

SPORTS

Tight finish to AUAA hoop season

By DAVID MOMBOURQUETTE

What local promotions were billing as the best inter-collegiate basketball in Canada proved to be just that, as the undefeated, and number one ranked, Saint Mary's University Huskies captured the AUAA crown in Halifax last weekend.

A crowd of close to 6,000 energetic fans witnessed the final game between the Huskies, and the defending champion St. Francis Xavier X-Men, a Husky victory that wasn't decided until the closing minutes.

The two combatants gained the right to do battle with victories in the semi-finals on Friday night. The X-men had a tough game with the UPEI Panthers, winning 72-66, while the Huskies coasted to a 119-90 victory over the slumping Dalhousie Tigers.

The St. F.X.-UPEI game

started out quite slowly, with neither team impressing in the offensive end. The surprising Panthers led for most of the first half, as they did a good job of rebounding at both ends of the court.

The second half started out looking like an X rout, as they scored eight unanswered points to take an early five point lead. The panthers quickly recovered though, and the X-men were unable to pull very far ahead for the rest of the game.

Compounding the St. F.X. problems was the fact that their star player John Hatch ended up in serious foul trouble, and had to sit out a good portion of the second half, including the last four minutes, when the game was still in doubt. With Hatch on the sidelines Chris Sellitri took up the scoring slack, shooting in all 14 of his points in the last twelve minutes of the game.



Victory - SMU guard Lee Davis, cuts down the nets, signifying his teams victory in the AUAA championships. Davis scored 64 points in his two tournament games.

With some clutch baskets by Mark Brodie, the X-men were able to hold off an attempted PEI comeback to win by six.

The other semi-final proved to be a slaughter, as the huge

frontline on the SMU team was able to outmuscle their smaller Dalhousie opponents, and feed the ball to sensational guard Lee Davis.

The slaughter started early in the game, as the Huskies pulled out to a quick 10 point lead. Although they slowed down a bit in the middle of the half, the Huskies came on at the end to hold a 61-46 halftime lead.

The second half proved to be no respite for the Dal squad, as the mammoth SMU front court of Ron Blommers, Tom Kappos, and Rob Latter, pounded the Tigers unmercifully. Scoring 16, 18 and 21 points respectively, the three Husky forwards controlled both ends of the court, leading their team to the 29 point victory. Lee Davis proved to be the killer though, ending up with 36 points and a fine defensive performance.

Saturday's championship tilt left no doubt as to the quality of play in the AUAA. Although St. F.X. had lost five times to Saint Marys during the year, they quickly showed that the Huskies were going to have to earn the title if they wanted it.

With X point-guard Geoff McIver switching to the shooting guard position, the SMU defense had trouble with the adjustment, and the usually low scoring McIver was able to score 14 half points.

McIver's performance did not go unchallenged though, as a slow starting Lee Davis provided 16 points in leading SMU to a 48-45 lead at the half.

The second half was a classic. The determined X-men regained the lead early in the half, and were able to hold it until only four minutes remained on the clock. Geoff McIver's continued hot hand, coupled with the inside power of John

Hatch, was able to keep the Huskies at bay for most of the game, but it could not hold up forever.

The teams were so closely matched on a team basis, that it came down to a spectacular individual performance to tip the balance in favour of the Huskies. Lee Davis accepted the challenge, scoring three unanswered baskets to give the SMU squad an 88-81 lead with only 1:40 left in the game. Davis was able to score one more basket as SMU held off a concerted X-comeback to win by five.

Davis led the Huskies with 28 points, while Tom Kappos hooped 22 for the winners. McIver with 26, and Mark Brodie with 20 led the way for the X-men.

In spite of the impressive performances of Davis, teammate Kappos was selected tournament MVP, as he combined a fine defensive performance to go along with his 40 points in two games.

As for the X-men, their efforts did not go unnoticed. The St. F.X. hoop squad garnered one wild card birth in the CIAU's with the University of Saskatchewan getting the other. St. F.X. will play the twice defending champions, University of Victoria Vikings in the first round, while the undefeated Huskies play Saskatchewan.

With two AUAA teams in the tournament, the chances look good for a return of the CIAU title to the conference. The fact that the Dalhousie Women's Volleyball team, and the U de M. Hockey team both captured national titles last weekend, means a victory this weekend for SMU or X would cap off an amazing week for the conference.

Devine selected All-Star

By DAVID MOMBOURQUETTE

In what was generally a disappointing season for the UNB Red Raiders basketball team, one point of consistency held the constantly changing team together, the leadership of team captain Scott Devine.

The fourth year business student, and team captain, turned in yet another solid season for the Raiders, leading the team in scoring while playing out of the point guard position. And while Devine's scoring exploits led him to the UNB season and career scoring records, it was his defence and playmaking ability which car-

ried the team through its difficulties.

Just how much Devine's talents are respected in the AUAA conference was demonstrated last week, when Scott was selected to the first team all-conference squad for his performance during the regular season.

The remainder of the first team selections included Saint Mary's players Ron Blommers and Lee Davis, Chris Sumner of UPEI, and John Hatch of St. F.X. Sumner also garnered the Rookie of the Year award, with Hatch being named the conference's Most Valuable Player. SMU coach Gary Heald was named coach of the year,

having led his team to an as yet undefeated season.

The second team consisted of Phil Coldwell and Donnie Ehler from Acadia, Mark Brodie of St. F.X., Bill Redmond of UPEI, and Tom Kappos from Saint Mary's.

In addition to Devine's all-star selection, several UNB players did well statistically in relation to other players in the conference. In the scoring column, Scott ended up sixth with a 22.3 average, while Chris McCabe's 18.0, and Don McCormack's 17.8, placed them eighth and tenth respectively. Chris also ended up eighth in rebounding and seventh in field goal percentage. Both Devine and McCormack ended up in the top ten in free throw percentage, Donny placing eighth and Scott capturing tenth.

The fact that Donny, Scott and Chris will all be back next year, should bode well for the teams chances next year, as all have shown they can play against AUAA competition. The return to health of Ken Amos and Paul Holder, combined with what coaches Nelson and Wright call, "a concerted recruiting drive," and the return of some now experienced freshmen such as John Farrell and Ted DeWinter, fill in the picture even more.

Whatever next year's team accomplishes, it is clear that the play of Scott Devine will be a major factor in the outcome.

Blazers best in N.B.

The UNB Red Blazers Women's Hockey team won the Senior 'A' Title in the first New Brunswick Alpine Women's Provincial Hockey Championship last weekend with a 2-1 win over the Kent Centre team. Scoring in the championship game for UNB were Carol Cooper and Kathryn MacDougall. Lynn Gaudette assisted on Cooper's goal.

In the round robin play UNB defeated Saint John by a 2-0 score, with Cathy Dickinson and Debbie MacLoon scoring the goals. Assists went to Paula MacDonald and Kathryn

MacDougall. UNB also defeated Kent Centre by a 2-0 score in the preliminary play with goals by Lynn Gaudette and Mary Lu Heckbert.

Goaltender Anne-Marie Levi and defenseman Rose Pothier were named to the Tournament All-Star team for their outstanding play in the tournament.

The win earned the Red Blazers the right to represent New Brunswick at the first ever Women's National Hockey Tournament scheduled for April 1-4, in Brantford, Ontario.