

Five wins in a row Tigers gear up for playoffs

by Greg Dennis

After key victories last week over St. Mary's Huskies and the Acadia Axemen, their 4th and 5th wins in a row, the Dalhousie Tigers are steam-rolling their way towards the Atlantic University Hockey Conference playoffs.

The Tigers dumped the Huskies 3-2 last Wednesday night in an emotional and exciting game at SMU arena. Captain Jim Bottomley scored the winning goal with less than six minutes remaining to play when he took a pass from defenseman Ken Johnson and banked it into the Huskie net off a defender's leg. On Saturday, a relaxed and confident Tiger squad went through the motions and blanked the Axemen 5-0 at the Forum. Ken Bickerton stopped all 31 shots directed his way to record his second shut-out of the season.

The wins moved the Tigers three points ahead of the Huskies in the AUHC's East Division and six up on the St. Francis Xavier X-Men. The Axemen trail the leaders by 16 points and will not make the playoffs.

"We're improving with every game," said Tiger head coach Pierre Page, "and the key is to continue to improve."

Page cited several areas where the Tigers are and have been working. Since the referees are still keeping close tabs on the Tigers and are quick to call anything resembling an infraction, "We have to control our tempers; both players and coaches. We have to play our own game and be the bosses on the ice. We have to be aggressive without retaliation."

Other things the Tigers will have to do to be successful in the upcoming playoffs and working on now, include con-

trouling the play in both ends of the rink. "We have to apply more and better pressure in their end", said Page, "by playing defensive hockey in the offensive zone. We have to stay in the other end longer. In our end, I want the guys to play the body more and to bring the puck out quicker. The fancy passing has to be avoided."

"Finally the guys have got to continue to be confident in themselves and have to show it. We want to be winners."

They were winners AND showed it against St. Mary's. Both teams were up for the game and the tone was fast and physical. Thunderous body checks, end-to-end play and excellent goaltending dominated the game from the opening face-off.

The teams traded goals early in the first period with the #7's each scoring. Rick McCallum opened the scoring for the Tigers but the Huskies quickly got that one back on a powerplay goal from captain Tom McDonnell.

The next goal was not scored until 45 minutes later as goalies Bickerton and Mark Locken, the AUHC's top net-minders, were spectacular in their respective nets. Huskie whiz-kid Mochie Friessen gave his team a short-lived 2-1 lead with a deflection goal at 10:15 of the third period. The line of Adrian Facca-Bark Haddad-Brian Gualazzi, stung by Friessen's goal, redeemed themselves but 37 seconds later when Facca's goal with assists from his linemates knotted the score. Opponents are respecting this high-flying unit—a scoring threat whenever on the ice.

In the final moments of play, shortly after Bottomley scored Dal's third goal, ("Some nice to get that," said the smiling captain after the



Dal Photo / Dayal

Bickerton recording second shut-out

game. "This is probably my last regular season game against SMU and I really wanted to beat them."), Huskie defenceman Scott MacLean took a five minute elbowing penalty that all but snuffed SMU's chances for a tie. Coach Bob Boucher and his players were livid after the game, calling the penalty a cheap call. Boucher called referee Rupe O'Shaughnessey "an old man too fat to skate who is prejudiced."

However, most observers sided with the ref on that particular play. MacLean, carrying the puck behind his own net, drove his elbow for little apparent reason at Gualazzi who was skating alongside the rearguard, landing it squarely in the Tiger's face. With a felled Gualazzi bleeding profusely on the ice, O'Shaughnessey had little choice but to call a major penalty. Tiger's assistant coach Bill Shannon said, "It was a stupid penalty. We

count on them doing it every year." It may have cost the Huskies first place.

