

sports

Columnist says

Referees should remember their place

It's the ref's fault!

How many times have we heard these words uttered by an embittered athlete? Often the officials are the scapegoats for disappointing defeats, but are they ever really to blame? Probably not, but that doesn't mean they always do a good job.

I will be the first to admit that sports officials have an extremely difficult job to do. I have officiated baseball, basketball, hockey and volleyball and I assure you that is anything but easy. But officials must learn that the fans are there to watch the players and not them.

Someone once said that if you don't notice the referee, he (or she) must have done a good job. For some reason, officials have taken it upon themselves to play a more prominent role in today's sports.

Unfortunately the AUAA has not been unaffected by this phenomenon.

The refereeing at last Wednesday's Dal-St. Mary's hockey game was simply dreadful. many calls were missed and some were made that left the crowd shaking their heads.

Let me back up my statement by saying that the officiating was not the reason the Tigers lost. They were simply outplayed in the first two periods. A valiant comeback fell about two minutes short. Bad calls were spread evenly between the Tigers and the Huskies.

Not only does poor officiating affect the players and the game, it affects the fans. There was an estimated crowd of 1,500 at the game and the atmosphere was like a Sunday afternoon in the Killam Library. The clutching and grabbing slowed the game down and it seemed more like a rugby match than a hockey game

between two very good teams. Every time a play seemed to be developing someone got dragged down. Fans never really seemed able to get into the game.

I have never seen a game where so many players were lying down on the ice at the same time. Most of the time there was no call on the ref. Then, all of a sudden, he would call three or four penalties in five minutes. Maybe he wanted to make sure no one forgot he was there? He certainly succeeded.

There was absolutely no consistency to the officiating. This is a phenomenon that has become all too common in sports. For some reason officials want to put on a show of their own. They want people to notice them. Maybe they wanted to be on TV or in the newspaper? Well they succeeded, sort of.

Devin Maxwell

Huskies' sled runs over Tigers

by Joe O'Connor

"Not a lot to say today. Just about everything that could go wrong... did."

The words of Dalhousie Men's basketball coach Bev Greenlaw are a fitting epitaph for a disappointing weekend which saw the Tigers drop two

games. As a student, and a fan, it is difficult to confront the negative when evaluating the performance of the 'home' team.

However, the team I watched this past Sunday appeared to play as sheep in Tiger's clothing, a far cry from the boisterous squad which just last week

served defeat to the defending national champions St. FX. To make matters worse the 89-62 drubbing came at the hands of our cross-town rivals the Saint Mary's Huskies.

The game itself was essentially over after the first ten minutes as the Huskies burst from the gates and built a 26-10 lead. Our Tigers seemed tentative, content to spectate rather than participate. When opportunities presented themselves, passes were missed, and shots fell short.

It is impossible to speak of this contest without acknowledging the dominating presence that Saint Mary's center William Njoku brings to the court. His imposing 6'9" frame controlled the offensive boards. This talent coupled with a delicate scoring touch allowed the Huskies star to sting the Tigers for 25 points, shooting 12 of 14 from the field.

The power and depth of the Huskies bench embarrassed the listless Tigers. Yet concealed beneath the weight of Saint Mary's 89 points, were a few individual performances that provide hope amidst such misery.

