

Part 2

Football—Is it time for a rebirth?

by Greg Dennis

In the late 60's, Dal received financial awards from the Tiger Club legally and above-the-board. The Tiger Club initiated by former head coach Harvey Scott saw the Alumni aiding in recruiting and coaching costs, and was an instant success. In the second year of its operation, Dal fielded a most respectable team, nationally ranked in the country. However, due to mismanagement of funds the club pulled out in 1971 and Tiger football never recovered.

It had been estimated in 1976 that to recruit 30 skilled players, the total financial requirements would exceed \$100,000. Since competition is so stiff in the Ontario region and students have an easier time getting into local universities like Acadia and Saint Mary's because of more lenient admissions requirements, Dal would probably have to put more dollars and much more time into its recruiting. It's not totally a question of budget but whether or not Dal wants to take the effort to fill its team in the Atlantic conference with students from outside the region.

Peter Call, ex-Tiger quarterback and defensive half-back from '72-'75 stated, "I admire Dalhousie's policy. I see no reason why we can't have all Maritime players in all schools. We don't need to complete nationally."

As it was, it was foolish to attempt to field a team com-

prised mainly of local talent and expect to be competitive in a region where schools recruit as heavily as they do. With that philosophy it was best to drop the football program.

The question now arises about the future of sport at Dalhousie and if football is going to have any part of it. Sport in all universities across the country is escalating rapidly in popularity and intensity. It is felt by some that a school with a sub-par athletic program might be less prestigious to prospective students, therefore enrolment could decline. At Dal, sport is receiving a great public boost with the opening of Dalplex and will get another lift when (?) the new rink is completed. The university can boast of strong teams in the so-called lesser sports and have worked hard to establish respectability in all sports. The hiring of top-notch volleyball coach Al Scott and the fine recruiting in hockey are two recent examples.

Some people close to the scene feel football should get under this ever-widening spotlight. Quackenbush, now a local lawyer and president of N.S. amateur football, is probably one of the most vehement in the opposition to the football void. He says, "I can't see football being anything but a benefit to Dalhousie and all Nova Scotia universities."

What would it take to rein-

state the football program at Dalhousie? Put quite simply a major facelift!

If Dal is to enter the football world again, they would have to jump in with both feet or face the same demoralizing results as before. Much moral support would be required from the student body and the School of Physical Education. Dollar support would definitely have to come from the Alumnus. A past example of their support was the Tiger Club which provided Dal with one of the finest teams in its history.

However, according to Dr. Bill Stannish, an ex-Tiger and now orthopedic surgeon, "The Club probably faltered due to a poor liason between the alumni and the bursary office as well as decreasing interest." Any funds made available for football will have to be funnelled directly into the program. Money should not be hard to round up if the alumni was diligent about it. Little trouble was encountered in finding additional funds for DALPLEX.

A nucleus of fine ball players; a quarterback, running-back, a wide receiver, two linemen, a linebacker and two defensive backs would have to be recruited from outside the Atlantic region. This would mean a serious philosophical change in administration's attitude on recruiting. This is not to infer that Dal should lower its academic requirements, but

that extra money would be needed to search out and convince students that Dalhousie would be a great place to play ball and receive a quality education. With a good coach on a full time basis and a capable staff, eager and strong students from anywhere can be taught to play one position effectively. Bob Douglas, Queen Elizabeth High coach said, "Football is unique, in that specific duties can be taught quickly to a fellow intent on perfecting one position."

A problem with Dal football in the past was a lack of harmony within the Athletic department. If reinstatement of the program comes about continuity within would have to exist. Dr. Stannish expounds on this saying, "The department was guilty in the past of ambivalence. It's vital to establish a firm philosophy regarding a definite direction in sport." The coach and his assistants would need encouragement from Athletics and be allowed to mold a respectable winner without unnecessary interference. Pierre Page, varisty hockey coach, took seven years to bring his squad to a title.

Another stumbling block to overcome would be the field and stadium facilities. This year the rugby club was not permitted use of Studley Field, Dal's one and only playing field, yet even without rugby or football it was still transformed into a quagmire.

There is a good chance Dal will be getting an artificial turf field in the future. Although, again more money will have to be invested, a rug would be ideal in the long-run since it has been estimated that an annual \$10,000 is spent on Studley's upkeep. With a practice field or two, a sport overload problem caused by football would be solved.

The health services would also suffer an overload with football reinstated. As Slaunwhite said, "It's a hell of a workload, but we have good people who would realize what would have to be done."

A renewed football program might stir a positive reaction from the future student at Dalhousie who knows nothing of the futile years; especially if administration and the alumni can get together and field a competitive team. While many changes, internally and externally, would have to be made, a good football program would be a tremendous addition to the campus. Although no talks are officially going on, informal discussions continue.

The Department of Athletics and Recreation and the Administration had sound legitimate reasons for the termination of Dal football in 1976 but it now seems to be the question of economics preventing the revival of the program. "When push comes to shove," stated Quackenbush, "It comes down to dollars and cents."



Athletes of the week



KEN BICKERTON—hockey—the Sydney native has played outstanding goal for Dalhousie all season and was particularly instrumental in Dal's 4-2 win over Acadia last Saturday. He kicked out 28 shots including a major save in the last minute of play with Dal holding a 3-2 edge. His season goals against average is about 3.60. He has made 276 saves in seven and two-thirds games, almost 35 saves per game.



KAREN FRASER—volleyball—a freshman from Halifax, Karen played a strong tournament in the Dalhousie/Acadia Invitational last weekend at Dalplex. She had led the Tigers to a 3-0 win over St. F.X. in AUAA play earlier in the week.

Her serving was strong, she was the outstanding hitter in the tournament, scored many kills, and blocked strongly.

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