

In basketball Media Skeptical

by Tom Barry

Having spent the past two weeks basking in the sun of southern New Brunswick, I had the opportunity to read and listen to several of the "authorities" on basketball in the Maritimes.

The voice of the CBC emphasized the power of the defending champion of Acadia Axemen, and constantly labelled the Wolfville quintet to repeat last year's performance in the Maritime Inter-collegiate Basketball Conference. In describing the annual New Year's Tournament at UNB, the Saint John Telegraph Journal named Acadia and St. F. S. as the strongest teams in the MIBC.

This questionable judgment was echoed in the Fredericton Daily Gleaner. I don't know how our Halifax critics at the Chronicle Herald feel about the standing of the various clubs, but nowhere in my travels in New Brunswick did I find any mention of the Dalhousie Tigers.

It would seem that the Tigers haven't proved anything to the so-called authorities. They can disregard Dal's massacre of the Mount Allison Mounties because this could not be taken as a test of the Tigers' potential. However, can they ignore the 74-56 trouncing of the Axemen on Dec. 2? This was the first of two meetings of the squads in regular season play and also the first time in three years that Acadia has been defeated on their home court in league play. Before going down to the Tigers, the Axemen had captured a tournament in Waterloo, Ont. Last week, they also defeated Waterloo Lutheran and MIT to take the Blunose Classic at Acadia. The tremendous factors which must be overcome at that

court in addition to the basketball skills of the Axemen are many. Three thousand partisan, bottle throwing, spitting and often just plain ignorant people must be endured. This is not meant to detract from the fine brand of ball that Gib Chapman's boys are capable of playing but it is my prediction that no other club will invade Wolfville and emerge victorious, with the possible exception of Les Goodwin's Huskies.

Speaking of St. Mary's, I wonder if the critics are aware of the thrashing given SMU by Al Yarr's Dal hoopsters in the annual SMU Invitational. St. Mary's had never lost their home tournament until dethroned by the Tigers late in November.

Why are we not number one? Possibly because the experts say our boys have hit their peak too early, or is it because of the notorious reputation the Tigers have earned as "chokes". It will be a long time before the successive collapses of the Tigers in 67 and 68 will be forgotten. And even in 1969, when they were highly rated at the first of the year, all were disappointed by their dismal 7-5 record, a poor performance for potential national champions.

I believe this year will be different. The "new" Tigers have a better attitude, are more mature and seem to have found a real leader in Larry Archibald. Although Yarr's quintet does not seem to have proven anything to anybody yet, I feel they are potential national champions and should never be satisfied with anything less.

The Tigers go after another victory at home on January 17, when the Red Raiders from New Brunswick will be entertained at the Dal Gym.

Tigers Humble Axemen 74-56

By Richard Munro

On the night of December 3, Dalhousie pulled out what many people considered a major upset over Acadia by defeating them 74-56, at Wolfville.

The loss of George Hughes, ineligible this year, and the decision of Bruce Bourassa not to play for academic reasons, caused many devoted Dal fans to predict a weaker team this year. However, due to a great deal of hard work by both Coach Yarr and his team Dal has formed what could be a championship squad. "Could", because the Maritime Intercollegiate conference has at least four other teams capable of knocking off any opposing teams on a good night, especially at home - Acadia, SMU, St. F.X., and UNB.

In the Acadia game, Dal started really strong. In the first half, they proved to the Dal fans who ventured to Acadia, that this team of 69-70 has something that last year's team lacked - a definite cool and tremendous team spirit. This "cool" can be accounted for by the play of both Steve Bezanson and Larry Archibald, who have the ability to slow the play down and not let it get out of control.

This is especially true when you consider the low number of turnovers Dal has averaged this year. No one doubted Arch's ability before the season, but the coming of age by Bezanson proved to be a surprise to many people - except his team-mates and coach. With all due respect, I believe that co-coach Eric Durnford (Dal MVP for the year

67-68) must take a lot of credit for helping to develop Bezanson's floor generalship.

In the Acadia game the Tigers were working as a team should, covering up for each other on defence, and working for that one good shot. All starting five scored when given the opportunity and the team average was an amazing 62%.

Archibald (Arch to his team-mates) led the offence with 23 points, closely followed by Brian Peters (captain of this year's team) with 19 points. Irv Cohen (Super) followed through with 12, while towering John Cassidy (Cass) plunked in 9. Bezanson scored 6 points at a crucial stage in the second half.

Defensively, Cass and Peters

controlled the boards, an ability that had been questioned before the Acadia game. Everyone knew that Cass could rebound, but Peters, who tore away 14 rebounds, proved no one was getting to the boards ahead of him.

Backing all this up is an enthusiastic bench. Flinn capably replaced Cass when he was in foul trouble and aided the offense with 5 points. The rest of the bench, Drew Bethune, Bob Howard, Joe Leish and Al Slaunwhite are all capable of relieving the starting five and add enthusiasm which helps to keep the team morale high.

The question now is can we take each game as it comes and remain number one? Find out at the game January 17 against UNB.

THE TIGERS WON IT... "Potato Classic"

On December 5th and 6th the small town of Houlton, Maine played host to the basketball Tigers as they swept in and won the "Potato Classic", an annual invitational tournament held in Houlton, "the Potato Capital of the World." The tourney was hosted by Ricker College, a high school-sized liberal arts college. The teams entered in the tournament were the Ricker College Bulldogs, Belknap College, the Fort Kent State Bengals, and the Dalhousie Tigers.