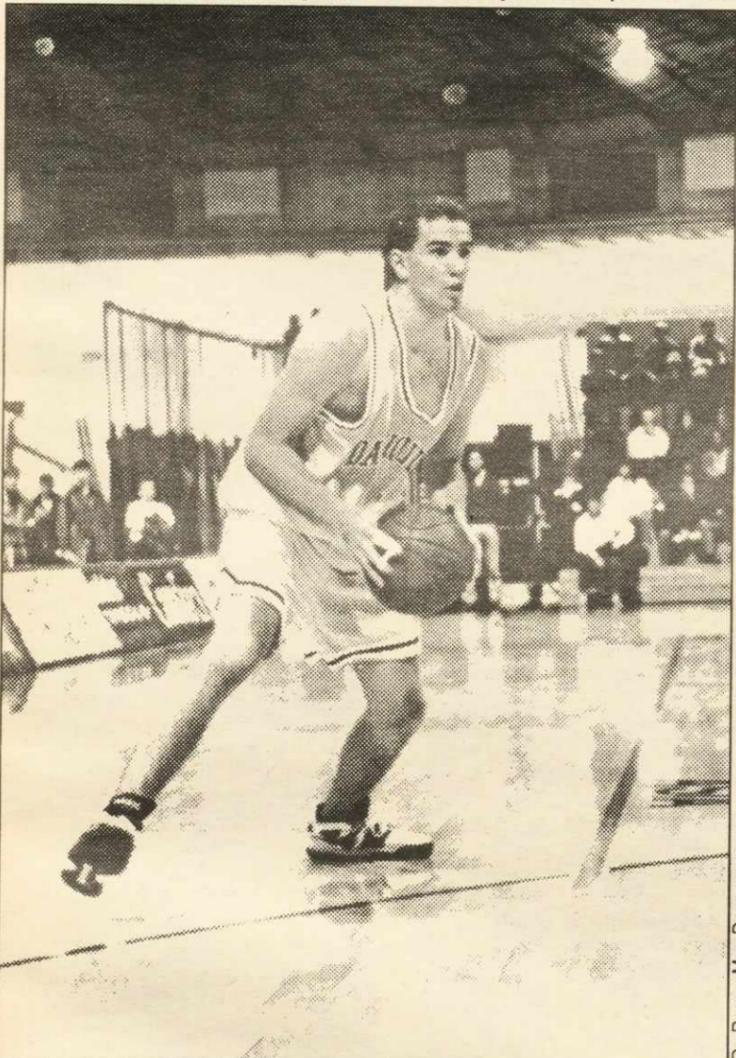
Forward Shawn Plancke ran the floor well contributing a team high 25 points. Jeff Mayo chipped in for 14, and when pressed, veteran Gary Blair played some very tough defense.

Friday night in Charlottetown, the Tigers fell just short as the UPEI Panthers defeated them 85-80.

Shawn Mantley led Dal with 23 points while Plancke added 22. Mayo contributed 18 points.

All in all the season is young and the memory of early losses is soon to be replaced with visions of sugarpl..... Anyway, most nights this fresh, exciting team comes to play.

Due to deadline Wednesday night's home game against Acadia was unavailable. It was the last game before the Christmas break.



DAL PHOTO: MIKE DEVONPORT

Jeff Mayo, shown here in action against St. F.X., scored 14 points in the Tigers' loss Sunday to Saint Mary's. Shawn Plancke led the Tigers with 25 points.

V'ball Tigers sweep Memorial

by Frank MacEachern

Chris Schwarz is a killer on the volleyball court.

The Dal Tiger led his team with 32 kills in a pair of matches against the Memorial University Seahawks last weekend.

Even though the Tigers recorded back to back 3-0, 3-0 wins against the Newfoundland team the third-year Kinesiology player said it wasn't the team's best effort.

"We didn't play up to our poten-

tial," he said Wednesday.

Sunday the Tigers won 15-8, 15-12 and 16-14 while Saturday they won 15-9, 15-10 and 15-4.

The men host UNB in a pair of matches this weekend. Saturday they meet at 7 pm while Sunday the game is at 1 pm. It is the last games before the Christmas Break.

The women's team were busy at a weekend tournament at the University of Moncton.

Unfortunately after finishing second in their poll they were bounced

from the tourney in the quarterfinals by UNB, 15-5, 15-8 and 15-11.

In their pool Dal beat Acadia, St. F.X. and Mount Allison but lost to the eventual tournament winner Laval.

Interestingly the two teams that Dal lost to were the tournament finalists.

The tournament was the last games the team will play before the Christmas break. Coach Leslie Irie says the squad has some work to do to improve in the second part of the season.

"(There's) not one area, I'd say several areas we need to work on."

Merry Christmas all you sports fans!



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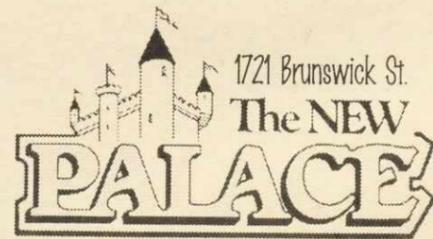
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