

## sports

# Intramural participation at Dal—an inside view

by Lisa Timpf

Since the late 1860s, when the first student-organized rugby football games took place, some form of recreative athletic activity has been part of student life at Dalhousie.

Sport was perceived early in educational history as a way of restoring the balance between body and mind potentially disrupted by academic duties. Since the earliest appearance of sport at universities, the athletic programs, and in particular intramurals, have been viewed as a useful way for the students to "let off steam" as well as enhancing their all-round character in the Greek ideal of the "sound mind in the sound body".

Although intercollegiate sport is certainly the most visible aspect of any university's sporting activities, the importance of intramurals to a large number of students is inarguable. For this reason, letters such as one received by the Gazette a few weeks ago, expressing some dissatisfaction with the way in which the current intramural program is functioning, must be treated with some concern.

Intramural convenor Tom MacKay agrees that there are "a few problem areas" with Dalhousie's intramural program.

MacKay is acquainted with the trials and tribulations of intramurals as well as anyone. He has had both an inside and outside perspective of the Dal program for a number of years. While taking Biology at Dalhousie from 1974-1978, MacKay was a sports representative for Cameron residence. Back for a second degree, this time in Physical Education, MacKay is now involved in the program from the other end, serving as an intramural convenor.

"While there has been an increase in the number of teams

-- volleyball, for example, has gone from 45 teams last year to 76 teams -- there has not been a commensurate increase in facility time," he noted. "Where before you could schedule seven or eight games for a team over a season, you now can only give them four or five games."

In addition to there being no increase in facility time, there has been a decrease in management time. This in turn has influenced the effectiveness of the program.

"The participants are starting to feel that they aren't getting the kind of program they have been getting in the past, or feel they have a right to get," said MacKay.

"There are three forces competing for the use of the Dalplex," he added, "varsity sport, community sport, and intramurals. Because the Dalplex is self-funding, intramurals consistently tend to be given low priority."

However, increased facility time for the intramural program would help to improve the quality of the program.

Also, computerized scheduling for intramurals would be useful in terms of freeing up management time spent on tracing eligibility problems and scheduling, to allow increased time for other areas of administration. Currently, schedules and eligibility traces are performed manually -- often a tedious process.

A further problem is caused by the fact that officials are paid only minimum wage. When the program was smaller, sufficient numbers of officials could easily be recruited from within the pool of physical education and recreation students. However, the increased program size and, on occasion, increased hassles from players, has resulted in periodic shortages of officials part way through the season.

"There are a lot of little things



needed to make the Dal intramural program run more smoothly," said MacKay. "The increasing size of the program is what creates the problems. There are too many teams and too much paperwork involved for the system to continue to run at its present level. Where participa-

tion increases arithmetically, the corresponding paperwork increases at a logarithmic rate.

"There seems to me to be more stress on the student today," said MacKay. "They really need an outlet, more today if anything."

Unfortunately, intramural pro-

grams often suffer in comparison with the intercollegiate programs in terms of attention and funding received. For the numerous individuals who could potentially benefit from intramural programs, it is unfortunate that the optimal level of fulfillment of that potential is not being met.

## Women's hockey club returns from Nationals

by Lisa Timpf

Two of the objectives of the Dal women's club hockey team prior to their trip to the National Championships in Edmonton last weekend were to improve over last year's 0-5 record and to generate more offense.

The team succeeded in both of these objectives, scoring eight goals in five games, and notching a 1-4 record to finish eighth in the ten-team tournament, an improvement over last year's basement finish.

The Dal team lost their initial game of the tournament to Manitoba, 10-2. Trish Selig and Gretchen Knickle notched Dalhousie's goals in that game.

The Dal team then followed up with a 5-2 win over Newfoundland. Selig, Terry Dick, Heather McLean, Lynn Hackett and Gladys Mosher found the mark for Dal's five goals.

Friday, the team lost three games to the top three teams in the tournament. Quebec



dropped Dal 7-1, with McLean scoring the only Dal goal, and Alberta and Ontario shut down the Dal squad 11-0 and 13-0 respectively.

Despite the high scores, the players felt that the team had performed well in comparison to last year's efforts. Considering that Nova Scotia women's hockey program is nowhere near the extent of those of Ontario, Quebec and Alberta, where numerous women's leagues exist, the results are understandable.

More important perhaps was the inspiration gained by seeing the calibre of play exhibited by

the other women's teams at the tournament. Players were particularly impressed with the final game, in which Alberta edged Quebec 5-4 in overtime. Ontario finished third.

"It was definitely a worthwhile experience," said defenseman Pam Williams of the tournament. "We learned a lot by watching the other teams play."

"In our first game, I think we had problems with jet lag and nervousness," she added, "but after that, I think we settled down a bit."

"Player of the Game" awards were named for each team after each game. Nova Scotia recipients were Hackett (twice), McLean, Mosher, and Patti (Rookie) Meehan. In addition, Hackett was named Most Sportsman-like Player of the tournament at Sunday's awards banquet.

"The tournament itself was really good, a lot better than last year's," noted centre Heather McLean. "For one thing, we got

a chance to get to know the players on the other teams a bit better."

This year's event was the last in a three-year contract with Shopper's Drug Mart to sponsor the tournament. The women's hockey representatives, pleased with the sponsorship so far, are now trying to convince them to return with a new contract.

As with any new event, certain areas of dispute are emerging. One is a proposal to hold regional playoffs, with the result that, rather than one representative per province being sent, one team would represent each of the following five areas: the Maritimes, Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and Alberta and British Columbia.

While this would eliminate some of the "weaker" teams from the tournament, it would also thereby eliminate some of the teams which perhaps need the experience of the national tournament the most.

The National format, as it presently exists, gives teams from each province the chance to identify themselves as a smaller part of a larger whole of women who play hockey.

As such, it acts as a reinforcement of their own participation, and provides them with increased incentive to field teams in hopes of landing a berth at the Nationals. Region playdowns might result in decreased motivation for some provinces who don't feel they have a chance of earning a slot in the Nationals.

A second area of concern is whether to play checking, body contact, or non-contact hockey. Currently, the different provinces operate with different rules, and the issue could prove to be a divisive one.

A final area of concern is a move to encourage the integration of minor league hockey for girls and boys under the age of 13. Physiological studies have

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