

# SPORTS

Deadline for stories is Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. Sports Desk 453-4983  
Co-Editors: Kelly Craig, Frank Denis.

## Bloomers finish sixth at Nationals

by Mark Savoie

For the second consecutive year the UNB Red Bloomers were the AUSA's representative in the CIAU women's basketball championship tournament. They won this honour by first defeating the Acadia Axettes in the semi-finals and then dropping the Dalhousie Lady Tigers in the finals of the AUSA tournament. These victories entitled the Bloomers to travel to Laval University in Quebec City, last weekend to compete against the best in the nation.

The Bloomers entered the tournament unranked nationally and seeded seventh in the eight team competition, ahead of only host Laval. As a result of this seeding UNB was forced to open the tournament against the second seed University of Regina Cougars, ranked #2 nationally. Regina had been the Bloomers opening game competition the year before, and were a very experienced team sporting a lot of size. Leading this strong Regina team was fifth year veteran Jackie Moore, a national first team All-Star.

This proved to be a major problem for the Red Bloomers, as they were unable to get their halfcourt offense going early and were trailing already 14-4 when Coach Claire Mitton called their first timeout five minutes into the contest. The Cougars extended this lead to as many as 18 points, with the Bloomers twice fighting back in the first half to within ten. But each time the Bloomers closed the differential to 10 points Regina would start a mini-run of their own, widening the gap once again. One of

these times was at the close of the first half of play, and the Bloomers went into the locker room trailing by 15, 48-33.

In the second half the Bloomers fared better, actually outscoring Regina until the very last minute of the the half. However, they were unable to seriously threaten Regina's lead and Regina was content to coast towards game's end for a 93-75 victory. This was testified to by the fact that in the first half of play Regina had launched a total of ten three-point shots; in the second half only one was attempted.

The Bloomers were completely unable to contend with Regina's powerful inside game. Jackie Moore of Regina was able to take advantage of this for a total of 36 points, and every time the Bloomers moved inside to contain her the ball would move outside to Vivian Kingdom, who scored all but four of her 19 points from long range. The other problem faced by the Bloomers, especially in the first half, was the strong half court defense of Regina, helping to force a total of 26 turnovers. The Bloomers were led in this game by Kara Palmer and Jennifer Hale, who struck for 23 and 22 points respectively.

The loss left the Bloomers with the task of playing the Bishop's University Lady Gaiters in the first round of the consolation tourney. Once again, this was a familiar chore for the veterans on the team, having also faced Bishop's following an opening game loss to Regina at last year's CIAU's in Toronto. Last year's effort had been a disappointing loss, as they had went

into the game favoured to win, only to lose badly. This year Bishop's was the favoured team, and the Bloomers were in the position of trying to force an upset.

Midway through the first half the hopes of an upset appeared to be over. The Red Bloomers were trailing 24-6, and were ineffectual on both offense and defense. The game, and the Bloomer's season, looked to be over. But then Bishop's ran into a wall, scoring only 10 more points for the duration of the half, as UNB narrowed the score to 34-30 to start the second half.

In the second half the Red Bloomers continued to pressure Bishop's defensively, with many fast break opportunities resulting. This strong defense helped translate to a strong offensive performance, led by CIAU rookie team All-Star Laura Swift's 21 points. The Bloomers used these weapons to quickly even the score against Bishop's and win going away 68-60. Kara Palmer dominated the game within the paint, helping the Bloomers outrebound Bishop's 16-8 in the second half. This coupled with with 62% field goal shooting enabled the Bloomer comeback.

By virtue of this dramatic come-from-behind victory UNB would get another game to their season. This game would be against the #10 ranked University of Western Ontario Mustangs. For the first time that weekend the Bloomers did not start the game slowly, matching Western basket for basket for much of the first half, to the point of the two teams being tied at 26 late in the half. Western took it to the Bloomers from that point onwards, and UNB entered the locker room at halftime looking at a 38-32 deficit.

Western came out very quickly in the second half, increasing their lead to as many as 20 points, before finally settling down for a 73-58 victory. The key to Western's success was a zone defense that held the Bloomers to a season low 33% field goal percentage. They were particularly effective in taking Jill Jackson out of the game. Jill's importance to the Bloomer's attack from her point guard position can not be overemphasized, and Western keyed on her, taking away her drive to the hoop. As a result Jill shot only 3-10 on the game, with no shot attempts in the second half.

Despite finishing only sixth in the eight team tournament Claire Mitton was very pleased with the weekend. She feels that the experience gained from the three games will help to make the Bloomers that much stronger next year. All players from this year's team are eligible for play next year, and Claire expects at least three recruits for next season to have an immediate impact. The

Bloomers proved over the weekend that they are capable of playing and competing against national competition with a team that is still very young. Next year the team will be composed largely of veterans, and much more will be expected of them. Last weekend they showed that they have the character to meet these expectations.

### UNB Black Bears at CIAU's

March 1-3

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## Athletes of the Week

### Female

Meaghan Seagrave of the Beavers swim team has been named this week's UNB female athlete of the week. Meaghan had an outstanding weekend at the CIAU Championships, at Dalhousie University. The AUSA female swimmer of the year swam lifetime best times in all three events taking a cumulative 9 seconds of her previous times:

100 m. breaststroke - 1:15.19  
- 1st in consolation finals  
200 m. breaststroke - 2:40.79  
- 5th in Canada  
200 m IM - 2:24.45 - 4th in consolation finals

Coach Andrew Cole felt that "Meaghan handled the pressure of the nationals extremely well and rose to the occasion at each event surpassing expectations". He added that, "Meaghan swam with quiet confidence and her success was a fitting conclusion for the Beavers' building year".

Meaghan is a 1st year BPE student from Fredericton, NB.

### Male

This week's UNB male athlete of the week is Claude Cullinan, a 3rd year Bachelor of Science student from Fredericton, NB.

Claude, a member of the Rebels volleyball team, was once again named to the AUSA All Star team of his excellent play this past weekend at the AUSA Championships at Dalhousie. Coach Belanger felt that "Claude had a good season considering he was asked to play a new position at the beginning of the year. He adapted well and became a major contribution to the Rebels successful season".

