

VIEW FROM THE CHEAP SEATS

by Mark Savoie

As much as I am loathe to agree with Bill Hunt of *The Daily Gleaner* I have to admit that the playoff structure in effect for this year's AUAA hockey league in a word, sucks. It was completely unfair to the teams finishing third and fourth in their respective divisions, making it a near certainty that they would make a quick exit. Home ice advantage is very important in the playoffs, and I agree that the teams finishing at the top of the standings should be so rewarded. But this was ridiculous! A better solution should and could have been found.

For those few of you who are not yet aware of the source of the problem, it stands as such. According to CIAU regulations teams are restricted to playing a certain maximum number of games. As a result the AUAA felt forced to reduce the first playoff round to two games, instead of the more customary best two games out of three setup. Both of these games were to be played at the home arena of the team with the best regular season standing. Should the two teams each win one of these games there would be a 10 minute mini-game to decide the eventual series winner.

Of course this puts the visiting team behind the proverbial 8-ball, as they are forced into the situation of having to win two out of three on enemy ice in order to advance. I will grant that the AUAA's decision in favour of a two game set was probably justified, given the logistics of the situation. However, I feel that better ways of scheduling a two game series should have been found. A far better solution would have been to play the first game at the rink of the lower team in the standings, with the second game being played at the rink of the team finishing higher in the standings. Should this result in both teams winning a game then the 10-minute game would then be played at this second rink.

Another possible solution would have been a 2-game total goals series. Again both games would be played at the two teams respective arenas, with the second game being played at the rink of the team earning the home-ice advantage. Should the two games end with the two teams scoring an equal number of goals then a sudden-death overtime could ensue. This format was used by the NHL for their quarter-finals well into the thirties, before being disbanded when the league elected to try and increase playoff revenue by increasing the number of games played. The major problem with this format is that if the first game results in a blowout then the second game is of only limited interest.

The forgotten sufferers with a playoff system such as the AUAA's this year are the fans of the team not getting a home game. They supported their team throughout the season and now find themselves without even the succour of going to a playoff game. The playoffs are the most important part of the season, and without being given the opportunity to watch the playoffs the fans are being cheated of the most entertaining and dramatic part of the season. This is the real tragedy.

All of this is particularly relevant because the UNB Red Devils and the UNB fans were the ones jobbed by this format. UNB finished in third place in the MacAdam Division, one point behind the U de M Blue Eagles. As a result the Devils were forced to play both games on the road. They did us proud, winning the first game handily and losing the second by only one goal. In the ensuing mini-game, UNB lost what was one of the exciting games (and infact may have been the single most exciting game) in AUAA hockey history 1-0 in triple overtime. The game was broadcast live over U de M's student radio, and as the game wore on more and more people were coming into the arena to watch the game of the year.

Despite my sympathy for the tough loss I do not mourn overmuch for the Red Devils. All teams, including the Devils, knew what the format was going to be before the start of the season. Had the Devils managed to avoid their second consecutive second half slump and finish second ahead of Moncton, I'm sure that this playoff format controversy would be nothing of the sort. At least not here. I'm also fairly sure that if the situation were reversed someone at the U de M paper would be penning an article similar to this one. The only solution is for the powers that be in the AUAA to devise a more equitable playoff format for next year and ensure that a travesty such as this year's format does not occur again. Unfortunately, this can not be done retroactively.

