

CLUB SPORTS

Ironmen crush opposition

Looking ahead to Mt. A and Pictou County

by Bones

Having lost their first match the UNB 2nd 15 were faced with a must win situation on Saturday. Their opponents, the Saint Thomas Tommies had defeated Mount Allison and allowed STU to leave the field with a 2-0 record would, according to coach Bob Cockburn, "virtually eliminating whatever chances we have of a Maritime University Championship."

The fierce rivalry between the two universities promised a good match. Both teams took to College Field eager to earn their bragging rights. The Ironmen stormed down the field straight from the opening kickoff. Hitting hard, the forwards took immediate control of the

game. Rucking and mauling textbook-style, they set up a try for Veteran Pack Leader Eric Ednie.

The Ironmen continued their domination in every aspect of the game. Continual support by the forwards (which included a prop supporting a winger!!) created numerous overlaps which enabled John Bujold to score several of his four tries.

The control of the forwards was especially evident in the scrums as several times they drove the Tommies four or five yards. These feats of strength forced the STU back field to retreat and thus left them vulnerable to the speed of Jamie Flynn as he flew down the sideline on many occasions, one of them resulting in a try.

Captain John Croucher scored a try much like the one against PEI when he caught the Tommies off-guard by quickly playing the ball on a penalty and driving to corner. Troy Stevens notched the final try on a spectacular burst through the STU backfield. The remainder of the scoring was done by kicker Tim Keddy whose ability to place the ball through the uprights from next to the sideline, totaled the final score to 46-0.

That same afternoon the A side took on the Kings County Lions. Their roar was quickly felt by the Ironmen as the Lions stormed out to a 10-0 lead. This lead was short lived as Matt Thorpe and Dean Plant combined on a drive up the sideline that allowed the latter to reduce the score to 10-7. This proved to be all the incentive the Ironmen required as they commenced to shut down the Lions' offence.

Encouraged by the sterling play of flankers Chris Irwin and Danny McGinn and the ability of Chris Turkenkopf to handle is own in his first rugby debut the forwards slowly took command of the game.

Marching down the field the pack was able to set up the ball which when spun out enabled Dylan Ashpole to weave through the opposition for his first of two tries and give the Ironmen a 12-10 lead. This would prove to be enough as from then on the Lions were unable to mount a constant offensive.

A try by Captain Kevin Kerstens took whatever wind was left out of the Lions' sails. The strength of the Ironmen could then be seen as Frank Dolan, Matt Thorpe, and Dean Plant rounded off the final score to 42-10.

This Saturday the Ironmen 1st 15 travel to Pictou County while at 2 PM the B side plays Mount Allison at College field. Anyone interested in enjoying what promises to be a hard fought rivalry is more than welcome to attend.

Scuba Club

Open pool time for all club members this week will be Monday Night October 4, 7:30-9:30 P.M.; at the Sir Max Aitken Pool. This is "free open pool time" for all members. The club has a wide variety of equipment for use! Certified scuba divers from all associations are always welcome.

A schedule for open pool activities has been made up for the term and is available at the scuba club. Such activities include underwater orienteering, scuba relay races, underwater scuba, hockey, update your skills session, and more. Also, a schedule of weekend dives is available for those of you who wish to do some diving on the weekends. There will be advanced and rescue courses offered this fall.

The scuba club would like to say special thanks to Inland Scuba for their contribution on student activity day.

For more information about the UNB Scuba Club please contact Kevin Johnston at 472-3101.

VIEW From The Cheap Seats

By Mark Savoie

Last week in my less than lucid ramblings I touched upon the subject of Wayne Gretzky. It is my expectation that the countless legions of the Cult of Wayne have already condemned me to the infernal tortures of the Ottawa Senators or the endless painful ignominy of the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim. Their reasoning? I have blasphemed! I have said evil things about Wayne, who is the Great One to whom all others must be compared to their discredit.

In an effort to spare myself inclusion in the nefarious pits of the San José Sharks or the doom that is the Dallas Stars I will hereby try to redeem myself. Although I will continue to expound long after my banishment to the Florida Panthers that Gretzky is and always has been overrated, I will swear by the virtue that is God's team the Montréal Canadiens that Gretzky is worth every penny of his record breaking contract with Bruce MacNall and the Los Angeles Kings.

