

## Lady Gaiters bite York attack, win Tait Classic

By ELISSA S. FREEMAN

In order to win last Sunday's Tait McKenzie Classic basketball final against Bishop's Lady Gaiters, the York Yeowomen had to overcome one very big obstacle—188cm (62) Lady Gaiter Andrea Blackwell.

Blackwell, accompanied by fellow National team members 185cm (61) forward Wendy Verrachia and versatile 173cm (58) guard Lynn Polson, led Bishop's to their second consecutive Classic gold medal defeating York 81-46.

Bronze medal action saw the McGill Martlets squeak by U of T 65-63.

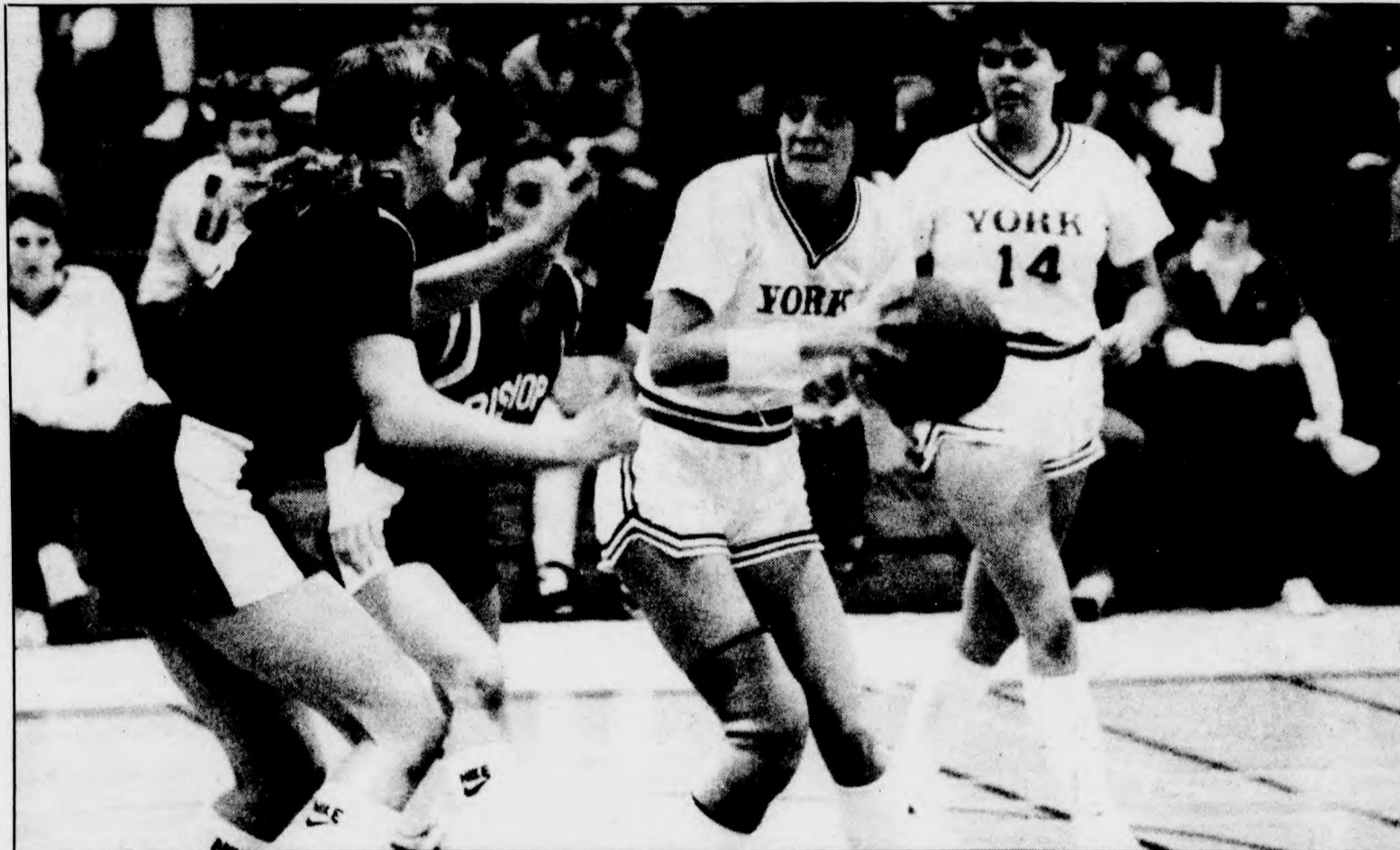
The Yeowomen's impressive play throughout the tournament was displayed in early round matches. In the first round, York downed McMaster 72-64 as veteran Nancy Harrison basketed 29 points.

During their 77-54 defeat of McGill, York played with incredible intensity out-passing, out-rebounding, and out-shooting the hapless Martlets. Ontario all-star guard Kim Holden, along with the 183cm (6) Harrison, dominated the game as their accurate outside shooting continually frustrated McGill's defense.

The one bright spot for McGill was the five-year veteran Annie Constantinides. The pint-size 160cm (53) guard dazzled the crowd with a pocket full of ball-handling skills that often fooled her opponents.

However, against Bishop's, last year's Canadian Interuniversity Athletic Union's (CIAU) champions, York faced an entirely different calibre of play.

"If you look at the all-Canadian stats over the past couple of years, you'll see Bishop's way up on such things as blocked shots and points for and against," said York coach



Mancy Harrison and Mary Ann Clark look to penetrate at the Tait McKenzie Basketball Classic.

Frances Flint. "The size they bring into the game is worth 20 points alone.