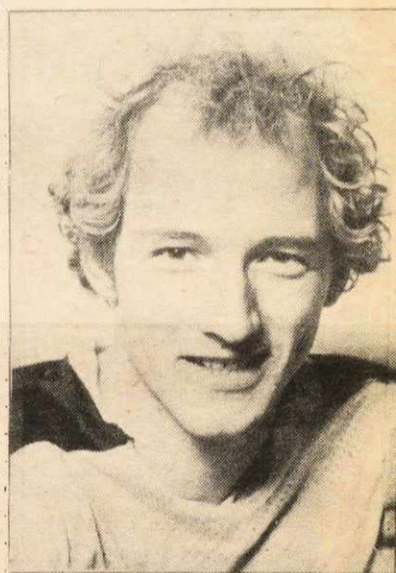
The game the following Saturday against Acadia was as dull as the SMU game was exciting. Bickerton, as he has all season, turned in a steady performance. Few of the 31 shots were difficult to handle but when called upon, Bick came up with a big save.

Five Tigers shared the scoring as each of Dal's four lines had goals. McCallum and Gualazzi scored their 19th goals of the year while Bottomley, Chuck Tuplin and Kevin Zimmer rounded out the scoring.

The Tigers finish their regular season this weekend against the Prince Edward Island Panthers. "We are going to P.E.I. to continue improving," said Page. "We are working more as a team and want to win that game."

Page insists he is not looking ahead to the playoffs. "I honestly have no prefer-

ences; it doesn't matter who we'll be facing. All the teams will be tough but we can meet the challenge."



**Captain
Jim Bottomley**

Verbal Diarrhea

by Greg Dennis

It appears that the Tigers will get a bye into the second round of the playoffs as will West Division leaders University of Moncton. As the standings are now, the first round will see New Brunswick travelling to SMU while Mount Allison plays host to St. F.X. These teams will (almost) definitely make the playoffs although the sites may change. Give the nod to the Nova Scotian schools wherever the games are played. After semi-finals are played, look for the divisional leaders in the championship. . . While O'Shaughnessey's call on MacLean may have been warranted, there were, as usual, several he missed. On one particular occasion, a fight broke out behind the play in the St. Mary's end. After almost a minute, the action returned up ice whereupon he noticed the by now tuckered-out pugilists. No penalties were called. . . I noticed a curious thing last Thursday in the *St. Mary's Journal* (a curious thing in itself). A page

containing a statement that the Dal Tigers 'cry about the refereeing' was followed immediately by a page containing the headline 'Refs 3—Huskies 2.' Pass the kleenex. . . Bottomley's goal in the Acadia game was unquestionably the best of his patented "slide-rule" goals this year. With skill and precision, he perfectly angled a shot from behind the net off a leg deftly picking the short side. Other Bottomley classics include the winning goal in the recent SMU game and the clever leaping skate-blade-deflection (against St. Thomas) where the unsuspecting goalie follows the broken blade's trajectory across the ice while the puck sneaks in behind him.

Four Tigers may be playing their last regular season game in the Dal Black & Gold this weekend: tenacious checking and MBA graduate **Dwight Houser**, vastly improved Adrian Facca (one goal and -4 plus & minus rating last year; 11 goals and -10 this season), respected team leader Bottomley and the sensational but oft-underrated Bickerton.

ATLANTIC INTERCOLLEGIATE HOCKEY LEAGUE STANDINGS

Teams	GP	W	T	L	Pts	GF	GA
EAST							
1. Dal	27	18	1	8	37	123	74
2. S.M.U.	28	16	2	10	34	128	93
3. St. F.X.	26	15	1	0	31	135	101
4. Acadia	27	10	1	16	21	121	12-0
WEST							
1. Moncton	25	21	1	3	43	182	108
2. MT. A.	26	14	0	12	26	139	152
3. U.N.B.	24	12	1	11	25	141	130
4. U.P.E.I.	25	11	0	14	22	122	119
5. S.T.U.	25	4	0	21	8	100	194
6. M.U.N.	29	1	1	17	3	50	150

Water Polo

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McMaster	5	0	53	24
Dalhousie	4	1	29	28
Carleton 1	3	2	41	23
Carleton 2	2	3	28	47
Halifax Metro	1	4	32	37
Newfoundland	0	5	24	48