Last week I wrote that the object of hockey is to win. A perfectly lovely sentiment, except that at the professional level it is untrue. It is as untrue in hockey as it is in baseball, basketball, and football. In each of these sports, at the professional level, the idea is not to win but is instead to make money. And the way to make money is to get people to watch. Winning thus becomes merely a tool to an end, and not an end in itself.

It is for this reason that I was not shocked to hear rumours that the Ottawa Senators intentionally lost games in order to secure the rights to Alexandre Daigle. To me the surprise was more that the rumours appear to have been false. The stories of team's losing intentionally in order to gain a better drafting position are not new. In the early 1970s two of the expansion teams were trailing the rest of the league by a wide margin. The general manager of the team which was slightly ahead of the other called his counterpart on the other team and asked, "Aren't you guys ever going to win?" The response was, "Not unless you do first." Even playoff teams are sometimes suspect. The Montréal Canadiens were once accused of intentionally dropping from third to fourth in the standings in order to face the New York Rangers and not the mighty Boston Bruins in the quarter finals.

The reason for doing so are obvious, and the ethics - if questionable - not necessarily improper. By losing now when ultimate victory is either impossible or unlikely you increase your chances of winning greater victories at a later time. The naïve among the Senators' fans may have been scandalized by the rumours, but the more realistic realize that at the end of such a lost season a few extra losses are a small price to pay in order to get Daigle. With a marquis player such as this, the Senators will: a) win more than they would otherwise, b) draw more fans than they would otherwise, and thus c) make more money (regardless of Daigle's contract) than they would otherwise. Thus, taking advantage of the NHL's existing draft policy is sound management. It is the league's responsibility to make losing less rewarding.

Now, with that little aside out of the way, we can return to Wayne Gretzky and his contract. Since the object of professional sports is to make money it stands to reason that the player who makes the most money for his team should get the most money in return. With that as the criteria Gretzky is probably being underpaid. The fact of the matter is that Wayne Gretzky has put more asses in more seats than any other player in the NHL's long and often sordid history. I, a non-Gretzky fan if ever there was one, once made a trek to Québec for a chance to see Gretzky play. Just so that years from now I'll be able to tell my grandkids (I got hopes, don't I?) that I saw the Great Gretzky play live and in person.

Other examples of this abound. In the middle 1970's the New York Jets had two quarterbacks: Joe Namath and Ken O'Brien. Namath was the legendary hero of Super Bowl III, the man who made pantyhose safe for men. O'Brien was just some guy who played quarterback. The coaches knew that if O'Brien started the Jets would have a better chance to win. The market analysts knew that if Namath started the Jets would sell more tickets and have better television ratings. Guess who started? If you said Namath go to the head of the class.

Perhaps Reginald Martinez Jackson put it best when he asked of reporters with his usual false humility why it was that he and Lee Maye had virtually the same career stats and yet Lee Maye was getting a routine salary while he was "the best damn paid player in the game." The answer, according to Reggie (and for once he was right), was because he, unlike Maye, put asses in the seats. Love him or loathe him, Reggie did earn what he was paid.

What is the consequence of all this? Is this a bad thing? Should winning be more important than making money? For once I am unashamed to admit that I do not know the answers to these questions. Ideally, it would be nice if every team tried to win every game every season. Unfortunately, this is not realistic. The Kansas City Chiefs intentionally reduced their chances of defeating the Houston Oilers three weeks ago because they were afraid of the risk of an early season injury to their Super Bowl hope, Joe Montana.

Who am I to gainsay them? Ultimately, with the possible exception of Maple Leaf fans, if the fans are unhappy with what they see they will discontinue their support. Since spectator sports are a form of entertainment the fans are entitled to support only the entertainment which they wish to support. If starting a fan favourite over a superior player makes the fans happy, then maybe that's the way to go. If causing short term fan unhappiness by losing intentionally now can cause long term fan happiness by winning consistently later, then maybe that's the way to go.

But as a purist, neither is satisfactory.

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