

Hosting York gymnasts look to defend provincial title this weekend

by Riccardo Sala

Hosting the OUAA and OWIAA championships this weekend will be little more than a formality for York's gymnasts, who have dominated gymnastics on the provincial (and national) level for the past twenty years.

Hopefully this year will be no different, with both York teams looking for a successful defence of their respective Ontario titles.

The Yeomen will be bringing a team which has not changed much from last year.

Led by national team members JP Kramer and George Zivic, the Yeomen also boast brothers Mike and Colin Hood of the Ontario team, and New Brunswick team member Seth Bitting.

"We're strong because we have depth," Yeoman coach Tom Zivic pointed out.

McMaster and University of Toronto look to be the biggest competition for the Yeomen this weekend, Zivic pointed out.

Natasa Bajin coaches the Yeowomen gymnasts, and like Zivic, is looking to continue a championship streak.

The Yeowomen have won both the McMaster and Queen's Invitational this year. While the first victory was close, York eclipsing second place McMaster by only half a point, the second victory, by a five-point margin over runner up Western at Queen's, was more heartening.

Bajin is confident of her Yeowomen's chances going into this weekend's OWIAA championships.

"I can't imagine everyone making so many mistakes that they (the Yeowomen) lose. I really feel confident," Bajin said.

Spearheading the Yeowoman defence is Olympian Janine Rankin, a first year York member. Now recovered from a bout of mono that sidelined her during the early part of the season, Rankin should be in top form this weekend.

Yeowoman Rebecca Chambers took top individual honours at the McMaster meet early in January. To-

gether with Rankin, Chambers is one of the leading gymnasts on the Yeowomen.

York also has a lot of depth, as Bajin pointed out.

"If, for instance, Rebecca has a bad day, we won't lose because we have someone like Heidi Clark, who's fourth or fifth on the team, and who can fill in and do the job," Bajin said.

Other Yeowomen with experience include Stacey Umeh and Trista

Bernier.

The Ontario university gymnastics championships take place this weekend at Tait McKenzie. The women's team championships start at 2:00 pm Saturday, the men's at 7:00.

The OUAA (Ontario University Athletic Association) and OWIAA (Ontario Women's InterAthletic Association) finals both take place Sunday at noon.



OH NO NOT ANOTHER TITLE! Maybe that's what York gymnast George Zivic is thinking. The veteran will be playing a key role in the Yeomen's defence of their OUAA title this weekend at Tait. The Yeomen have won close to twenty Ontario titles over the years, and this year looks to be a repeat, though coach Tom Zivic won't deny the threat posed by teams such as UofT and McMaster. photo by Anthony Cohen



PRACTISING at the Gymnastics Academy, a Yeowoman prepares for this weekend's Ontario championships. While the team has several standout athletes, namely Olympian Janine Rankin, most of its strength lies in its depth, which coach Natasa Bajin is hoping to capitalise on to overcome a very competitive field photo by Anthony Cohen

Anderson shines despite York loss versus UofT

by Mike Raycraft

When the jury delivered its verdict following York's 110-93 loss to arch-rival University of Toronto last Tuesday at Tait McKenzie, the defence was found guilty on all counts.

What began as a tightly knit affair soon unravelled for the Yeomen. With the score 19-18 in their favour, the Blues went on a modest ten-four run, widening the gap to seven, 29-22, midway through the first half.

Unfortunately for the Yeomen it didn't stop there. Having established their inside game, UofT used a series of effective screens to set up their outside shots with Scott Bleue and Rowland Semprie.

Neutralizing York's man-to-man coverage, the Blues continued to add to their lead.

A small run by the Yeomen as the first half ended cut Toronto's edge to 13.

York headed to the locker rooms but not without something to think about, namely UofT's 62 per cent shooting from the floor.

"Not to take anything away from UofT, but defensively we couldn't have played a worse first half," York forward Clive Anderson said afterwards.

Anderson himself had a night that made many people forget about the score. With 46 points, Anderson was four points shy of equalling York's single-game scoring record, set by David Coulthard in the early eighties.

Unfortunately it was not a good game for teammate Mark Bellai. Usually a scoring leader, the York forward, coming off a knee injury, pulled in only 12 points that night.

York started the second half appearing to have adjusted well to the Blues attack. By cutting the number of Toronto shots and offensive rebounds with a more focused defence the Yeomen found themselves slowly chipping away at a deficit that once seemed out of reach.

The Yeomen put together a modest ten-four run of their own, tapped by a three-pointer courtesy of guard Wilton Hall, bringing York within five points.

This was as close as York would get. Playing continual catch-up finally took its toll on the Yeomen as the UofT lead became insurmountable.

A Toronto surge late in the second

nullified any York hopes of stealing a win. The Blues rambled off on a thirteen-three run to finish the game with a 110-93 final.

"You can't allow 62 points in the first half and expect to win. Especially against a team like this," said York head coach Bob Bain.

"They beat us inside as well as out," he added.

Where it was a given that Wilson would have his usually strong inside game, shooting from the perimeter—particularly from three-point range—proved too much.

"We expected Robbie (Wilson) to do just what he did tonight, but Scott Bleue and their other shooters just killed us," Anderson said.

"Defensively we just didn't compensate," he added.

Bleue was UofT's leading scorer with 34 points, while Wilson and Semprie had 23 and 15 respectively.

York then travelled to Queen's on Friday, the Yeomen coming away with a 100-87 win over the Gaels.

