

## SPORTS

## Men's soccer hope to clinch Holy Grail

BY ANGEL FIGUEROA

One more victory rounded up the last of the league games for Dalhousie men's soccer — a 2-1 defeat of Saint Francis Xavier, on Saturday October 26. This culminated 11 games in eight weeks in which Dal has had its best season in more than a decade, even surpassing the achievement of last year's seminal record under Tiger soccer-guru Tony Richards. Having gone 7-1-3 this year, with an incredible goals average of 27 for and 6 against, the team has hovered in the CIAU top-five all year, like a stalking predator about to devour its prey.

## Do the job...

But truly, enough of petty nostalgia. Ask anyone on the team, and they'll tell you that the real season is only about to begin. Having qualified for the play-offs four games ago, the Tigers have not only fulfilled this year's primary goal of coach Ian Kent. They have also set a standard that only needs to be ultimately fulfilled, as they resume a quest for an Atlantic championship that has evaded Dalhousie's trophy case for 14 years. The Holy Grail lies unassuming and waiting on the soccer pitch in Fredericton, at the University of New Brunswick, and the claimant will hoist it's grace at the culmination of this weekend's AUAA play-offs.

Scrawled in thick strokes on the chalkboard of Dal's meeting room are seven dire letters: R-E-V-E-N-G-E. Such are the sentiments of a team who were robbed of the title crown this time last year, when they lost to Mount Allison in a 2-1 nail-biting final. Fittingly, Mt Allison is first on the list for the semi-final match on Saturday,

while U.N.B. will play Acadia. All on the team are pleased with this fatal "arrangement," and the coach can't help but recognize the incredible hunger that is evident with every player on the squad.

"Everyone is pumped and ready to perform," Kent said, who is never one to look ahead with predictions. "I am sure we will prevail. Everyone is healthy, and we have greatly improved since our last meetings [with Mt. Allison and U.N.B.]"

Kent is referring to the fact that injuries had plagued them during the last encounter with both teams, as they were hampered by the absence of Craig Janc and the below-parabilities of Neil Sedgwick, Andy Wheeler, Tim Hall, and Adrian Ibbettson, who are all paramount assets of the team's formidable power. Still, Dal drew them both 1-1.

"Simply put, we are the best team coming into this final round — our record and stats show that. We have more depth than any of the other teams, both on and off the bench. Of course, the best team does not always win. But a victory will come not from being the best team, but simply because we have an incredible hunger that won't be matched by any one else. Also, we have a large number of big-game players who are ready — and not uneasy — to play in the championship game. But ultimately, the final factor is that we will work harder in every inch of the field than any of our opponents."

Kent added that this last point is absolutely essential to bring in the two victories this weekend. By doing so, they will prove that last year was indeed "just the beginning..." Throw in this year's secret tactic of rods and cones, and Dal could have that elusive formula which will guide them to Kingston, at Queen's, for the national championship.

Do the job, gentlemen.

Against Saint Francis Xavier, the otherwise squeaker score of a 2-1 victory hides the fact that a 3 hour bus ride at 6:00 in the morning isn't exactly the greatest way to prompt another meaningless thrashing of the worst team in the AUAA.

## sleepy play...

Add the absence of superstar Neil Sedgwick, ("no comment..."), and a very fluky SFX goal, and truly, you realize the slim score isn't an indication of a possible transformation just before the critical play-offs. Routing SFX 6-0 only a week before, the domination was still evident on the field, albeit the slightly sluggish, if sleepy style of

play. (Hell, not even the writer made it for the trip to Antigonish — he was sleeping off a hangover.)

John Richmond scored the opener in the 34th minute, after Chad Thorpe crossed from the wing, and Richmond knocked it in within the 6 yard box. This notched his sixth goal of the season, to claim the incumbent spot as the team's scoring leader.

