

Sports and Recreation

Lions claw Wesmen capture Excal Classic

Jonathan Mann

The Excalibur Volleyball Classic came to a close on Saturday, with Penn State's Nittany Lions taking top honours in a surprise turnaround over the University of Winnipeg. York's Yeomen finished a convincing third.

The three day meet drew eight teams from across Canada and the United States.

Unbeaten in round-robin play, the University of Winnipeg Wesmen were favoured as they entered the best of five final against Penn State. Having

thrashed the Lions just the day before (15-3, 15-11), the Wesmen seemed assured of the championship.

So it surprised no one when Winnipeg took the first game 15-12. But the Lions proved determined. In the remaining games they looked stronger, pushed harder, and served up some really aggressive volleyball, clawing the Wesmen 15-12, 15-6, and 15-8.

In the fight for third place, York beat out the Bruins of Kellogg Community College from Battle

Creek, Michigan 15-10, 15-13, 9-15, and 15-7.

Even though the Bruins only managed fourth position overall, they have a lot to be proud of. As a community college, Kellogg only has first and second year students to work with. Considering the relative youth and inexperience of their team, they have no reason to be ashamed. And if we take into account that their season hasn't even begun yet, and their team was assembled just for this tournament, their fourth place finish seems all but miraculous.

Having expected to beat Kellogg (as they had earlier — 15-10, 15-12) the Yeomen were satisfied with their performance. But their big disappointment of the Classic was Friday evening's meeting with Penn's Nittany Lions.

After having watched them in earlier play, the Yeomen felt they could beat the Lions, according to middle blocker Lino Girardo. But the competition was close, and York's squad just wasn't getting the breaks it needed. Trailing two to one in games, the Yeomen managed a 14-13 lead, only to lose 16-14.

The loss made Saturday's game with Kellogg "hard to get up for", according to Girardo. "We had to prove that we could still win."

Yeomen coach Wally Dyba shared the regret over the loss to Penn State, but was satisfied with York's performance in the tournament. "We learned a lot," he said, venturing that "I would liked to have done better, but there are a lot of good teams out there."

Dyba, who also served as tournament director, was delighted with how the Classic turned out. Asked if he considered it a success, he replied, "Unquestionably so, in all regards."

He was particularly pleased by the coverage the tournament received in the media. All three television networks and a few Toronto dailies joined Excalibur in featuring stories on the meet. Declared Dyba, "We're showing off York. It's good for York, it's good for volleyball, and it's good for the Yeomen."

The Classic drew the largest volleyball crowds to be seen at York so far this year. The finals alone were attended by a crowd estimated at over four hundred.

The Yeomen do battle next at Ryerson on January 18.

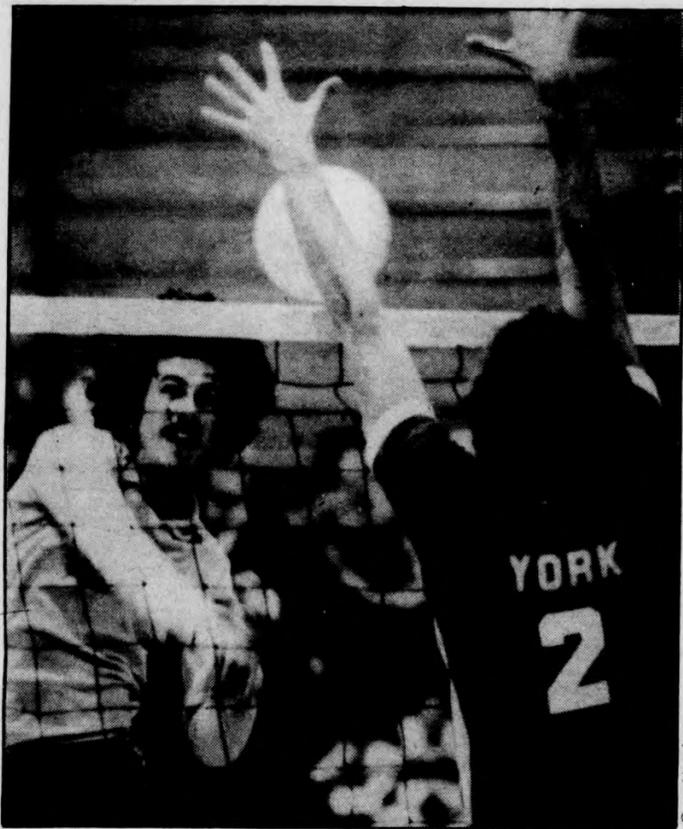
Be there. Aloha.

