

Tigers take silver in Classic battle

By MARK ALBERSTAT

THE SIXTH ANNUAL Dalhousie Volleyball Classic was held this past weekend with the Saskatchewan Huskies coming out the champions on the men's side and the Winnipeg Weswomen defeating York Yeowomen to win the women's side.

The gold medal match for the men's section was a showdown between the 4-0 Saskatchewan squad and the 3-1 Tigers. The Huskies prevailed by scores of 15-12, 15-10, 15-8.

Saskatchewan's power was provided by two national team members and Junior National team member Darcey Busse, who was last year's CIAU Player of the Year.

In the first game of the final match, Saskatchewan hit fast to gain a 2-0 lead before the Tigers were able to regroup to forge ahead 3-2. The Dal squad hung on until the 10-10 mark, when the Huskies drove the score up to 13-10. Dal called a time out at this point and managed to get two more before the Huskies clinched their fifteenth point.

The second game was much the same except for the fact that the Tigers only held the lead twice, both times in the early going.

The third and final game of the match saw the Tigers fight hard until the 6-6 mark, when the Saskatchewan team went ahead to stay and captured the gold medal.

As the score would indicate, Saskatchewan outpowered Dal. Much of this is attributable to Darcey Busse and Jarome Linnell.

After the match Tiger coach Al Scott said, "We approached the match very positively and played the second game point by point". He went on to say, "we had trouble with service reception and troubles with our offense."

In the match Tigers' Andrew Kohl had 13 kills and one block, Jamie Fraser had 18 kills and Jeff Bredin had seven kills and three blocks.

For the Huskies, Todd Zazelenchuk had 10 kills and two blocks and Darcey Busse had 10 kills, four blocks, and one ace.

The Dalhousie women's team hit the court first at 2:30 Friday winning 15-4, 15-12, 4-15, and 15-5 over University de Laval Rouge et Or in their first match of two that day. The team obviously lacked their usual consistency but finally prevailed over the Laval squad, who was ranked two notches above the Tigers in the CIAU.

Simona Vortel was a power in this match for Dal as she picked up 25 kills and three blocks. Laval's Paula Leclerc had 17 and four.

The Dalhousie men's first outing also produced a win, with scores of 15-9, 16-14, 8-15, and 15-7 over Universite de Sherbrooke.

The first game of this match had the Tigers take a fast 7-0 lead only to see this margin slowly eroded before they were able to put home the final point. The second game was not as one sided as the score was tied several times through the game.

Tiger coach Al Scott said Sherbrooke was "good defensively and had a lot of heart and desire." He went on to say that "they just dug up everything", something not often seen in the AUAA. Sherbrooke's Eric Guimond said that the Tigers were "very good and strong" and were a good matchup for them.

Dal's Jeff Bredin had 15 kills and seven blocks and Jamie Fraser had 17 kills and two blocks in this match.

The women's second match of the day was against number one ranked University of Winnipeg.

In the opening game of this match, Tiger coach Karen Fraser put out her big guns only to see one of her top setters, Nicole Young, hurt herself. This forced a change in the lineup, but Young was not seriously hurt and played for the rest of the tournament. The team readjusted quickly to the change but Winnipeg's depth and strength came through as they took the match in three straight, 15-10, 15-6, and 15-11.

After the match Fraser said "we're not always expecting the ball to come back because of the weak teams in the league," and added, "the girls will learn from this."

Once again Simona Vortel shone for the Tigers as she had 16 kills and one ace. Brenda Turner added 11 kills and four blocks.

The final set of matches that night started at 9 o'clock and saw the Dal men taking on the number two ranked University of Saskatchewan. The Tigers definitely rose to the occasion, making Saskatchewan fight hard for their points.

The first two games went to Saskatchewan by identical 15-9 scores. In the third game of the match the Tigers hit early and fast, and quickly got a 6-2 lead, eventually winning the game 15-7. The final game had the same score as the first two with Saskatchewan winning it and taking the match, leaving both Tiger teams with a record of 1-1 for the first day's action.

Other scores on Friday in the men's division saw York University defeating Laval in straight games, 15-7, 15-12, and 15-11. University of Saskatchewan defeated Memorial 15-5, 15-2, and 15-11, while University of Winnipeg topped Universite de Moncton 15-17, 15-11, 4-15, 15-10, and 15-11. This was one of the biggest surprises of the tournament as Winnipeg is ranked in seventh spot in the country, while unranked U de M is second in the AUAA. York defeated Winnipeg 15-7, 15-13, 15-12, Laval dropped U de M 15-8, 12-15, 15-12, and 16-14, and

Memorial defeated Sherbrooke 15-12, 15-4, and 15-8.

The other scores on the women's side on Friday were York over Manitoba 15-7, 15-13, and 15-4; Winnipeg over Ottawa 15-4, 15-9, and 15-4, and Saskatchewan over U de M 15-1, 15-11, and 15-10. Saskatchewan defeated Manitoba 15-4, 15-6, and 15-9, Laval defeated Ottawa 15-2, 15-6, and 18-16, and York dropped U de M 15-4, 15-4, and 15-6.

Saturday's matches started at 12 noon and went continuously for almost 12 hours.

