

Lady Harriers look to CIAU

by IAN SUTHERLAND

A combination of youth, experience, hard work and positive thinking has allowed the UNB Lady Harriers to advance to the CIAU women's cross-country championships for the sixth year in a row.

The Lady Harriers won their sixth title two weeks ago at the UNB Woodlot by edging favored Dalhousie Lady Tigers by three points. The Lady Harriers, who have won the championship every year it has been contested, are in Lennoxville, P.Q. this Saturday for the Canadian championships, admitting openly their chances of victory are slim.

"We seem to improve every year," co-captain Tammi Richardson said. "The problem is that all the teams at the CIAUs improve every year. The competition is awfully tough at that level. All we can do is try our best and see what happens."

If you remember, this was supposed to be the year the Lady Harriers fell off the ladder. Margaret MacDonald had graduated from UNB and people assumed the Harriers would be easy prey for teams from Dalhousie and Memorial.

And for most of the year, that seemed to be the case.

Dalhousie was winning a majority of the meets, with UNB placing second. "But the margin kept getting smaller and smaller (between the two teams)," Richardson said. "We improved a little bit every meet and were pretty confident for the AUAA's."

In the end, UNB grabbed the title by just three points over Dalhousie, with Michele Cormier's third-place finish pacing UNB. Richardson finished sixth and Lynn Poole seventh to round off the all-star team. The end of the race brought relief for Cormier, who found herself under increasing scrutiny in the week preceding the championship. The media attention she received was a new experience, and she admits the pressure began to bother her.

"I tried to ignore all the attention," Cormier said. "I wasn't sure how I was going to do in the race, but other people were putting pressure on me by saying I had to have a good race if UNB was going to win; I've never had that kind of pressure before."

While the natural goal is to win the CIAUs, Richardson said the team is well aware that their chances are slim at best.

"Actually, most of the pressure is off of us now," Richardson said. "The AUAA championships were a reachable goal and, because of the past history, people were expecting a lot out of us and we were expecting a lot out of ourselves."

With the past two weeks off from competition, the Lady Harriers have been tuning up for the trip to Lennoxville. As Richardson explains, there isn't a whole lot more that can be done to get the team ready.

"Anything we do now won't

make a great deal of difference," she said. "All we've been doing is running on a golf course and doing some speed work. The championships are going to be held on a golf course, so we wanted to get used to running on one."

Regardless of what happens this weekend, both Cormier and Richardson are happy with the season, and give a lot of the credit to coach Joe Lehmann.

Richardson, a fourth-year science student, said Lehmann understands the

aspect of the sport.

"The team is what counts, but Joe also relates to everyone as individuals," she said. "He knows that different people have different personalities and have to be treated differently."

For first-year science student Cormier, Lehmann's time commitment is inspiring.

"He puts so much time into it that you want to do well for his sake as well as your own," she said. "I can't believe how dedicated he is to helping us race our best."

Red Devils lose tough one

The hockey Red Devils face a stiff challenge Saturday afternoon at the Aitken Center, with powerful Moncton Blue Eagles in town for a 2 p.m. appointment.

The Blue Eagles have

Mounties 8 - Red Devils 7

garnered three victories in four starts to date this season, while the Red Devils have one victory in three starts. UNB dropped a tough 8-7 decision to Mount Allison Mounties in Sackville last Friday night. John LeBlanc fired two goals

and added two assists for the Red Devils while single goals were scored by Bruce Carroll, Peter Thorne, David Goodland, Mark Jeffrey and Charlie Cameron. For UNB coach Doug MacLean, there were some positive points in the game.

"For one, I think we showed a lot of character by scoring five goals in the third period," he said. "We actually had a good opportunity to win the game, despite a poor second period. Our special teams also played much better than they had the previous week. We

scored three powerplay goals in eight attempts and our penalty killing was much more effective than it had been in the past."

Against Moncton, MacLean says the entire team must be willing to put out 100% if the Devils are to be successful.

"We won't win if only one or two lines are playing up to par," he said. "We need strong, two-way hockey out of everyone. We also can't afford to take bad penalties ... they always have a strong powerplay and can kill you with their powerplay."

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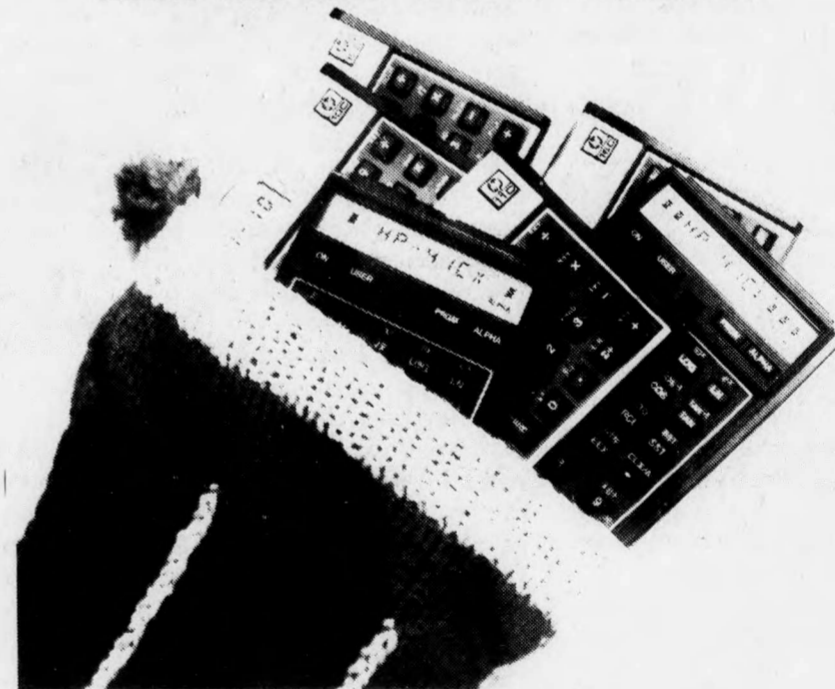
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