

S P O R T S

Yeomen fencers finish a close second in Invitational Queen's edges out York by single point



TAKE THAT: A fencer from Kingston's Royal Military College lunges at a Yeoman at the recent York Invitational Fencing Tournament. Although the York fencer looks to be in trouble here, they went on to defeat RMC and earn a silver medal in the sabre competition. A female fencer from Ryerson was stabbed by a broken foil, taken to hospital and later released with a chipped rib.

By EDO VAN BELKOM

With all 16 Ontario universities competing at the York University Fencing Invitational Tournament, the Yeomen had the opportunity to measure their ability against the best the OUAA had to offer.

Judging by their performance York coach Richard Politynski feels confident that he will have all three of his teams in the provincial finals. But having teams in the OUAA finals is nothing new for Politynski, who has been coaching the Yeomen for 11 years. During that time the Yeomen have made frequent appearances in the finals, winning a total of two team bronze and silver medals and one individual gold.

According to Politynski, the essential ingredient to fielding competitive teams, is a small corps of dedicated and eager athletes. Although this sounds fairly simple it hasn't always been easy to do. "The basic problem is that fencing is not a high school sport. We always have a good initial turnout and from that first meeting about 25% of the people stay on to compete in their first year. Out of those people about 20% stay on with the team and compete for their whole time at York.

"The first thing that brings them out," Politynski continued, "is the romantic idea they get from movies and television. But when they find out about university life and when they find its not as easy as it looks, they drop out."

Team members agree with this assessment adding that people show up to the first meeting expect a weapon to be handed to them and then give up when they realize that a great deal of physical preparation is involved.

But progress has been made in York's fencing program as there are

18 members of the present fencing team while the starting fencers had to beg athletes to join the club in order to field a minimum nine member team. This year the Yeomen have the luxury of fielding full A and B teams in all three weapons. Although the Yeomen have a full complement of fencers they still lack enough women to field a women's team.

Larissa Banting is the single woman on the Yeowomen, who must combine with women fencers from Ryerson to compete as part of a team. Because of this Banting will not be allowed to compete in the provincial finals; even in the individual competition a competitor is required to belong to a university team. "I have been trying to get girls out for the next year. We can't have a women's team without enough girls first," Banting said.

Banting competed in the weekend tournament with some Ryerson teammates but was unfortunately knocked out in the first round. The men on the other hand fared well placing seventh in both the foil and epee events and an impressive second in the sabre competition. Overall the Yeomen placed a close second to the University of Western Ontario, finishing just a single point behind.

NOTES: With weapon names like foil and sabre, fencing sounds like a dangerous sport. Precautions are made and wounds are rare but sometimes accidents happen, as they did on the weekend. A female fencer from Ryerson was stabbed when a competitor's weapon broke (the most dangerous occurrence in the sport) and the jagged tip of the foil punctured her protective equipment. The woman was taken to hospital with a chipped rib and later released.

B-ball Yeomen 3-0 in OUAA; but lose to Waterloo 81-68 in Mike Moser Memorial game

By GARY SCHOLICH

Although the York basketball Yeomen are now 3-and-0 in conference play, coach Bob Bain feels that there are some areas that still need work.

Prior to this past weekend, York coasted to an 86-70 home victory over Ryerson. On Saturday, they went up to Sudbury and knocked off previously unbeaten Laurentian 77-60. However, in between the two wins was an 81-68 exhibition loss to Waterloo in the Mike Moser Memorial Game.

"We didn't capitalize at Waterloo. We had to play 'catch up.' Their key players, Paul Boyce and Peter Savich hit for 27 and 18 points." Waterloo centre, 7' Randy Norris missed the game with a knee injury, but Bain felt that his backup Jamie McNeill did a fine job in his place. Stu Levinsky led York with 15 points.

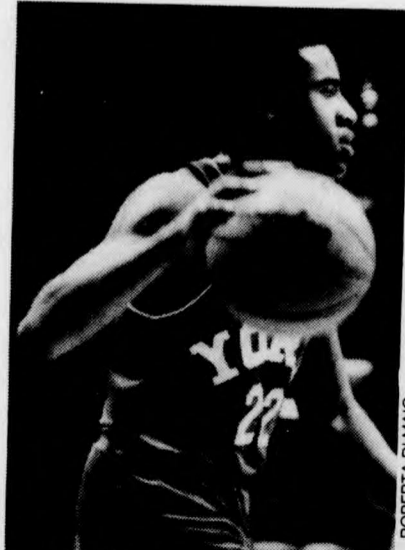
"I feel that some of our guys may have been more apprehensive about Laurentian. There was a lot of hype, and they were 8-and-0. We executed well and we capitalized. Mark (Jones) controlled the tempo and took good shots. He played probably his finest game of the season. Tim (Rider) hit 8 of 10 shots to lead with 24 points, and Mike Sherwood played well off the bench against both Waterloo and Laurentian."

Bain feels that the man-to-man defense has been strong at times, and he has also been impressed with the team's ability to rebound from adversity. However, he feels that inconsistency has plagued the team.

First of all, York does not have a "true" centre. Secondly, the bench has not delivered on a consistent basis, although it has looked good at times.

Tomorrow night, the Yeomen will face Ottawa, while on Saturday night, they face Queen's in the "Let's Make a Deal" doubleheader. "Ottawa is small. They play hard and come to you, but they have suffered a couple of injuries."

"Queen's is much improved," Bain said, adding, "they're mobile and play man-to-man very well. Our fatigue level was high when we beat them in Calgary (72-62) during the road trip, but I don't see a 30-point blowout anymore."



MARK JONES: Coach Bain said he played his best game of the season against Laurentian.

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