

Sports editorial: Pros at the Olympics

by Bruce Denis

Last Monday night I had the good fortune of chatting with Olympic rower Don Dickison at the lecture on Pierre de Coubertin and the modern Olympics. Dickison has been with the national rowing team for two and a half years and managed a 7th place in the doubles competition in Barcelona. I had originally intended to write this editorial on the evils of allowing professional athletes compete at the games. However, Dickison helped me see the other side of the coin. Admittedly, he doesn't compete in a sport endangered by professional ranks, but I think Dickison was arguing more as an athlete than as a rower.

When Coubertin began the games in 1896 he believed that there was no place for the professional athlete. A sport was to be competed for the sports sake. Professionals were not allowed in the games because they competed solely for monetary gain. After Coubertin died in 1937, the games began its metamorphosis from amateur to semi-pro to professional. The few sports that remain restricted to amateurs (such as cycling and soccer) are in jeopardy pending a decision by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) whether to allow professionals or not. My concern, as a competitive cyclist, is that should the IOC allow professionals in the olympic cycling events, where does that leave the amateur riders who have lived with paltry wages and trained so hard to race in the games? If the olympic games are for the same heroes who ride the Tour de France, how will aspiring young Canadians find the motivation to train for the national amateur team. To me, the olympics have been something just within reach.

To Don Dickison, the olympics should pit the best athletes in the world against each other. "My goal as an athlete is to compete against the best. That is the nature of Sport. This is lost in the ideals of Coubertin and amateurism." He says while single handedly shooting me down from the sky. Maybe, as merely a good amateur, I don't deserve to compete in the olympics. Dickison believes the olympics should be a veritable quadrennial world sporting championship, and admittedly, my blood rushes at the very thought.

He says "The whole ideal of amateurism and professionalism is rooted in the spectator. Athletes don't undergo any changes when they sign a professional contract. Let's get rid of the notion of amateurism and make it an open field." Does that make me a professional? No, it makes me a spectator in Atlanta. Not to say I would have ridden the olympic road race, but like every aspiring amateur, I like to dream that I might.

By opening the race to professionals, my dreams are shattered. But the games will probably be better off anyway. To be honest, the public would probably rather watch Greg LeMond and Steve Bauer than Bruce Denis and Ian Starke.

Perhaps a large reason professionals are able to dominate their respective sports is an affluence in sponsorship and salary. Particularly in cycling, a racer can spend over \$10,000 a season on state of the art equipment alone and travel expenses can exceed a similar amount. I struggle through the season with a sorry excuse for a racing bicycle and spend all my hard earned student loans on travel expenses. I bet Greg LeMond doesn't get the paddle from his parents when he heads to Belgium to begin racing every Spring (maybe that's why he can sit on his bike for seven hours and I can't).

I believe athletes who are better funded can afford to be better focused and hence become better athletes. Dickison does not. "Inevitably it's still a competition between two athletes, regardless of how much your opponent is being paid. Those who say 'It's not fair, they have more money to work with' are left in the dirt. It's not a valid excuse." Once again your faithful hard working amateur is shot into the ground. Dickison continues "Too much emotion is getting caught up in it. Ultimately it doesn't come down to dollars and cents, it comes down to the athlete." A very good point, but one which leaves me scrambling for a life preserver to save my olympic aspirations.

Evidently, Don Dickison is a realist, but he's also an olympic athlete. I, unfortunately, am a dreamer, and a strictly amateur athlete. It hurts to see so many athletes denied the opportunity to compete in what is ultimately the pinnacle of sport: the Olympics. Conversely, it's a well deserved privilege that at the end of the olympic coxless doubles rowing competition Don Dickison was able to say to himself "I am seventh best in the world." A privilege I and 130 other cyclists would have been denied at Barcelona. In Dickison's words "It all comes down to being the best in the world." And maybe in four years he will be.

This week's trivia question: No less than four veteran NHL teams have hit the ice this season with new uniforms. Name the teams.

Last week's answer: Gary Carter played for the Montreal Expos, New York Mets, San Francisco Giants and L.A. Dodgers.

