

Women Ready for Classic Event

by JOANN SHERWOOD

The women's volleyball team is looking forward to this weekend's Dalhousie Volleyball Classic for a number of reasons.

The tournament is an important one because it influences the CIAU rankings. All the teams in the women's division appear to be strong. Dalhousie coach Karen Fraser feels that this is the strongest field the tournament has had in a number of years because there are no weak teams.

The Tigers placed fourth at last year's Classic and Fraser hopes to finish in or close to fourth position again this year. To get into the playoffs, the Tigers will have to beat two of the teams in their pool. The other teams in their pool are: Moncton, York, and Winnipeg. She emphasizes that her goal is not just to place well in the tournament, but to play well also. Fraser feels that the Tigers must play with intensity and consistency. The team seemed to lack these two elements in Winnipeg last weekend. In this way, the tournament will be good preparation for the AUAA playoffs.

Fraser feels that Dalhousie should be inspired against a team like Winnipeg, which is ranked number one in Canada.

"There's no pressure on us. We have nothing to lose. They're the top team and they're expected to do well," said Fraser.

Winnipeg's chances of capturing the gold medal could be ham-

pered if former national team member Diane Scott is injured. Scott, a middle blocker, was injured during the Winnipeg tournament. She is one of the main attackers for the Winnipeg team.

Manitoba and Sherbrooke should also be strong competitors. Sherbrooke will be lead by Rachel Belliveau. The diminutive setter is a former member of the national team. Barbara Broen can also be counted on as a powerful hitter.

Manitoba, who finished second at the CIAUs last year, will be sparked by strong power hitter Sue Duke, who is fast on defense. Middle blocker Lisa Mork is another main hitter for the Lady Bisons.

The Tigers have not previously seen action against York or Ottawa, who are two of the top teams in the Ontario league.

Dalhousie is used to playing fellow AUAA members UNB and U de M. UNB, though near the bottom of the AUAA standings, has played most of its matches this season against the stronger teams in the AUAA.

Said Fraser, "Moncton should be as tough as they are in regular league games."

The Tigers realize that it will be tough to reach the bronze medal match, but the advantage of playing in front of a home crowd seems to help the Dalhousie squads competing in the Classic.

And Men do too

This year's edition of the Dalhousie Volleyball Classic boasts an extremely strong field, with six of the eight teams participating ranked in the top ten in the country. Perennial powerhouse, the University of Manitoba Bisons, will be the favourite team but will face stiff competition from both Toronto and Laval. The Tigers are definite underdogs but Dalhousie teams have a tradition of playing outstanding volleyball during the Classic and could prove to be the dark horse of the tournament.

The Tigers have had an up and down season so far. Lacking any serious competition in the AUAA, the team has an unblemished league record of 9 wins and no losses. However, the Tigers have struggled in out of conference play. On both their western trips, the Tigers have found the competition extremely tough. Playing at home should be a boost for the team which is looking to move up from their tenth place ranking. Look for All-Canadian Brian Rourke and AUAA All-Star Andrew Kohl to lead the team. In front of a home crowd and with tradition on their side, the young Tiger's team is hoping to pull off some major upsets.

Ranked second in the country, the Manitoba Bisons are the cream of the crop at this year's tournament. Under coach Garth Pishke, the Bisons have been to the CIAU finals seven times in the last seven years. With a good balance of veterans and rookies the Bisons are the front runners in the tournament. The Manitoba

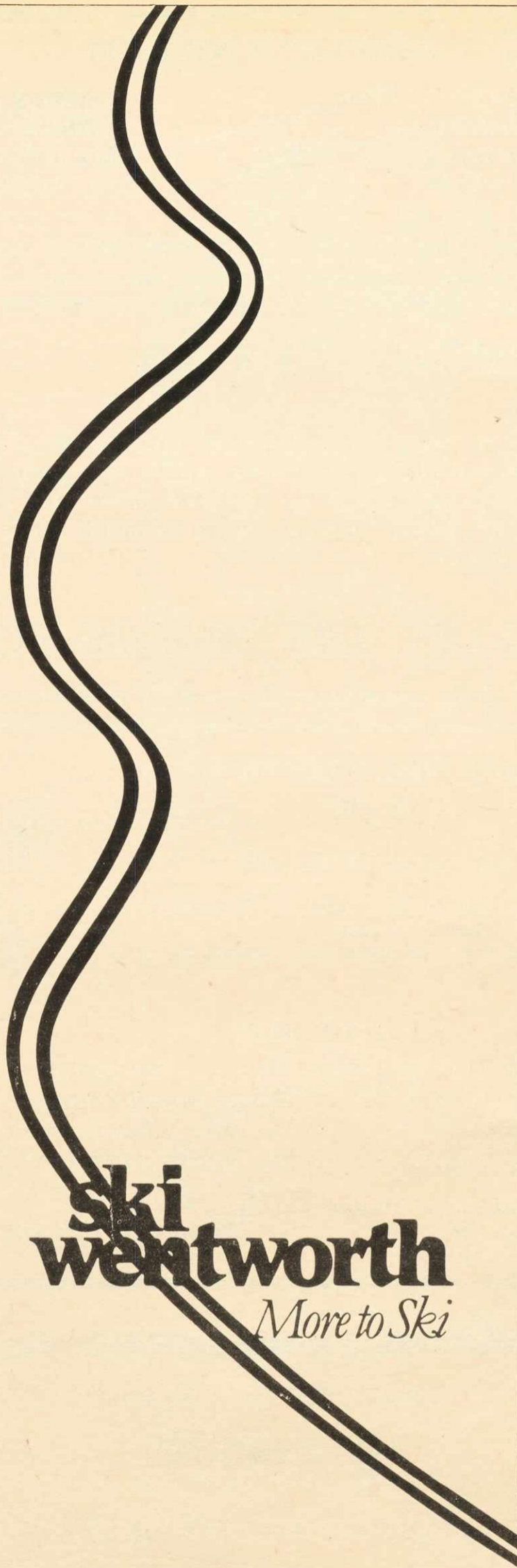
squad will be lead by All-Canadian Dewayne Osbourne, GPAC All-Star Keith Ferley and fifth year blocker Marc Morelli.

The Toronto Varsity Blues are seen as the Bisons toughest competition in the tournament. Ranked fourth in the country, the Blues have managed to defeat the Bisons this season. The Toronto team will be lead by All-Canadian Marc Dunn, OUAA All-Stars John Spicer and Paul Cox, as well as standout rookie Edgar Lueg. The Blues, who defeated the Tigers in a five match pre-season series, are hoping to continue their winning ways in the tournament.

The third ranked team is from Laval. This year's Red and Gold is one of the strongest teams in the university's history. Ranked fifth in the nation, Laval is hoping to improve its ranking with a strong showing. The Red and Gold will be led by former Canadian College MVP, Gino Brosseau as well as veterans Franco Cerantola and Mario Goselin.

Rounding out the field are the young York Yeomen, ranked ninth nationally, last year's Classic Silver medallist, seventh ranked Waterloo, an improving New Brunswick squad, and the rebuilding Sherbrooke Green and Gold.

With the Classic being a major event in determining CIAU rankings, all teams will be hoping to improve their positions as the playoffs approach. With so many top ten teams, the tournament will be a hard fought affair with no easy games for any of the teams.



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