But this was answered by a goal from Andy Wheeler in the 75th minute, who was more elated just to score his own sixth goal of the season, and so tie Richmond in a friendly rivalry that was brewing at the expense of the other team. (Wheeler was reportedly all smiles when Richmond missed a golden opportunity later in the second half.) Rob Sawler made a fine cross to Craig Janc, who headed it down

for Wheeler to drill it on the volley and into the upper corner.

What followed was a defender gaff that gave SFX an interception and a subsequent goal. Utterly inauspicious, it was one that deflected off a Dal defender and over keeper Phil Samyn's head. Now at least Rob Adams has a goal to his credit, since a beautiful one of his won (in the opposing net, that is) was disallowed in last week's game against SMU.

Richmond and Wheeler remained tied for team scoring leader, and second overall in the league behind Chris McCarthy of Mount Allison who had 9 goals this season, one of which against Dal in their 1-1 draw. Rob Sawler was second on the team with 4 goals, and Tim Hall third with 3.

## Tigers ready for AUAAAs

BY DEREK NEARY

One season has come to an end for the Dalhousie Tigers but another one is just about to begin.

This past Saturday the Tigers wrapped up the regular season by posting a 2-0 shutout over the St. F.X. X-ettes. Sand was scattered over the mud-laden field in an attempt to establish suitable playing conditions, and players on both teams often approached the ball tentatively as it was difficult to maintain their footing on the clumpy turf.

The Tigers owned the first half. They left the X-ettes defenders dumbfounded as they moved the ball around freely with textbook passing plays.

The 14th minute saw Belinda Campbell deliver the first goal of the game on a strike that found the corner of the net.

The first half came to a close with Dal leading by a 1-0 count and the X-ettes keeper having handled the ball more than any other St. F.X. player.

As dominant as the home team was in the opening 45 minutes, the opposition only needed one break to even the score. The X-ettes nearly got that chance but Suzanne Jones broke up a potential breakaway with fine defensive play.

The Tigers received a number of efforts from Kate Gillespie who turned some brilliant footwork into a few goal scoring opportunities. But the only other goal of the game came in the dying seconds as Campbell emerged from a crowd in front of the net and once again beat the opposing netminder to the corner.

So the regular season has drawn to a close for the successful Tigers who compiled an impressive 8-1-1 record and ended up with a share of first place with the Acadia Axettes.

It is hard to criticize a team with a near flawless goals for/against

record (37 for, 1 against), but the Tigers haven't looked as overpowering lately. The Dal squad is coming off previous wins of 2-0 and 1-0 over St. Mary's after their only loss to Acadia.

"We haven't been playing up to our potential," said coach Darrell Cormier. "I guess Acadia was quite a blow to us and we've been sluggish to come out, but we played well [Saturday]."

"We were a better team than we have been the past three games. We used this as a training session for the AUAA's, it was a good platform for us," he added.

Dalhousie will travel to Acadia on Saturday, Nov. 2 and open the semi-finals against third place Mount Allison. In the other semi, Acadia will take on fourth place St. Mary's. The winners will battle it out on Sunday for the AUAA championships.

The elements are all there. As long as complacency doesn't become a factor, the Tigers can be the AUAA champions.

In the words of coach Cormier, "We've learned our lessons and we're coming out to fight. The only team that can beat us is Dalhousie."



Belinda Campbell demonstrates her talents against SFX, where Dal won 2-0.

DAL PHOTO: SATISH PUNNA

## MEN'S SOCCER FINAL RESULTS

## HOME

Dalhousie 1  
Dalhousie 5  
Mount Allison 1  
U of N. Brunswick 1  
Dalhousie 5  
Acadia 0  
Dalhousie 0  
St. Mary's 1  
Dalhousie 6  
Dalhousie 0  
St. Francis Xavier 1

## AWAY

U of PEI 0  
Memorial 0  
Dalhousie 1  
Dalhousie 1  
St. Mary's 1  
Dalhousie 3  
Acadia 1  
Dalhousie 3  
St. Francis Xavier 0  
U de Moncton 0  
Dalhousie 2