NOTE: The Brunswickan Sports department, particularly Frank Denis, would like to wish Neil Unsworth and the Boston Bruins the best of luck in the up coming season.

Campus recreation

Serving the campus community

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Exercise Bikes Monark 817

Two exercise bikes are available for UNB/STU students and Recreation members. The bikes are located on the second floor in the L.B. Gym, near the squash courts. Instructions for use are posted.

Tennis Courts

Four tennis courts located above Tibbits Hall are available on a first-come, first-serve basis only. Reservations for individuals are only accepted during the summer, however, groups can book the courts 24 hours in advance by contacting the Equipment and Facilities Manager at 453-4579 during office hours.

INTRAMURAL SPORTS

\$\$ LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY \$\$

Referees are wanted for the following sports:

Touch Football	Soccer	Softball
Ice Hockey	Basketball	Volleyball
Floor Hockey	Waterpolo	

Some experience is preferred, training also provided. Please come to the Recreation office and complete and application if you are interested.

Co-ed Softball

There was a Co-Ed Softball Tournament this past weekend involving 12 teams, held at the Queen Square diamonds. There was stiff competition in the preliminary round of play on Saturday with division winners, Huskies, Social Club, MacKenzie, and Lady Dunn/ Neville. In the semi-finals on Sunday the Harrison Huskies defeated Dunn/Neville 13-4. The Social Club closely defeated the boisterous MacKenzie team who had more fun than anyone else. In the Championship game the Social Club crowd entertained the spectators while defeating the Huskies 7-2. Congratulations go out to the Social Club for their representation and thanks to all the teams who participated.

Ladder Tournaments

Individuals are invited to register for the squash or racquetball ladder tournaments. Registration begins September 28. Individuals challenge each other throughout the semester with a winner declared in December.

Co Ed Innertube Waterpolo

Registration for Innertube waterpolo has begun! Be sure that you don't miss out on your opportunity to have loads of fun in this exciting and entertaining sport. The registration deadline is Wednesday Oct. 14 and registration is limited so get your team in early. For more information drop into the Recreation office at the L.B. Gym or call the office at 453-4579.

CIAU top ten

Football

1. St. Mary's
2. Bishop's
3. Toronto
4. Wilfrid Laurier
5. UBC
6. Calgary
7. Queen's
8. Western
9. Guelph
10. Mt. Allison

Soccer (M)

1. Laurentian
2. UBC

3. Victoria

4. Dalhousie
5. Alberta
6. UQTR
7. McGill
8. Sherbrooke
9. UNB
10. Carleton

Cross Country (W)

1. Western
2. UBC
3. Toronto
4. Queen's
5. Dalhousie

6. Calgary

7. Guelph
8. Victoria
9. Windsor
10. Manitoba

Field hockey

1. Victoria
2. UBC
3. Toronto
4. Tie UNB
Alberta
York
7. Manitoba
8. Guelph
9. Queen's
10. Calgary

UNB Rowing takes to the water

- UNB hostes first Atlantic regional Championships

by Umas Forsythe

Last Saturday the UNB Rowing Club, with entrants from around the Maritimes, hosted the inaugural Canadian Inter-university Regional Championships.

The day started early with rain, but the sun shone through before the day was done, shining brightest for the host team. Both of the varsity eights crews won their

For the men's team Ed

Winchester, Peter Bance, Don Dickison, Duane Dunfield, Jamie Cleveland, Sean Moore, David Gentlemen, Kevin McDonnell, and Tanya Gillis (cox). The women's team was

made up of Stacey Graham, Lisa Murphy, Jo-Anne Harvey, Krista Jackson, Jennifer Skaling, Laura Swift, Liz Cootes, Tamara Shaefer, and

Stacey White (cox).

The UNB team had two other successes on the day. The first was the novice men's eight winning a close race by 5 seconds over both DAL boats and the lightweight men's cox four.

The team is continuing its training this week preparing for the Head of the Connecticut races, taking place this weekend.