Acadia's win over the Vikings came at the Stu Aberdeen tourney, and that win, coupled with York's 113-57 annihilation of the Dalhousie Tigers, set up the Axemen-Yeomen showdown last Saturday.

Unfortunately for Yeomen fans, York came out on the short end, 90-83, despite a 34-point performance by forward Bo Pelech and 16 points by guard Dave Coulthard.

If there's a bright spot on the 1980 horizon for the Yeomen, it has to be the apparent equality among top teams in the league. That means the Yeomen shouldn't be counted out for another shot at a national title. Whether they'll be in good position to take that shot may depend heavily upon their fortunes in Ottawa on Friday and Saturday of this week.

True, St. Mary's no longer has Mickey Fox, coach Brian Heaney et al, but York no longer has Lonnie Ramati, Eddie Siebert, Ted Galka, Chris McNeilly, Peter Greenway and Paul Layefsky. And Acadia, like York, is in the midst of rebuilding. Still, both York and Acadia have beaten Vic, which, if anything, has improved with the addition of Billy Loos, who scored a record 57 points in a losing cause against York at Carleton.



Hectic net action at the Excalibur Classic.

Will Ottawa trip decide future?

Bruce Gates

Although the sixth-ranked York Yeomen have played only one game of their 1979-80 regular-season basketball schedule (a 94-57 win over Laurentian in November), the outcome of two contests this weekend in Ottawa could well decide first place.

York has already played and lost in a tournament match-up against division rival Carleton Ravens (83-78) at the Carleton University Invitational held Dec. 27-29. That win gave Carleton the tourney championship, spoiling the Yeomen's impressive 98-93 victory over the first-ranked Victoria Vikings.

But York coach Bob Bain was quick to point out that the loss shouldn't necessarily be taken as an upset. "Carleton is a good team," he said before the team practised Monday. "Victoria may have the superior personnel but Carleton has good people too, and they'll be tough."

Bain says many of the teams are equal this year, and the results of some recent tournament games seem to underline his point. Taking away the Yeomen's two straight losses to the NAIA's Simon Fraser Clansmen and the GPAC conference Lakehead Nor'Westers at the Pacific Rim tournament in Victoria Nov. 30-

Dec. 1, and forgetting the Yeomen's three straight wins the following week over Western, Toronto and McGill at the University of Toronto invitational round robin, one sees a certain amount of balance in the CIAU this year.

Last year, as may be recalled, the Yeomen and the St. Mary's Huskies (whom York beat by a point last weekend in Acadia) were the two dominant powers in the country. This year no team has emerged as the premier basketball squad. That accounts for the Acadia Axemen's 80-73 victory over number one ranked Victoria, and York's win over St. Mary's at the Stu Aberdeen Memorial University Basketball Tournament in Wolfville, N.S. last week.

True, St. Mary's no longer has Mickey Fox, coach Brian Heaney et al, but York no longer has Lonnie Ramati, Eddie Siebert, Ted Galka, Chris McNeilly, Peter Greenway and Paul Layefsky. And Acadia, like York, is in the midst of rebuilding. Still, both York and Acadia have beaten Vic, which, if anything, has improved with the addition of Billy Loos, who scored a record 57 points in a losing cause against York at Carleton.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FOR YEOMEN

Like Scrooge the York hockey Yeomen seem to have turned over a new leaf during the holiday season.