Intramurals

MEN'S ICE HOCKEY FINAL STANDINGS
To Monday, February 25, 1991
(also includes defaulted games)

TEAMS	G	W	L	T	PTS
Recreation - Blue Division					
E.E. Electrons	9	7	1	1	24
Harrington Raiders	9	5	3	1	19
Legal Eagles	9	5	4	0	19
Aitken Rangers	9	5	4	0	19
Skidders	9	5	4	0	19
Leftovers	9	3	6	0	15
Wild Thing	9	2	6	1	14
Legionaire	9	2	6	1	13
Competitive - Red Division					
Social Club	9	8	0	1	26
Bridges House	9	7	1	1	24
Hooters	9	7	2	0	23
Aiken Animals	9	5	4	0	19
Law Lords	9	4	4	1	18
Blade Runners	9	2	5	2	15
Random Measurements	9	2	5	2	15
Chess Club	9	2	7	0	13
Jones House	9	1	7	1	12
Red Wings	9	1	8	0	11
Competitive - Green Division					
Civil Devils	9	9	0	0	27
Marysville Selects	9	6	2	1	22
Hubtown Rats	9	6	2	1	22
Night Hawks	9	6	3	0	21
North Shore	9	5	2	2	21
Crazy Canucks	9	5	4	0	19
Che. Eng. Kings	9	5	4	0	19
Party Chiefs	9	2	7	0	13
The Canyons	9	2	7	0	12
Warriors	9	1	7	1	11
ME Turbos	9	0	9	0	0

Varsity Mania season successful

by Boner DaBone

Last Sunday, Varsity Mania ended off the season with their Grand Finale down at the Lady Beaverbrook Gym. It was the last chance to 'kick the cat' with the Red Bloomers. And 'kick the cat' the Bloomers did, blasting the UPEI Panthers 74 to 48. At no point could the Panthers get it together, the Bloomers dominating play all game. A combination of over 800 off-campus, residence and other basketball fans packed the Pit to show their support. The gym was shaking and quaking for all the noise. From the moment the Red Tide opened with O Canada!, till the last fan left the gym, no moment was without excitement.

Half-time featured the Great Greco Pizza Paper Airplane Toss, with many excellent prizes up for grabs. Jones House won the huge pizza party courtesy of Greco Pizza. Aitken House won the Coastal Graphics Challenge for attendance, a massive extra-extra-large sweatshirt to hang in McConnell Hall. Aitken House was also the winner of the Moosehead Trophy for the highest attendance this term. The trophy not only carries the distinction of first place

Varsity-Maniacs, but also a T.V. prize. Carl Burgess from Moosehead made the presentation following the game, and was heard to say "those guys are crazy, they deserve to win this prize. What awesome spirit!" Neill House won second prize of a VCR, also supplied by Moosehead Breweries. Hats off to the new presidents from Harrison and Jones House who were able to get the boys out in force. Special mention also must go to the Fans of the Game, and all else who participated.

Even though Varsity-Mania is over for the season, Varsity Athletics continue at UNB. The playoff season is here, the Black Bears in Regina for the CIAU's one Beaver at the CIAU's at Dalhousie, and the Red Bloomers in the AUAA's also at Dalhousie. Good luck and many victories to all of our Athletes from varsity-Mania.

The last word goes to Varsity-Mania Co-ordinator Steve Williams: "This season has been one filled with much fun and excitement. Over the last three years Varsity-Mania has earned strong support through their reputation for rowdy fans and loud crowds. With this strong foundation,

the future looks good for Varsity-Mania. Things can only get better". Varsity-Mania would like to thank all our supporters, and sponsors, and especially the fans.

MOOSEHEAD Varsity Schedule

Friday, March 1

Volleyball(M) AUAA's #2 at #1
Basketball(W) AUAA's at Dal
Swimming CIAU's at Dal
Wrestling CIAU's at Regina

Saturday, March 2

Basketball(M) UNB at StFX
Volleyball(M) AUAA's #2 at #1
Volleyball(W) AUAA's at Dal
Basketball(W) AUAA's at Dal
Hockey AUAA Semi-Finals
Swimming CIAU's at Dal
Wrestling CIAU's at Regina

Sunday, March 3

Basketball(M) UNB at Dal
Volleyball(M) AUAA's #2 at #1
Volleyball(W) AUAA's at Dal
Hockey AUAA Semi-Finals
Swimming CIAU's at Dal