The team arrived in Houlton after a nine hour bus trip. They were greeted by Happy Hannukah signs and at supper were handed symbolic cakes and candies. That night the Tigers played the home-town Bulldogs and eliminated them from the competition with an 18 point margin. This

was the first time that the Houlton team failed to make it to the final game. Also that night Belknap of New Hampshire, defeated Maine's Fort Kent State.

Saturday was spent roaming the streets of Houlton doing Christmas shopping and watching the fantastic annual Christmas parade. There was plenty of seasonal spirit later on that night after the Tigers defeated Belknap by a score of 73-55. In the other game Ricker won and picked up 3rd place.

Dal is the first Canadian University to win the Potato Classic. Outstanding players in the two games were Cohen, Bezanson, Cassidy, and Archibald, with his fantastic ball-handling ability.

Women's Basketball

J.V. TEAM SELECTED

The members of the Women's Junior Varsity Basketball Team were selected the first week in December. Members include Susan Clarke, Beckie d'Entremont, Pat Hoskin, Terry Innis, Gayle MacCharles, Cathy Moffat, Debbie Patterson, Linda Stevenson and Jane Willis. All nine are first-year students.

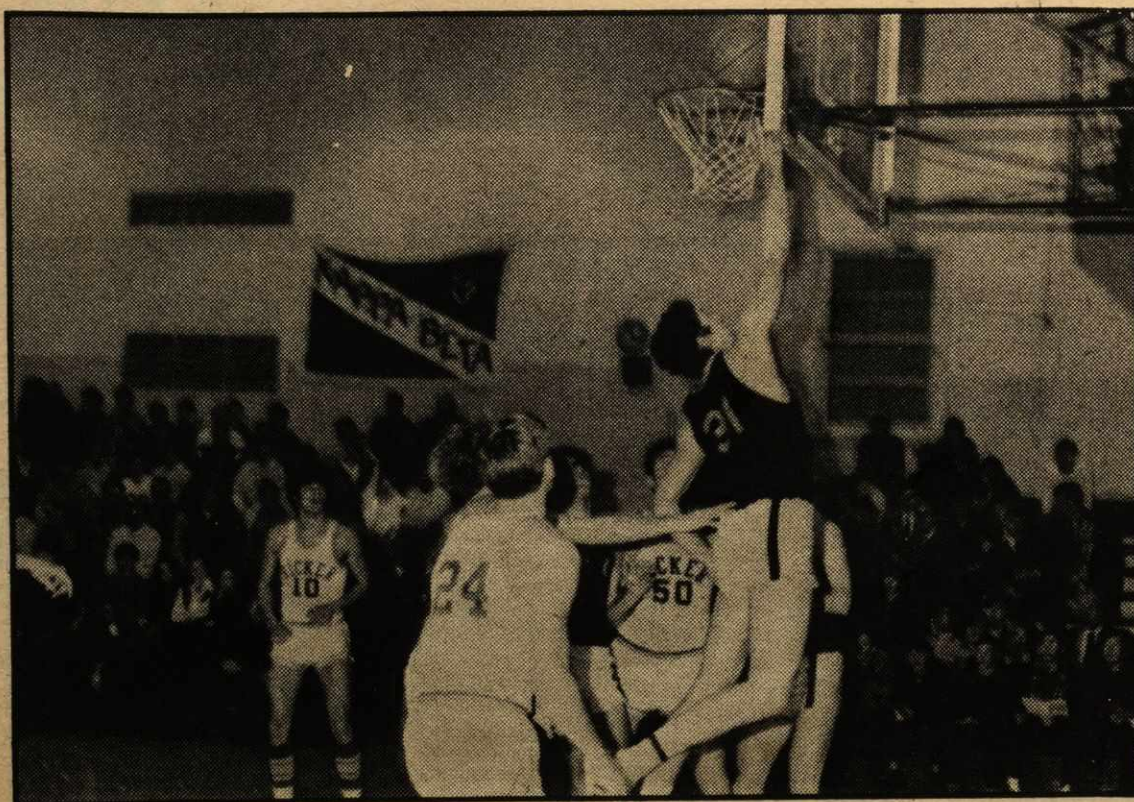
Other key people on the team are

Vicky Jeans, team manager, and Barbie Wilcox, team statistician. The coach is Miss Carolyn Jack.

The team meets their first inter- varsity competition when Acadia visits here for a game January 17. Other inter- varsity games are scheduled for January and February, but the highlight of the season will be February 27 and 28 when the team

travels to Acadia for the Women's Junior Varsity sectional tournament.

The winners of this tourney will meet the winners of a similar tournament in New Brunswick for the championship March 6 and 7 at King's College. Naturally, this Dalhousie ball club has its sights set for those championships in March.



Dal Water Polo Club Meets Polar Bears

On Saturday January 17, the Dal Water Polo Club will meet the C.F.B. Polar Bears in a game at 5:30 p.m. at the Stadacona pool. Last year the Dal team walked off with the top honours from the Nova Scotia provincial championships and hope to do so again this year.

The club is practicing at the Centennial Pool from 6 to 7 on Tuesdays and Thursdays under the direction of Mr. John Salmond, one of our Summer Games representatives.

The chief aim of this club is to

stimulate interest in this sport in the local area and in other Maritime universities. Unlike Dalhousie, these other universities are now practically all endowed with magnificent pool facilities and the establishment of active teams should present few problems.

At the moment the Dal Club needs about four more players and competent swimmers wishing to learn more about the game are urged to come to the Centennial Pool during practice hours.