

90 Years of UNB Hockey



Varsity hockey at UNB celebrates its 90th season this year. Since UNB's first City League game in January 1902, when "the Red and Black" defeated a team of local bank employees 2-1, UNB hockey has altered and expanded as much as the University itself. From the era when "home ice" was a flooded field borrowed from the local garrison and the players, not a Zamboni, cleared the ice; when the team captain doubled as coach and the 7-man starting line-up ("every man in College capable of putting on a sweater") was the entire team—UNB hockey has evolved from January/February weekend recreation (weather permitting) into the Red Devils' present 26-game regular-season schedule.

UNB has been a part of Maritime intercollegiate hockey competition since MIHL's inception: the first varsity league game (January 1906) saw UNB defeat Mount Allison 3-2. In the 84 years since then—as the MIHL evolved from the original 4 teams (Mt. A, Dal, St.FX and UNB) into the AUAA's 10-team league—UNB has missed only 2 years: 1912, when hockey was dropped at Mount Allison and Acadia also, and 1919, owing to Closure of Fredericton's Arctic Rink.

These apart, and despite the effects of the World Wars enrollments declined, Officer Training claimed many would be players, and travel was severely curtailed—UNB continued to compete (sometimes in more than one league) every year

In 1911 the team acquired its first paid coach Sandy Staples. This development was funded by the Class of '10, thus initiating a solid tradition of Alumni support for UNB's hockey program which has continued to the present. Since Staples guided his 10-man team to the 1911 New Brunswick League Championship, 19 others have succeeded him as coach. Four men in particular marked notable eras in UNB varsity hockey.

Throughout Fred MacLean's tenure (1921-30 and 1933-37), UNB had no rink of its own, and had to compete with other city teams for ice-time. Nonetheless, despite the lack of facilities, despite enrollments and athletic levies lowered by the Depression, UNB became permanent holder of the Sumner Cup in 1928; won the MIAU title in 1934; and were NB Intercollegiate Champions in '36.

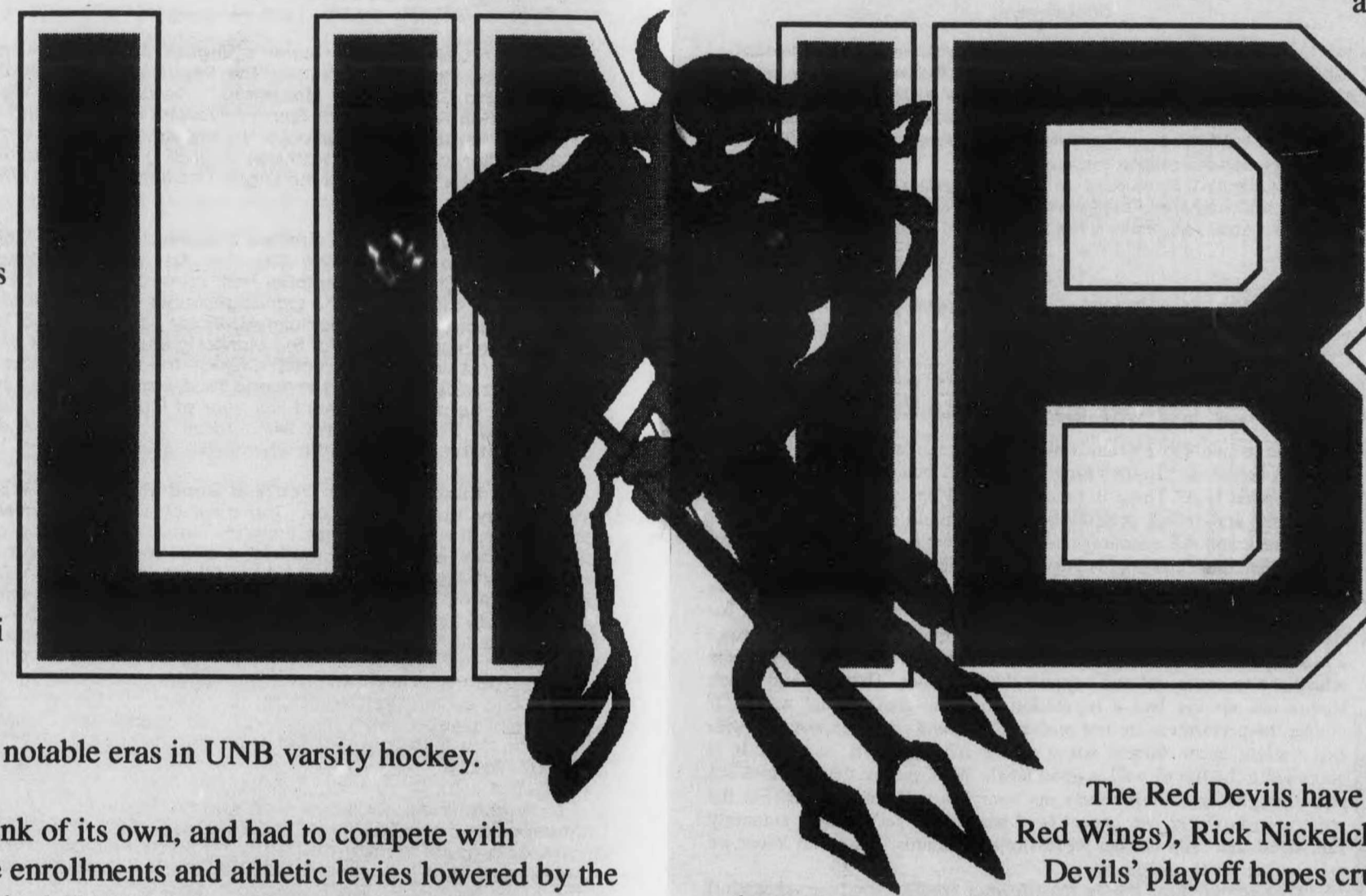
Former NHLer Pete Kelly's 20 years behind the UNB bench coincided with major developments in UNB Athletics in general and hockey in particular. Kelly was also Director of Athletics — a measure of the increasing importance of hockey on campus despite the relative weakness of the war years. His emphasis on conditioning underlined the inadequacy of existing facilities, more critical than ever now that most of UNB's varsity opponents enjoyed artificial ice. In his first year, 1948, the student body voted overwhelmingly to dedicate funds provided by Lord Beaverbrook to the construction of an indoor arena. In 1950, UNB's varsity team moved into the newly completed Lady Beaverbrook Rink with a new name: the appearance of the "Red Devils", who won MIAU titles in '60, '62 and '64, inaugurated the modern era in UNB hockey.

