

Overtime Sports on the drawing board

by Dean Goodman

The America's Cup wound up this week with Stars and Stripes taking the Cup back to the states and Dennis Connor being heralded as the best skipper in the world. But is he? Just four years ago he lost the Cup to John Bertram of Australia and much of the loss was attributed to him. How has Connor's talent improved so much in such a short period of time? Simple; he got a better boat.

In 1983, the radical new design of Australia's winged keel gave John Bertram the faster boat and superior handling ability to take the Cup. Now Connor has the upper hand, with better boat speed and some new technology of his own, such as a friction-reducing coating on the ship's hull.

But the question remains; who is the better skipper — Murray, who's forced to play catch-up because he sails a slower boat, or Connor, who now has the upper hand he lacked in '83? Would Connor have won if he were sailing Kookaburra III and Murray had Stars and Stripes? We'll never know, but this dilemma raises the larger question of how much talent is involved in sports such as 12-metre yachting, which rely so heavily on new technology and the millions of dollars that go into its development.

Events such as the America's Cup seem to be a hit-or-miss attempt in development. However, this is not just a yachting phenomenon with the richer and/or luckier team taking the event. A prime example of this occurred at the 1984 winter Olympics in the bobsled. The countries with a great deal of money invested in their bobsled programs (i.e. USSR, East Germany, USA) had developed a new sled that was much faster than the traditional sleds. The teams with the older sleds could not compete and were left far behind. The talent of the teams had little to do with who won, as half the teams were

basically disqualified due to a lack of money and technology. The question seems to be, "Should the medals go to the bobsledders or the designer of the sled?"

What can be done? How can technological advances be taken out of competitive sport? I think that talent and training are the important things and that technological advances have no place in competitive sport unless all teams have them. What's the point of people spending the better part of three years training just to be beaten by a new faster design, driven by someone who may not be as talented or have trained as hard?

Is there a solution? Standardization is one possible answer. Most sports have strict rules that govern all facets of competition. No one would accept raising or lowering a diving board according to the wishes of each individual, or allowing only those people who could afford it to use a scope in a shooting competition. However, this is what technology-dependent sports often amount to. The victory usually goes to the new innovation or to the people who stretch the rules and get away with it.

Sports, in its more classic sense, is a pursuit of personal excellence in fair and equal competition. With sports such as yachting, the fairness is taken out by inequalities in the money spent on development. These events cease to become sports and instead turn into a battle between corporate sponsors with million-dollar budgets. Most individuals competition has been effectively eliminated as the race is decided before the boats even reach the water. If the desire of sport is to promote individual excellence and personal achievement, high-technology sports must be better regulated in order to put the race back in the hands of the competitors. If not, there will still be the exciting race for technology but the sports will be to competition what McDonald's is to fine food.

Dal wins while stranded

By Joann Sherwood

The Dalhousie women's volleyball team travelled to UPEI for a pair of weekend matches. Because of the weather, the Tigers only played Saturday's match, winning 15-10, 15-8, 15-8.

Dalhousie coach Karen Fraser was not entirely happy with her team's performance. She noted that she did have to go with a different lineup because only nine players were able to make the trip. The dark UPEI gym, with the volleyball net loosely hung from the walls, took some getting used to.

"We were trying to run a faster offense because we were getting a lot of free balls," said Fraser.

All of the players got an opportunity to play because Fraser was experimenting with tactics.

The Tigers were sparked by Colleen Doyle with 13 kills, one

ace, and one stuff block. Other Tigers who performed well were Sandra Rice with seven kills, one ace, and one stuffed block, and Paula Clark with seven kills and five blocks. Cheryl Mayne was UPEI's top performer with six kills and two aces.

The Tigers will be travelling to Mount Allison for a pair of contests this weekend. Fraser feels that these games will be important for the Dalhousie team.

"If we can win both games, we have a good chance of taking over first place in the standings," said Fraser.

The Tiger's record against the Mounties so far this season is 1-1.

The Tigers hope to gain the upper hand in the regular season series by putting together a good performance on the court to overcome an unfamiliar crowd and an unfamiliar gym.



Dalhousie Tigers' Sheri Thurrott looks for a teammate to pass the ball to during the Tigers' weekend series against Memorial. Photo by Russ Adams/Dal Photo

Back into contention

By DEAN GOODMAN

The Dalhousie women's basketball team moved back into contention in the AUBC with a pair of wins over Memorial on the weekend. The Tigers won a squeaker 68-66 on Saturday and then posted an impressive 30 point win in Sunday's game.

Paced by Peggy Johnson, who netted 21 points, the Tigers managed to pull out the close game, squeezed past an intense Memorial team. Kathy McCormack added 18 points for the Tigers while Trish McCormack threw in 11. Memorial was led by Diane Cashin who had 15 points and Lorraine Kickey with 13 points.

The first half of Sunday's game was as hard fought as Saturday's action. With strong outside shooting and Dalhousie struggling from the foul line, Memorial opened a 10 point lead. At this point, the Tigers started their full court press, which confused Memorial and allowed Dalhousie to run off fourteen straight points and jump into a 24-21 lead. Memorial managed a small comeback and the teams went into half-time tied at 26.

The second half was all Dalhousie. The Tiger came out with intensity and led by guard Lisa

Briggs, who scored 10 points in the first 7 minutes, the Tigers moved into a commanding 18 point lead before Memorial even got on the scoreboard. Relying on an offense centered around Briggs, outstanding one-on-one skills and showing good defense and smart passing, the Tigers opened a 27 point lead and cruised to an 80-50 win.

The Player of the Game was Dalhousie's Lisa Briggs who had a quiet first half but scored 22 of her 26 points in the second to lead the Tigers to victory. Kathy

McCormack added 19 points for the Tigers. Karen Cotter had 12 points and Diane Cashin scored 10 to lead the Memorial squad.

Hopes are high again for the Tigers after their solid showing. After a dismal 3-3 start, the team has rebounded with three straight wins and has put itself back in the hunt for top spot in the league and the right to host the AUAA Championship. The Tigers can do much for their playoff aspirations this weekend as they face league leading UPEI.

Tri-meet hosted

The Dalhousie swim Tigers hosted a tri-meet competition at the Dalplex pool against Mount Allison and Memorial Universities. In the men's division, the Tigers defeated MtA 71-17 and MUN 69-24. MUN beat MtA 37-24. On the women's side, Dalhousie finished second to MtA. Scores were: Dalhousie falling to Mt. A 26-69 and then losing to MUN by a score of 41-53. Mt A beat MUN 62-33.

The Dalhousie men managed to out-do the visiting swim teams and keep their undefeated streak

intact. The Tigers were without the services of team co-captain Andrew Cole and second year stand-out Darryl Dutton, who were both in Winnipeg attending the Canadian International Championships and World University Games Trials.

The women Tigers, AUAA champs for the past six years, suffered their second loss of the season, which was only their third loss since December of 1979. It was Mount Allison who handed the Tigers both of their losses this season.