro Centre on January 10. He said that the team's level of intensity was higher, though he still believes that his team is giving up too many turnovers.

Acadia was led in the first half by Peter Morris. Morris scored 18

of his 22 points in the first half to give the Axemen a 40-27 halftime lead. The Tigers went scoreless for the first six and a half minutes of the second half. Acadia improved their lead to 54-27. The increase in the deficit meant that the Tigers' hopes for a comeback were disappearing fast.

The Tigers' offense was led by Jeff Burns, who hit for 16 points. Andrew Merritt added 11 and fellow rookie Willem Verbeek had nine. It was Verbeek's first game in three weeks. He had been suffering from a bout of pneumonia. Dalhousie coach Doc Ryan was happy with Verbeek's play, considering that he may have been weak, having lost ten pounds during his illness.



Pierre Painchaud of Laval blocks a Roger Valee spike during the men's championship match of the Dalhousie Volleyball Classic. Photo by Deepak Seth/Dal Photo.

G.P.A.C. dominate final

By JOANN SHERWOOD

In their first game of the tournament, the Dalhousie women's team was dominated by the number one team in the country, the university of Winnipeg Lady Wesmen. The Lady Wesmen showed why they are also the two-time defending Classic champions beating the Tigers by scores of 15-1, 15-0, 15-7.

Winnipeg displayed awesome hitting power, and were able to capitalize on the mistakes made by the young Dalhousie team. Whenever the Tigers set up a shot, there was always a Winnipeg player ready to get the ball.

Tiger coach Karen Fraser says the game against the Lady Wesmen was frustrating.

"They just kept putting the ball over again until we made a mistake."

"We tried hitting the middle and we tried hitting the deep corners. We tried everything but nothing worked," says Fraser.

Friday evening, Dalhousie played a match against the York Yeowomen. The Tigers' blocking was ineffective at times, allowing York to win the first game 15-3. A boost in the success of the Tigers' blocking allowed them to win the second game 15-10. The scores of the last two games, 0-15 and 4-15, were not indicative of Dalhousie's playing the match. The Tigers had been playing well before York began to pull away. Paula Clark had seven kills, three blocks and two aces for the Tigers. The Yeowomen were led by Christine Pollitt with 14 kills, two blocks and one ace.

In other women's action on Friday, Winnipeg had a smooth match against the University of Moncton, winning 15-1, 15-3, 15-7. York handed the Blue Angels their second loss, by scores of 15-8, 15-1, 15-6.

In a poll B of the women's side, Manitoba got behind to Ottawa before roaring back to take the next three games 15-4, 15-4, 15-5.

The Lady Bisons had an easier time against Sherbrooke, winning 15-1, 15-4, 15-7. UNB went winless in their first two games. Sherbrooke beat the Reds 15-4, 15-8, 15-6. Ottawa beat UNB in four games 15-9, 15-5, 15-15, 15-10.

Saturday morning, the women played their final game in their respective pools. The Tigers faced their AUAA counterparts from the University of Moncton. The Blue Angels led for the entire first game winning 15-13. Dalhousie got behind 1-6 in the next game, but rallied to tie the score at ten. The gaps in the Tigers' defense cost them the game, 12-15. Behind the blocking of Colleen Doyle, Dalhousie built momentum as the rallies got longer. They took the fourth game 15-7. In the final game, the score was tied at six before Moncton began to split Dalhousie's defense up the middle. Moncton pulled away for a 15-6 win to secure the match. Colleen Doyle had 23 kills, two blocks, and one ace for the Tigers. Spiker Julie Godin led the U de M with 24 kills, two blocks, and one ace.

Fraser pointed out the cause of the shift in momentum during the final game.

"Moncton started killing us up the middle. It was harder for us, not having an effective two player block up the middle," said Fraser.

In other play, York managed to win a game against Winnipeg but the Lady Wesmen prevailed 15-8, 12-15, 15-11, 15-11. Manitoba easily beat UNB 15-7, 15-7, 15-3. Sherbrooke took the Ottawa Gee-Gees in three straight games, 15-7, 15-11, 15-2.

In the consolation semi-finals, Dalhousie lost to Ottawa by scores of 10-15, 15-1, 15-7, 4-15, 7-15.

The winners in the other consolation semis were Moncton over UNB 15-3, 15-4, 15-6; Manitoba defeated York 15-8, 15-6, 15-8; and Winnipeg beat Sherbrooke 15-5, 15-13, 15-5.

The Tigers beat UNB to finish in seventh place. Though they won in three straight games, 15-12, 15-10, 15-7, Fraser said her team knew UNB could have come back easily if Dalhousie gave them the chance. Sandra Rice led the Tigers attack with 11 kills, one block and two aces.

Fraser was happy to stay away from the bottom of the standings. "Compared to the weekend we played in Winnipeg, we've improved a lot," said Fraser.

"In a way I'm not pleased with the result, but I am pleased because we've improved."

Ottawa defeated Moncton in a long match, 15-10, 11-15, 7-15, 15-7, 15-7 to finish fifth in the Classic. Sherbrooke easily handled the York Yeowomen to win the bronze medal. Sherbrooke was led by Elaine Lauzon with 16 kills and four blocks. Christine Pollitt had seven kills and one block for York.

The women's final was an all-Manitoba contest, with the Manitoba Lady Bisons meeting the Winnipeg Lady Wesmen. Manitoba had lost only two games over the weekend while Winnipeg had lost only one.

The first game started out as a close one. The Lady Wesmen did manage to win 15-12. Winnipeg's blocking, led by Sandy Kroeger, was a key factor in the win. The rallies were even longer in the second game. Once again, the superior blocking and defense got Winnipeg out to an 11-5 lead. Manitoba attempted a comeback, which came too late. Winnipeg won 15-11. The Lady Wesmen secured a three game victory over the Lady Bisons by winning the third game 15-7. Winnipeg led throughout the final game, by scores of 6-3 and 11-6.

The Lady Wesmen were led by Diane Scott, with 14 kills and seven blocks, and by Ardith Lernout, with 13 kills. Manitoba's Leeta Liepans and 25 kills and six blocks.