After a bleak 3-6-1 start the team seems to be getting back on track. A convincing 10-0 slaughter of Ryerson, coupled with a 3-1 victory over Windsor's Spitfires has brought the Yeomen record to a respectable 5-6-1.

York has a precarious foothold on sixth place in the OUAA standings, one point in front of the Western Mustangs and two in front of the Waterloo Warriors. But Mustangs have two games in hand on Yeomen, while Warriors have three.

Only the first six teams in the standings make the playoffs and Yeomen must finish the season strongly if they are to remain in contention for post-season play.

The team's strong second-place showing at the Ottawa Invitational this past weekend indicates that the winning trend may continue throughout the second half of the season.

The team is away at Brock on Jan. 10, but returns home to play Queen's on Jan. 11 at 8 pm.

Shortstops

VINTAGE VOLLEYBALL

York's men's and women's volleyball teams are both having vintage seasons.

The men rank second in the OUAA with a 4-1 record. They trail Laurentian, whose record is 5-3, by two points, but have two games in hand, and are tied with Queen's, having played one less match than the Gaels.

Yeomen face both these teams in crucial matches later in the season. The Gaels come to York on Jan. 19 for a 2 pm match, while Yeomen travel to Laurentian for back-to-back contests on Feb. 1-2.

Meanwhile, the women remain undefeated under the guidance of Coach Merv Mosher. The ladies latest conquest was a Dec. 6, 15-11, 15-9, 15-10 white-washing of Western. But their lead in the OWIAA standings is a slim two points over Ottawa and McMaster.

Yeowomen are in action at home on Jan. 10 at 8 pm against University of Manitoba before their important home match against Ottawa on Jan. 18 at 7 pm. They play McMaster at York on Feb. 9.

WHIBBS WORKING WONDERS

Barb Whibbs has played nothing short of spectacular basketball in leading the Tier II Yeowomen to a perfect 5-0 record.

Yeowomen lead the Tier II OWIAA standing with the best offensive and defensive records in the league. In their five games to date they have out-gunned the opposition 416-198.

Whibbs, a nineteen-year-old, first-year student, who earlier this season set an OWIAA single-game scoring record (42 points), leads Tier II shooters with a 21 point per game average. But Whibbs, who Coach Frances Flint exalts as "one of the best players in Canada", has proved to be more than an offensive marvel. She also leads the league in rebounding with 62.

The Tier II race seems to be coming down to two teams, York and Brock. They meet in an important showdown here at York on Jan. 25 at 6 pm.



Bryon Johnson

UPCOMING EVENTS

A field of eight teams, including Queen's, McMaster, U of T, Laval, and East Michigan, will compete in the **11th Annual York Invitational Gymnastics Meet** to be held on Fri., Jan. 11 at 7 pm in the Tait McKenzie gym. Included in the York team are Marc Epprecht and Dan Gaudet, both members of the Canadian Olympic team which will travel to Moscow for the Summer Olympics. Public admission is \$1.50 for adults and 75¢ for children.

The **All-Comers Track Meet**, sponsored by the York Track Club, will start at noon, Sat., Jan. 12. There will be a \$1 registration fee at the door and everyone is welcome. For further information contact the York Track Club at 241-4660.

On Sat. and Sun., Jan. 12-13, York hosts the **5th Annual York Fencing Invitational**. Sixteen Ontario teams, including Queen's, Ryerson, Western, R.M.C. and U of T, are expected to compete. The action begins at 9:30 am in Tait.

The **York University Invitational Indoor Track Meet**, featuring the Star 1500m Trial, will take place at the Metro Complex on Sat., Jan. 19.

The **York Invitational Squash Tournament** has a 6 pm start on Fri., Jan. 25, with the final rounds to be held the next evening.

York will host an **Intercollegiate Synchronized Swim Meet** on Sat., Jan. 26 at the Tait McKenzie Centre.