

SPORTS

Two baskets short of a load

by Kevin Barrett

With a 1-3 win loss record in league play, you would think the Dalhousie Mens Basketball team would be in a somewhat downcast mood as they prepare to open the second half of their AUAA schedule. However the team has very much to be enthusiastic about, especially after their performance in the 4th annual Coca-Cola Beaver Foods Basketball tournament played at the Dalplex, last week-

end. The Tigers played their best ball of the season as they reached the finals of the tournament before succumbing to the SMU Huskies in a 88-84 nailbiting final.

The tournament, featuring some of the top teams in the country, is quickly becoming one of the top competitions in the country, possibly only ranking behind the CIAU's in quality. The Tigers showed that they did indeed belong as they defeated the Waterloo Warriors and number 1 ranked

Concordia Stingers before losing to SMU.

Keith Donovan (22.3 ppg) and Dean Thibodeau (23.3 ppg) once again lead the young Dalhousie squad throughout the tournament and both were rewarded by coping berths on the tournament all star team. They were very important to the success of the Tigers but the contributions of all the players was the real reason for Dal's top calibre of play. David Paquette had his shooting form from outside and Shawn Mantley showed a great deal of composure in running the half-court offense of Dal.

Against Waterloo, the Tigers took advantage of the lack of height and bench to dominate the game on the boards. The long trip to Halifax seemed to take full effect on the Warriors in the second half as Dal seemed to grab every rebound and get every loose ball. Thibodeau lead the way by blocking several shots, gobbling up numerous rebounds, and smashing down two impressive dunks in leading the Tigers to the easy win.

Things were not as simple against Concordia as Dal raced to an early lead of 31-19 and although they led by as much as 73-42 they could not put the Stingers away because of foul trouble. With ten Minutes left in the game Thibodeau and Donovan were both on the bench with four fouls and Concordia made a great run but ran out of time as Dal won 105-102.

In the final against SMU, the Tigers would not be as fortunate with the foul problems that plagued them throughout the tourney. The game seesawed back and forth but when Donovan got his forth foul early in the second half, the Dal offense sputtered and never fully recovered. In the end, a late 8-2 run by SMU, keyed by MVP William Njoku was the difference in the score.

Dal returns to AUAA action this weekend in PEI as they take their misleading 1-3 record against the UPEI Panthers who looked anything but a first place team in the Dalhousie tourney.

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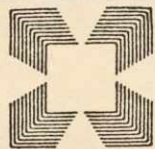
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