Black Bears prospects good for upcoming contests

In wrestling tournaments on the ast two weekends UNB's wrestng team the Black Bears, came second twice to the Dalhousie University Tigers

Wilmot United Church, Feb. 9

1 a.m. NEW LIVES FOR OLD

7 p.m. TRI-FOCAL LENSES

The tournament two weeks ago was the Universite de Moncton Invitational Tournament, while last weekend's was the Saint Francais Xavier Invitational. This weekend the AUAA championships are to be held in Wolfville, N.S. at Acadia University. The team came up with a

stronger effort last weekend as they only lost to Dalhousie by one point whereas the previous weekend they lost by seven points. When the team goes to the mats on Saturday they will be looking for their third AUAA championship in a row. In their previous two championships. Memorial University placed second but they are not expected to be UNB's main competition as they expect it will come from the Dal Tigers.

There are twelve weight classes in the competition this year; up from ten last year. UNB's main strength is in the middle weight classes as Mike Ballak, Phil and Greg Knox have dominated the 142, 150, and 158 lb. classes all season long and are expected to pick up wins for the Black Bears in the finals this weekend.

In 134 Dave Niles has been a consistent second to his opponent Carter from Dalhousie, who has been able to dominate him all year.

Dave is looking forward to his final match with him in the hopes

final match with him in the hopes that he can knock him off and pick up the victory.

In 167 lb. class Ric Cuthberson has just returned after being off all season with an injury. Last weekend he picked up a second place finish in his first time out. With the added practises this week he could pick up a first as he has lots of experience.

In the 126 lb. class Jim Rand was expected to have a chance to win it all this year as he has finished in second place the past two years, but he came up with a ligament injury and will miss the finals. He is being replaced by Peter Bork who is a good wrestler in his own right and he, too, has a chance to win the weight class.

He had come out for the team last year and was impressive then, but he didn't continue wrestling all season. Peter, in his first tournament, picked up a third place finish and had to lose a lot of weight to get down to the weight

class. With an additional week of wrestling he should be in better shape, and not be weak from having to lose a lot of weight, and pick up a win.

In the 118 lb. class UNB has had a consistent second placer in Peter Boutlier. In his first season for the Black Bears Peter should have a good future with the team and could possibly win his division.

The 177 lb. class has been one of the weak points on the team this year, after many years of strength. At the beginning of the year it was expected that Kim McPherson would fill that class, but he has been wrestling at 190 lb. as nobody had been found for that class. That gap has been filled by Rod Bell who picked up a third place finish this past weekend and is expected to do alot better as last week was his first week wrestling ever. Kim was not wrestling last weekend due to injuries, but will be wrestling in 177 lb. class at Acadia.

In the heavy weights there are two weight classes, under 220 lbs. and heavy weight. In the heavy weight class Al Norman has been able to pick up a first and a third in two tries and could pick up a win at the championships. Black Bear coach Jim Born had hoped to pick up an additional wrestler for the heavy weight classes to complement Al Norman, but couldn't recruit one in time.

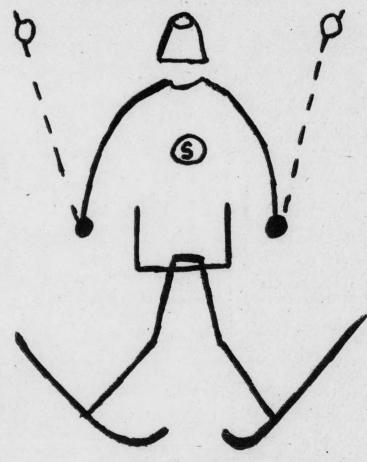
Slowly the team is putting it all together as in past meets this year they have been plagued by injuries and inexperience in some important areas although the team has had some exceptionally strong points to keep them respectable in all the meets they have been in this year. In an interview coach Jim Born said "Everybody is going to have to wrestle 110 percent and all are going to have to pick up points. Dalhousie are going to be tough, but we can take it again. The team has come too far to lose it now."

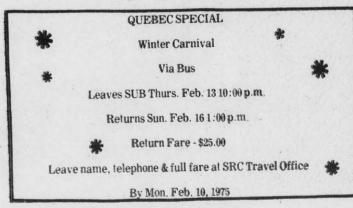
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