

sports

Still looking for a few good men

by Angel Figueroa

The snow is gone, the smell of spring lingers in the air, and Wickwire Field is a complete mess.

Five months after the last pair of muddy cleats were banged on the side of Dalplex, three months since winter (indoor) training started, and just a day after the athletic awards banquet, I, meek and humble sports-writer that I am—with no claim to fame after four years of spewing raving propaganda for the Dalhousie Sports Machine—suddenly had a spell of nostalgia. Soon, in just five months, after a glitzy World Cup fest and another summer in the local league, it will begin again.

I went to talk it over with the coach; to talk about soccer.

Like me, soccer consumes him, and for this last interview it seemed like September was actually around the corner, so clear and immediate were his answers to my queries on both last season and the one to come.

To close the book on the 1993 men's season, Ian Kent put into perspective the loss last November in the Atlantic championship final. It was Dal's fourth straight appearance in the championship game, vying to win the Holy Grail for the third year in a row, but lost 2-0 in overtime to Saint Francis Xavier.

"It really was a good season. It just seems a lot worse than what it was because our expectations were so high after such success in the previous year, when we won the bronze at the nationals."

I asked him about this year's prospects.

"We'll have quite a new team.



PHOTO: ANGEL FIGUEROA

We lose five starting players (we also lost five starters the previous year) so it will be brand new. We're looking for individuals who want to be part of a team and who are willing, ready and able to work. As far as the recruiting is going, those are the type of people I've been talking to—the type of people who can make more of a difference because of their attitude. Next year will be good; we have a good base of young players already here and we have some hopefuls."

I asked him who among the returning players will be expected to take the lead roles in another quest for the Holy Grail.

"David McFarlane — I think

you're going to see him blossom. He got better with every game he played last year. He is on the national youth team right now, so he'll be looking to have a major impact. Chris Devlin, with the right attitude and focus can do big-time damage in the league. Senior player Rob Sawler, in his last hurrah coming up this year, will be expected to do more than what he has done in the past—and he's done quite well in the past.

"For Tony Pignatiello, it's his last hurrah as well, and if I know Tony well enough he is going to want to come out with a bang, so I expect him to come into camp fitter than we have ever seen him, ready to do dam-

age. We're looking forward of course to the tenacious marking ability of Matt Serieys and see what else he has to offer. I am also excited about Justin Varney; to see what he can do with more time because he is a very talented player, and our hopes are that Moorten Mooers returns to help solidify the defensive troops. There is also Trevor Chisolm, who is on the Olympic try-out squad right now—we will be looking for big things from him as well. As you know he's one of the best, if not the best keeper in the league. He'll be playing with King of Donair this summer, so he'll improve a great deal, and will be a big part of the leadership that we'll be counting

on next year."

But Kent had more to say than just the usual pre-season chit-chat of hopefuls, a new team, and another good year. In fact, he has a message:

"Everything that has to do with the university has everything to do with different cultures and different nationalities coming together, to work together as a team. But the players on the soccer team, if you go through the roster, are basically all from Nova Scotia except for a New Brunswicker and two Ontarians. Now, I know that there are players out there from the Caribbean, Europe, Africa, Latin America and elsewhere that are at Dalhousie and who can have a major impact at Dalhousie. I'm just not sure they know about us or their role in thinking that they are here just to study.

"While our focus on the team is studies first, I really believe soccer can help round out your education. So I want to encourage all our international students to come out; we need players who have played at a very high standard. As it turns out, Canada is not at a high-class world standard in soccer, whereas some of the countries that are represented in the student population are, so the odds are very good that there are some great players out there that we don't even see, and I want to see them."

Training camp begins September 1, and there's no way you can miss it—just look for the bumpy, dirty field beside the A & A building and the group of hopefuls kicking balls around. (Or call Ian Kent at 494-2003).

Go Brazil.

Women's soccer season a successful one

by Sam McCaig

An AUSA championship. A CIAU silver medal.

It is accomplishments such as these that qualify the women's soccer team as one of Dalhousie's most successful squads of the year.

While playing without much of the hyperbole that goes along with some of the higher-profile sports, the women Tigers put together a phenomenal regular season and continued their torrid pace in the playoffs.

Many who had not followed the women's soccer program over the last couple of years were surprised to hear of their on-field successes. This was not the case for first-year coach Neil Turnbull.

"You always hope for a successful year," Turnbull remarked. "We had goals at the start of the year. We wanted to make the playoffs and do well; we wanted to win the conference. We wanted to go to the CIAUs and do well there also. We did a lot of building throughout the year."

Apparently, the building started on defence. Keeper Leahanne Turner had a solid defensive core in front of her and this led to a regular season which saw Dalhousie give up but one goal.

The prize for this commitment to defence was captured on a chilly November night at Husky Stadium. Carla Perry scored at the 67th minute and that was all the offence the Tigers needed, as they held on to beat



the Acadia Axettes 1-0 in the AUSA championship game.

Then it was on to Montreal and the CIAU championships. Dalhousie emerged victorious from their three-team pool (in which they faced McMaster and defending national champion Wilfred Laurier) and went on to meet the University of British Columbia in the final.

At the end of regulation time, the score was knotted at ones, with striker

Kate Gillespie doing the damage for Dalhousie. Two 15-minute overtime periods settled nothing and it came down to a shootout. Amazingly, after 10 shots by each team, the match was still without a victor (each squad scored six times). So, in the oddest of grand finales, each team's keeper shot on one another. It was here that UBC prevailed and captured the gold.

Thus, a little disappointed that their tremendous effort came up a bit

short, the team returned to Halifax. Nevertheless, their CIAU silver represents Dalhousie's best showing at the national level by any of our varsity teams this year.

Though he concedes it will be a hard act to follow, Coach Turnbull seems confident that next year's squad will be up to the task.

"It's going to be hard to replace the four players that we're losing (Stephanie Johnson, Lynne

Robertson, Allison Sears and Nicole Webb).

They're four quality players, but we had some good first-year players and we'll have some recruits coming in."

Coach Turnbull concluded, "We hope to repeat everything we did this year and we hope it gets better."

That sounds like a good plan, coach. Good luck in your encore season.