The Dalhousie women's team played a 12:00 match against sixth-ranked Ottawa. Ottawa had lost their two previous matches, both in straight games.

This match, however, took all five games with the Tigers prevailing 8-15, 15-10, 8-15, 15-3, and 15-4.

The need for five games to put away the Gee Gees was summed up by coach Karen Fraser when she said, "we went into the match being told they were weak. The girls believed it was going to be an easy match."

Serving up the winning point and thus putting the Tigers into the semi-finals was Paula Clark. In this match, Tiger Brenda Turner had 13 kills and five blocks while teammate Simona Vortel had 11 kills and two blocks. Dena Thebarga had 13 kills and two blocks for the Gee Gees.

At two o'clock the Dalhousie men's team took to the court to face the winless Memorial Beothucks. Dal won the match with scores of 15-10, 15-8, 12-15, and 15-2. The winning point was put home by Jeff Bredin.

Dalhousie's troubles in the third game of this match were explained by assistant coach Ken Bagnell as follows: "We just had a mental letdown and our intensity also went down." Dalhousie came back after the "let down" to beat Memorial by 13 points.

The other round robin matches at 12 and 2 had, in the women's division, Winnipeg defeating Laval 15-12, 15-10, and 15-5. This win put Winnipeg in first place in their pool and dropped Laval to third. Manitoba crushed Moncton 15-6, 14-16, 15-9, and 15-8, while York won over Saskatchewan, 15-10, 14-16, 15-9, 15-2.

The other round robin matches at 12 and 2 had, in the women's division, Winnipeg defeating Laval 15-12, 15-10, and 15-5. This win put Winnipeg in first place in their pool and dropped Laval to third. Manitoba crushed Moncton 15-6, 15-11, 15-8, while York won over Saskatchewan, 15-10, 14-16, 15-9, and 15-2. This put York in first place and Saskatchewan second in their pool.

Other games in the men's division had Winnipeg defeating Laval 8-15, 19-17, 15-5, and 15-7. York won over U de M for first place in their pool 15-7, 15-6, 18-16. Sherbrooke lost to Saskatchewan in straight games, 15-10, 15-4, and 15-2. This left Saskatchewan first in their pool, with Dalhousie second, Memorial third, and Sherbrooke fourth.



Both Tigers teams saw plenty of action in the Dal Volleyball Classic this weekend. Photo: Bill Jensen, Dal Photo.

The consolation semi-finals had Ottawa facing Manitoba and Laval squaring off with U de M on the women's side. Laval won their match 15-6, 15-4, and 15-4, and Manitoba won theirs 7-15, 15-13, 15-13, 7-15, and 15-10.

The men's division had Memorial facing U de M with Moncton winning 15-8, 14-16, 15-2, and 15-0. Sherbrooke faced Laval with Laval winning 15-3, 15-11, and 16-14.

The semi-finals on the women's side featured Winnipeg against Saskatchewan, and Dalhousie facing York. Winnipeg won their match 15-4, 15-3, and 15-4.

The men's side also had Saskatchewan against Winnipeg and the Tigers taking on York. This Winnipeg team also won 15-11, 15-13, and 15-7.

The Tiger women's team ran into trouble against York as they lost in the semi-finals 15-3, 15-4, and 15-10. This match advanced York to the finals and the Tigers to the bronze medal round. Simona Vortel had 14 kills, one block and one ace.

The men's team on the other hand defeated York 9-15, 15-9, 12-15, 15-10, and 16-14 in an extremely hard-fought match. York is ranked fourth in the country.

"We went into the match knowing we are as good or even better," said Tigers assistant coach Ken Bagnell.

The match to decide fifth and sixth place on the men's side was between Moncton and Laval. Laval prevailed 15-9, 6-15, 15-12, and 15-10. Seventh place honours went to Memorial as they defeated Sherbrooke 15-9, 8-15, 15-9, and 15-13.

The match on the women's side to decide fifth and sixth slots was between Manitoba and Laval

with Laval winning in three straight 15-6, 15-13, and 15-0.

The medal rounds took place Sunday morning, with York taking on Winnipeg for the bronze in the men's division and Dalhousie taking on Saskatchewan on the women's side. York won the bronze for the men, 15-11, 15-5, 6-15, 7-15, and 15-5.

It took four games to decide the bronze medal team on the women's court. The Tigers lost this match 15-11, 8-15, 6-15, and 16-18.

The first game had the two teams battle back and forth for the lead several times. The second game, on the other hand, was Saskatchewan's from the beginning as they took an early 3-0 lead and never looked back.

The third game was much like the first until the two teams were tied at six apiece, when Saskatchewan broke loose and took the game. The fourth game was undoubtedly the most exciting. The teams were neck and neck all through this game with neither team having a solid lead at any point.

"We started fighting too late, we were also very tired, but we'll have to learn to push through that," said Dal coach Karen Fraser, adding, "I was pleased, we improved with every match and this tournament was very valuable to us."

The tournament was unquestionably valuable to both Tiger teams, as they faced some of the top teams in the country, and hopefully helped their standings in the CIAU.

The women's team's next home game is on February 6th at 8:30 pm against St. Francis Xavier. The men's team next plays at home on February 15th against University of New Brunswick at 7 pm.