Bill MacGillivray, captain of the MIAU-winning team of '62, succeeded Kelly as coach in 1967. While the next decade saw a number of play-offs but no titles, future prosperity was nonetheless preparing. UNB's "building boom" was in full swing: in 1976, the Red Devils abandoned the Lady Beaverbrook Rink to the Saint Thomas Tommies (rivals relocated from Chatham in 1964) and moved up the hill to the new Aitken University Centre a change no less momentous than the shift to the L.B.R. from the outdoor College Rink of the 1940's.

And as Kelly was succeeded by his protege, so MacGillivray in his turn coached Don McAdam. Player for three seasons (1970/71 to 1972/73), then coach 1977-85, McAdam took the 1983/84 Red Devils to an AUAA title, their first in 20 years.

The Red Devils have had coaches since 1985: Doug MacLean (now co-coach of the Detroit Red Wings), Rick Nickelchok, and current coach Mike Johnston, whose second season at UNB saw the Devils' playoff hopes crushed in a triple-overtime loss to UdeM in the longest-running game in AUAA history.

Layout and design by Eric Drummie, special thanks to Kwame Dawes of the Brunswickan, Mike Johnston, the UNB Hockey program, Bill Traer, and UNB Athletic Department



UNB Hockey ... More than a Hockey Team

The UNB hockey program is more than a Varsity Hockey team that plays for six months of the year it is a fully integrated organization that works all year-round. There is fund raising through the Friends of the Red Devils, summer recruitment, and in the summer the UNB Red Devils Summer Hockey School.

The Friends of the Red Devils was formally structured in 1990 and after one year has received strong support from alumni to continue with our work. The purpose of this group is to encourage the continued friendship of Red Devils Alumni, to involve other Red Devils supporters, and to assist the hockey program in every way possible.

The UNB Hockey School offers the best in instruction, experience, and facilities. The staff devote as much care and attention to instilling basic skills in beginner as to helping more advanced player development. The UNB hockey school is staffed with professional coaches and teachers whose backgrounds include NHL, European hockey, University, Major Junior, High School and all levels of minor hockey. This combination of experience and facilities make the UNB Hockey school another valuable facet of the UNB Hockey Program.

Mark Jeffrey Memorial Game

In early August, Mark Jeffrey died after coming in contact with live electrical wires while cutting down a tree outside his in-law's place in Montreal.

Mark will be remembered the most as the driving force behind the 1983/84 AUAA championship. He continued to be involved with the UNB Hockey program after completing his academic career as a volunteer coach. Mark used to say "I want to give back to the program because I got a lot out of it".

On November 22, 1991 the Friends of the Red Devils, with assistance from Varsity-Mania, are honoring the memory of Mark Jeffrey with a memorial game. The proceeds raised through this game will go to the Mark Jeffrey Memorial Scholarship Fund.

"He lived and breathed the Red Devils hockey program and he would do anything for the team when he was a player and when he was a coach".
Mike Johnston, UNB Red Devils Coach



Mark's #17 jersey is to be retired on Nov. 22

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83/84



Photo by Bill Traer

The above picture was taken in a game against Acadia in the 1983/84 AUAA play-off's. UNB would go on to claim the AUAA title and advance to the Semi-finals of the Nationals. The Semi-finals were a two game total goals against U of Toronto, played at UNB. UNB came up short, losing both games. Toronto would go on to win the National Title.