

Womens Basketball

Reds Nova Scotian Roadtrip-Women Win Two

by Matthew J. Collins
Brunns Sports

On any team, rookies are considered to be inexperienced players who haven't paid their dues. They are often seen as gophers, whether it be fetching a water bottle or carrying the bags. But last Saturday against Saint Mary's a pair of talented rookies were carrying more than just bags—they were carrying the team.

The Huskies stormed out to a twelve point lead on the Reds who shot a dismal 1-13 from the field in the first ten minutes of play. But then, Shelly Ryan and Bonnie Munn led a Reds attack which would continue on into the second half and see them to a victory.

Munn contributed in all aspects of the game, finishing with 11 points, 7 rebounds, and 6 assists. Ryan added to the rookie rally by connecting for 14 points of her own. And she admits that much of her success is due to the support of her teammates.

"My confidence has gone sky-high

because of my teammates. As a rookie, the veterans are always building you up, and so are the other rookies. If you do something wrong, someone is always there to encourage you."

Ryan also has a great attitude when she steps onto the floor. "I just want to get the job done. When I come out on the court I just try to do my best." This winning attitude is reflected in the confidence placed in the rookies by Coach Claire Mitton.

As she states, "There is no hesitation for me to put Bonnie or Shelly into the game. It doesn't matter to me that they're first year players. Look to them to be major contributors for us. Actually, all of our rookies have been doing a great job for us."

Reds Captain Krista Foreman shares these sentiments. "I'm very proud of the way all our rookies have played for us this season. They've been performing well." And so has Foreman, who earned Player of the Game honours against SMU, tallying 12 points and 10 rebounds in the Reds Victory.

Foreman's presence was also felt in the 65-52 win against Acadia on Friday night as she finished with 11 points and 5 rebounds. Also impressive was the sharp-shooting of Donna Retson who nailed 5 of 7 from the field and 7 of 9 from the charity stripe. Her 17 points outing was key to the Reds victory and she deservedly was named Player of the Game.

If anything, last weekend showed not only the Reds but other teams that behind a steady core of seasoned veterans lies a number of talented rookies. Along with Ryan and Munn are guard Marnie Dickens, Erin Brien, and the much talked-about forward, Maria Wikstrom.

Coach Mitton feels that the development of these young players and consistent play of veterans will be key to the future success of the Reds. "We still haven't had everyone perform on the same day, and that's what we're striving for. If we can get everyone to get at the same time, we're going to be a tough team to beat."



Marnie Dickens goes up against Acadia. Photo Bill Jackson

Mens Basketball

Playoffs in doubt after double N.S. loss

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Someone once said, "effort without concentration is worthless." Last weekend, the Varsity Reds discovered exactly how worthless it was. On Friday night, they were chopped by the Axemen of Acadia 75-62, and on Saturday were chomped by the Saint Mary's Huskies 93-83.

In the Acadia game, the Reds trailed from the opening tip and it seemed that they could never get their game on track. Despite a 17 point outing by Stan Mitchell, and a solid all-round effort by Brian Elliott (11 pts, 5 rbd, 8 blks), the Reds were unable to get contributions from other key players. The rest of the team shot horrifically, combining for 11-34 from the field.

As second year forward Gord McNeilly explains it, the Reds were simply unable to bring things together when they stepped on the floor. "Off the court we've been getting along really well and we're gelling as a unit, but we haven't

been able to transfer that onto the court. There were a few individual efforts, but there wasn't a strong unity of guys on the floor at one time."

When the Reds took to the floor on Saturday against SMU, they were hoping things would be different. But tempers flared early on both sides just as they did a year ago, when both teams became involved in a bench clearing brawl. Yet despite the high level of tension the Reds managed to stay in the contest for most of the game.

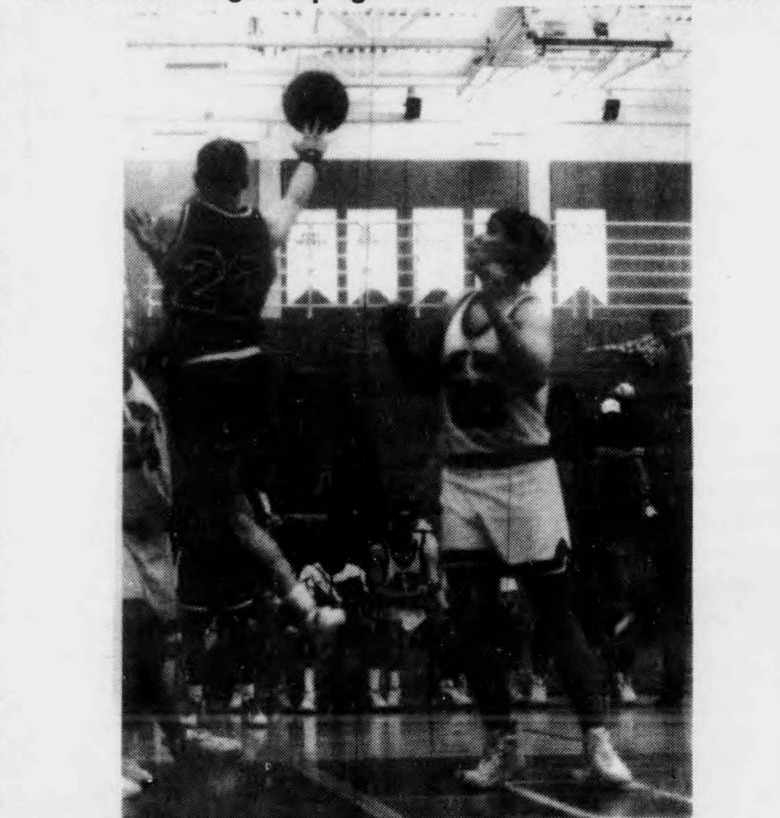
Trailing by eleven at the half, the Reds remained competitive until a Huskies 20-7 explosion midway through the second. This run was keyed by the exceptional three-point shooting of rookie Kevin Keeler who nailed 6 of 9 from downtown. Also pitching in for SMU was forward Jason Medford who netted 20 points and ripped down 12 rebounds.

The Reds could have stayed close the entire game, but momentary lapses at both ends of the court contributed to a 93-83 loss. As Captain Marc Aubé puts it, "We

couldn't put together a good overall team performance." However, Aubé is optimistic with regards to the talent of his squad. "If all pistons would fire at once we'd have a pretty powerful engine."

The Reds will need all the pistons firing this weekend as they travel to take on the red-hot Memorial Seahawks. MUN has defeated every team on the road this year and have jumped into third place in the overall standings. Aubé realises that they cannot be taken for granted.

"They have a lot of heart, and play hard, but hopefully we can put it together for this weekend. When we do that, we're as good as any team in the conference. It's a matter of finding the right piece of the puzzle before our opponent. If we can do that, we'll be successful."



Andy MacKay takes a shot against SMU. Photo Maria Paisley

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