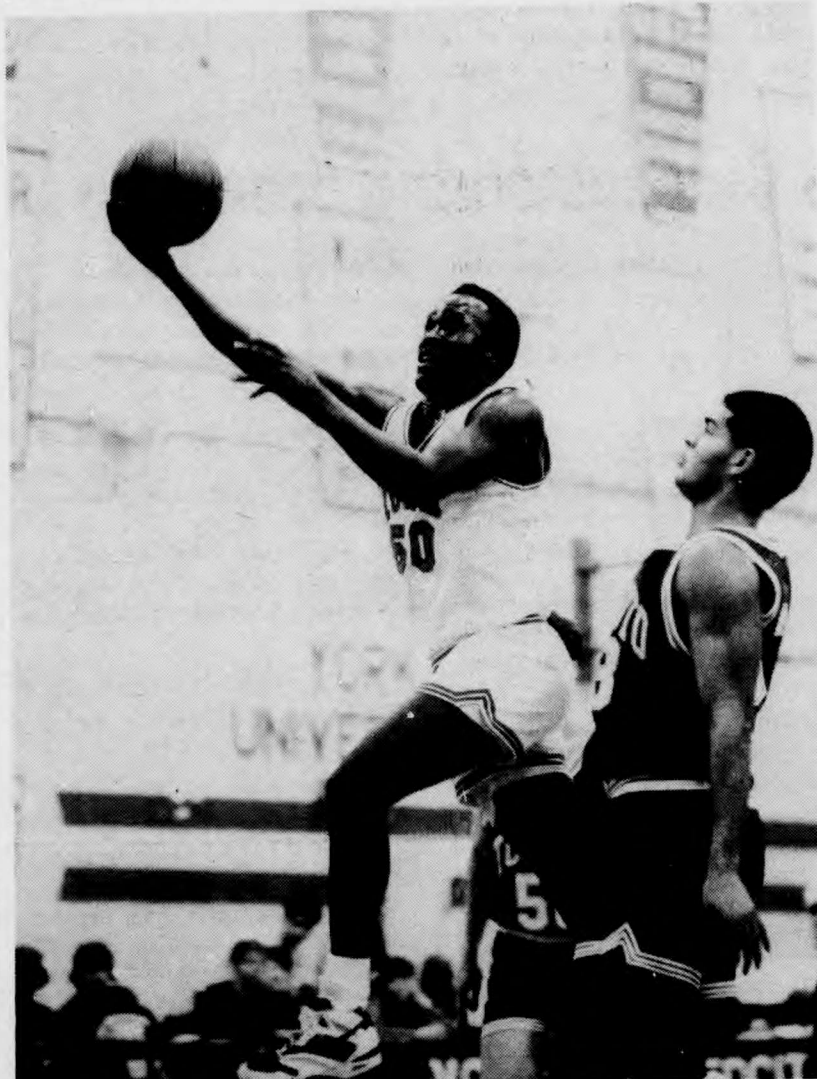
"We were actually behind 61-55 at the half, but we pulled it out in the second," Bain said.

Anderson led York on the scoreboard with 25 points, followed by Bellai with 22. Altogether, six York players scored in the double figure ballpark.

The Yeomen meet the Blues tonight (Wednesday) at UofT.

What then does York have in mind for their rematch at UofT?

"We're going to throw various junk defences at them hoping to get them off balance," Bain said.



LEARNING FROM THE BEST: A UofT player watches on as York's Clive Anderson goes for the basket in last Tuesday's matchup at Tait. Anderson, the leading scorer in the OUAA, nabbed 46 points in the game, which the Blues won 110-93. The Yeomen were at Queen's Friday, coming away with a 100-87 victory and boosting their regular season record to 8-2 photo by Michele Boesener

Bronze on the horizon?

by Riccardo Sala

It is a small renaissance that has taken place this season over at the Ice Palace, one that you're likely to miss if you aren't up before nine o'clock in the morning or not familiar with York's figure skaters.

Practicing early in the morning three days a week, as well as on Tuesday nights, the figure skating Yeowomen, under the tutelage of Judy Chantler, have made their presence known in the OWIAA this season with several strong finishes, including a fourth place at a recent Queen's meet.

In Kingston, the Yeowomen placed in five events. Tina van Hinte came second in intermediate singles; the duet of Jackie Macdonald and Rachel Caron took a silver in the senior pairs.

Bronze medals came York's way with Selina Tombs in the Senior A singles, Robin Casson in the short program and Julia Vaccari in the Senior B singles.

Going into this weekend's OWIAA championships at Western, the Yeowomen are gunning for a possible third spot.

Lofty heights these, for a team which last year finished eighth of nine teams in the province.

In her first year with the Yeowomen, Chantler is overseeing an eleven member squad, of which seven are rookies.

Chantler's background is fitting. As a former Western skater, she was part of a program

which along with Queen's dominated the OWIAA for the longest time.

"Judy has exceptionally good leadership skills. She's not perfect, but she's open to suggestions. She's very open-minded and tries to do what's best for the team," team veteran Jackie Macdonald said.

For Chantler, who works as a coach at the Unionville and Forest Hill figure skating clubs, the progress of her York skaters has been a pleasant sidelight to her return to university skating.

"My whole motto this season is that we're rebuilding. No matter how we do, we're just going to get better and better," Chantler said.

New routines are being used this year. As the skaters learn these, especially the team routines, Chantler is looking at a team which next year will be able to build upon this repertoire.

With their Queen's results behind them, the Yeowomen are now looking to validate themselves with a suitable finish at the provincials this weekend.

"The girls are really motivated and want to have a good team and be in the top three," Chantler said.

In a lot of ways this is like bicycle racing. For the longest time, the Yeowomen were at the back of the pack. This weekend they'll be making a run for the lead, hoping to leave the rest of the pack behind in their bid for a bronze.