Throughout the opening minutes of the gold medal game, the Yeowomen were able to match the rigorous pace set by the Lady Gaiters. Harrison, who was assigned to shadow Blackwell, took quite a beating under the basket trying to manoeuvre around the imposing centre. But the third-year veteran

was not to be intimidated as she often managed to grab stray rebounds and shoot over Blackwell's outstretched arms.

York stayed within two points of the score until the 13-minute mark when Bishop's began to pull away taking the lead 19-12. From then on it was all Bishop's.

Time and time again Bishop's came up with the big plays as all-star guard Polson fed the ball to the

towering tandem of Blackwell and Verrachia—both of whom rarely missed their mark. Blackwell ended up with 32 points and Verrachia with 15. Polson, who is also known for her shooting ability, netted 16 points.

"They have in Andrea Blackwell, probably the best university basketball player in the country," said Flint. "Polson directs their game,

but Blackwell makes them the dominant force they are. She virtually owned the boards all tournament long."

York used the same game plan of shooting from outside the key that worked against McGill. However, this strategy soon became a result of their inability to cope with Bishop's aggressive man-to-man defence, which prevented the York offense from driving inside to the basket.



The Yeomen suffered a pair of weekend losses but remain in the playoff picture.

## Pair of losses sting York

The York Yeomen hockey team took a pair of losses on their collective chin when the Laurentian Voyagers swept 9-2 and 7-3 victories last weekend at the ice-palace.

The back-to-back losses leave York hovering in the middle of the pack in the Ontario University Athletic Association's (OUAA) standings with a sixth place 6-7 record to date.

Meanwhile, the Voyagers jumped into second place with a 6-3-3 record, seven points behind the front running and still undefeated U of T Blues.

Only the top six teams in the 13-team league will earn a berth in the playoffs.

"It was a particularly bad time to come up with a pair of losing efforts," coach Bob Hedley said. "we've been looking to make a jump in the standings with so many teams grouped so closely together. But you can't make any moves without any points."

"On the other hand, we're still in the thick of things. It would be nice to wind the year down on a winning note, but there are

still 11 games left in the new year. We can still come out looking to finish well within the top five with a good second half."

To get back on a winning track, and more importantly, the establishment of a top five finish which carries a home ice advantage into the playoffs, the Yeomen have to halt their current slide in which they've won one game in the past five.

Dating back to the November 22 loss to U of T, the Yeomen have surrendered 28 goals against while suffering a lack of goal production—they've managed only 16 goals for in the five-game stretch.

In their eight games preceding the five-game tailspin, York allowed 14 goals against while totalling 41 goals in the for department to kick their record up to 5-3.

"You don't like to see things like a slump happen," Hedley said. "It's definitely hurt us as far as the standings are concerned. But things like that come and go. There is still a lot of time to turn things around."

## Hoopsters hunt for hardware

By MARK ZWOLINSKI

The Basketball Yeomen consider themselves to be on a team sojourn that they hope will end with a conquest of the OUAA and CIAU championships.

While York holds down the nation's current number-six ranking, they point their fingers to the new year, more precisely to the month of March when the provincial and national titles go up for grabs.

The Yeomen name has been practically synonymous with Ontario University titles—they've won it more times (eight) than any other university and that includes their latest string of OUAA crowns from 1979 to 1981—but they've never had the austere pleasure of sipping champagne from a national championship cup.

"There's no doubt we could have done it last year and we do have a team that is very, very capable this year," says coach Bob Bain, who watch his team take a 111-75 drubbing from the reigning Canadian club champion Estonia. "The Estonia game showed us that we have to keep up a certain high level of intensity. We weren't very intense Tuesday night, especially on defense. If we don't make that commitment then we're going to experience problems."

"What we want to do is go undefeated in league play and regain the Ontario championship. That much we are confident of. To make it to the final four will be a real dogfight. The CIAU's... well we have limitations there. Right now, Victoria is playing above everyone else's head. We don't have the size, experience, or skill they can put on the floor at any one time. We believe though, that with a concerted effort, we can win. The commitment has to be there. It's as simple as that."

Bain, who returns to the head coaching job after a year's sabbatical, inherits a team whose pitch for national glory rests in the hands of five returning starters who have been justly garnered, in one short year of playing together as a unit, the most balanced quintet in the league.

Their credentials together are expansive, having woven three tournament victories and a

13-1 league record last year with last weekend's Concordia "tip-off" crown and a perfect 3-0 record in league play this year.

There is just one small detail that has to do with winning the "big" game—the Yeomen haven't done it for the past two years now.

Last year it was a one-point 66-65 loss to arch-rival Waterloo in the league championship final.

This year it came with yet another one-point 84-83 loss to the Brock Badgers in the Brock tourney last November.

"We have to fire with all five cylinders so to speak," says Bain. "Basketball is the type of game where you don't overpower any one team night after night. We aren't an overpowering team. There are going to be games where things won't work. Hey, if one shot goes in at the league final they win the whole thing. Things like that happen."

Tuesday's dredging from Estonia resurfaced the haunts from games past.

Estonia boast a couple of names from York's illustrious past, namely Dave Coulthard and Bo Pelec who were largely responsible for notching OUAA crowns number six through eight into the Tait trophy alcoves.

But graduation claimed those two and other York stars from the championship days, leaving this year's starting five with some rather large shoes to fill.

With the ex-red and whites having a little fun at the expense of their contemporaries. The one-point losses and the subsequent fall-out from the CIAU's east regionals in New Brunswick last year were reverberated in harmony with the report that the new Yeomen are a Coulthardless team—how would they win without him?

"The starting five realize they have to play as a unit," says Bain. "We don't have a Coulthard or a Pelec, players who can pick up the slack when the others are flat. We can't afford to be flat. I think that the whole team has played enough to understand what the championship road looks like, though. They're certainly capable. They just have to go out and prove it."