

# Hockey Tigers looking good

by Greg Dennis

After coming off their successful season last year, the Dalhousie Tigers, AUSA hockey titlists and Canadian runner-ups, are now preparing themselves for the upcoming '79-'80 campaign. The Tigers are trying to better last year's record when they upset the first place St. Mary's Huskies two games to one to win the Atlantic championship. Although it will be a difficult task to top last year's performance, coach Pierre Page, now in his eighth term as the Tigers mentor, is confident his troops will disappoint no one.

There are just eleven returning members, which means at least nine new faces will be suiting up this year. Big skates to fill will be those owned by Paul MacLean (recently selected to the Canadian Olympic hockey squad), Earl Theriault, Don Wier, Bob Dugan, Ray Off, Shaun and Allie MacDonald.

Needing size and speed, coach Page and his assistants looked locally and across the country in search of replacements and came up with some fine talent. Ex-Sherbrooke Beavers captain Ken Johnson and Gary Ryan from Moncton will bolster the weakened defensive corps. Page also expects fine showings from skaters Chuck Tuplin, Don Zimmel and Don Matheson.

Naturally, with the team's success in the nation last year, many quality players consider Dalhousie an excellent school to develop their talents. Different from past years, there is a winning attitude and a positive feeling at Dalhousie. This has resulted in a number of top-notch performers being recruited.

"Athletes have always wanted to come to Dalhousie," commented Page, "but they've always doubted our seriousness. The Tigers are serious."

Calling the AUSA conference, "the most competitive in Canada", Page feels St. Mary's Huskies will traditionally be strong and that they will be the team to battle with for first place, a position never attained by the Tigers (they were second last year). Page also expects that the other four teams in the league (UPEI, St. F.X., U of Moncton, and Acadia) will be extremely competitive.

Turning his thoughts to the future, Page commented on the idea of having a National University League, comprising the top two or three teams from each conference across the country.

"On June 19, Dr. George Kingston, who is the coach of Calgary, proposed the idea. It wasn't accepted this year by the CIAU, but they have a committee on study now to determine its feasibility. Derrick Holmes, the supervisor for Hockey Canada, is talking to the presidents and directors of athletics to convince them that the league is a good thing", said Page.

Page foresees the proposed league as being a good foundation for prospective Olympic hockey players. Most exceptionally skilled players shun university to turn professional. The formation of a "Super League" with the best of talent and good competition may encourage players to seek an education as well as develop their hockey careers. Such a combination is ideal for players and Hockey Canada. Page states, "I think it will come about next year".

There are a couple of stumbling blocks, the major one being economics. The federal government has promised aid and sponsors can be hopefully rounded up to help reduce costs. Another problem will be convincing university presidents that such a league will not deter players from their studies. Page added, "Halifax would love to

adopt their own people . . . their own team."

However, for now, coach Page is concentrating and looking forward to this season. It took much confidence and hard work to get to the finals last year and it will take more of the same this year. "I don't believe anything comes easy," said Page, "when you think you've got it sewed up, that's when you fall flat on your face."

Don't look for the Tigers to be sitting on their laurels, it's definitely not in Pierre Page's playbook.

## Women's volleyball tryouts

Tryouts for the Dalhousie Women's Volleyball Tigers begins this evening at 7:30 in the Dal gym. All players attending this camp are to be dressed and ready to begin by 7:15.

With a large number of players returning from last season's squad and the addition of many outstanding rookies expected at this year's camp, Dal should have one of the strongest teams ever seen in the Atlantic Region.

The season should prove exciting with the Dalplex hosting the Dal / Acadia Invitational and the National Seniors Championship. Along with these tournaments at home, the Women Tigers will be travelling to the Waterloo Invitational, a training session in Cuba at Christmas and many other tournaments.

For further information on either the team tryouts or the season's schedule contact either Coach Lois MacGregor at 424-2152 or Kent Rodgers at 469-1830.



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