

One-man volleyball team dominates York

by Paul Ghezzi

Brad Thomas, a one-man volleyball team, handed the York Intermural All-Stars two consecutive defeats. Winning with scores of 15-5 and 15-0, Thomas also provided an entertaining exhibition of his unique style of play.

Waiting in anticipation, the crowd seemed to buzz in disbelief as Thomas was introduced. He was far from resembling the well built, sleek athlete everyone expected. He seemed too short and too overweight to live up to his reputation of 496 wins and 15 losses. This notion was quickly put to rest as the whistle blew to signal the beginning of the match.

Thomas scored quickly, compiling six unanswered points before York could respond with one of its own. Using quick lateral foot movements and his keen sense of timing to bump, set and spike the ball, Thomas scored the next four points. It was clear that the York team was suffering from nervousness and intimidation.

Thomas' strategy was one of positioning and of pinpointing weaknesses in the York defence.

All his shots were directed at the players he thought would have the most difficulty returning them. Whenever he spiked the ball, Thomas made sure he was on the far left or far right sideline. Any attempt to block the ball by the All-Stars would send it out of bounds.

York struggled to mount an offensive retaliation that was quickly reversed by inconsistent play. With the aid of an aggressive frontline, York was able to rally with four consecutive points to put the score at 10-5. Said Thomas, "They had two or three guys out there who could really spike." However, too many missed serves and bumps allowed Thomas to score the remaining five points needed for victory. York's inconsistency carried into the second game.

In the next match, Thomas took control from the onset and dominated until the end. His main weapons of attack were a hard, accurate jump serve and an elusive top-spinning spike. Feeling the lead he had accumulated was insurmountable, Thomas dazzled the crowd with a variety of serving and volleying techniques.

Thomas was able to hand the York Intramural All-Stars an easy defeat and advance his record to 497-15. The team did not play up to its potential and made too many unforced errors. A more relaxed, less intimidated York team would have provided Thomas with more difficult competition. When asked about the overall performance of the team, Thomas replied, "They were good. A lot better than I expected."

Thomas began playing one-man volleyball in 1983. While organizing co-ed games he found that he could beat most teams he played. Prior to touring and exhibiting his talent, he played college volleyball at Ball State University in Ohio. Due to his height he was unable to try out for the U.S. Olympic team.

Since 1983, he has toured the U.S. extensively and is now concentrating on Canada. He has also done a great deal of work for various charities and benefits.

In the future, Thomas will be doing work in the Toronto area and a possible Asian tour is in the works, but Thomas won't confirm the dates until it is ironed out with his sponsor.

Japanese defeat volleyball Yeowomen

by Sharon Creelman

It was a case of too little too late. The Yeowomen volleyball team was beaten in a pre-season exhibition match by a touring Japanese club with scores of 15-3, 15-6, 15-12.

The Tokyo team wasted little time in putting the Yeowomen under fire. York head coach Merv Mosher felt the strengths of the opponents were their speed on attack with quick outside sets, as well as their execution of combination play. According to Mosher, "The ball just kept coming back (over the net)."

The Japanese team was noticeably the harder hitting of the two teams. Time after time the opposition was able to penetrate the blocking of the York frontline. Mosher, however, did not feel his team was overwhelmed by the power-hitting of the Japanese.

"Our girls have had the ball hit

that hard at them before," commented Mosher. "Many of them just haven't seen it in a few months."

Offensively, York was guilty of a number of missed hits and missed opportunities. These will occur without enough practice time. The Japanese, on the other hand, were brilliant in their execution at the net. This, according to Mosher, is the result of the amount of practice they have had together as a unit.

"Their team would be practicing together about three to four hours a day," explained Mosher. There was no doubt in anyone's mind who watched this match that this was a highly skilled and disciplined unit.

The best game was definitely the third one. York seemed to be getting a handle on its opposition. Chris Pollit began finding holes in the blocking, while the York

blockers stood tall and turned back many of the Japanese attacks. Throughout game three, the York crowd caught glimpses of just how talented the Yeowomen can be.

Much of the breakdown in the York play in the first two games can be attributed to lack of preparation time. With only one week of training together, things such as "timing and court positioning are going to be affected," said Mosher.

So what can we expect from the 1989-90 Yeowomen? "These girls are hungry after not winning last year's OW's," said Mosher. "They feel they have something to prove to themselves."

How good can this team be? Mosher feels it has the potential to be better than last year's team. York will open its season at the Reebok Tait Classic at the end of October.

Yeomen rugby defeated

by Brian Amuchastegui

Last Saturday, the Waterloo Warriors capitalized on York's defensive errors and lack of self-discipline to defeat the Yeomen 10-3.

"We didn't have self-discipline in the first half," admitted York head coach Bill Currie. "They played hard, didn't take any penalties, and deserved to win."

York started the game strongly, with its pack winning most scrums and forcing its opposition to take the defensive.

The play in the first half was conservative, with both teams intent on keeping the play in mid-field. The wings from both teams had little chance to open their running game as the play was dictated by kick advances and not lateral movement. York missed a good opportunity for going ahead early when fullback Grant Purdy blasted a penalty kick, striking the Waterloo left post.

The score was opened by the Yeomen with a penalty kick from flyhalf Andrew Saunders to put them ahead 3-0. The wind aided the Yeomen in the first half and they capitalized on it, keeping the play mostly on the Warriors' side.

The second half was quite a different story. Waterloo appeared to benefit from the wind, now blowing in its direction. Waterloo was more solid in its game, opening its

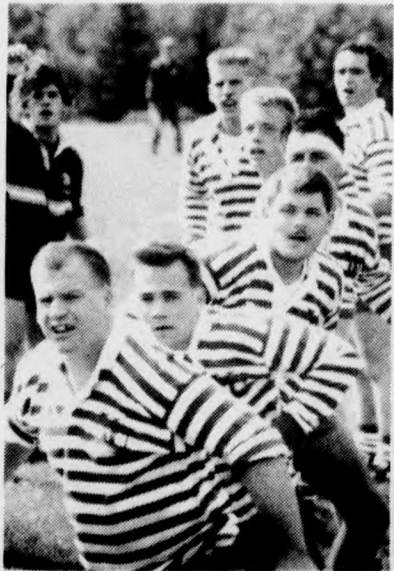
passing, creating an efficient running game and capitalizing on some of York's defensive lapses.

Twenty minutes into the second half, Waterloo passed to the offensive and the score went to 7-3 in its favour. A long kick inside Yeomen territory put Waterloo in command, 10-3. From that point on, its lead was never threatened.

The Warriors, led by Mike Fisher and Ontario University Athletic Association (OUAA) all-star Paul Tune, were able to stay clear of penalties and engineer a more effective ruck-and-maul game. Although smaller than their York counterparts, they were able to maintain their offensive attack.

This game saw effective first half play from the York forwards: they played decisively but failed to capitalize on their offensive possessions. The Yeomen controlled their opponents well in the first half and, for a while, it looked as if they would be running away with the game. However, their sting was gone by the second half and the visiting team did the most with their opportunities.

Both teams agree the competition is stiff between the contenders for this year's first division title. "The league is so balanced," said Waterloo Assistant Coach Derek Humphreys. "It's spread even between five or six teams and, on any given day, any team can beat another."



Jennifer Crane

Yeomen rugby.

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