

Sports editorial: The right way to do it

by: Bruce Denis

If you consider big time American sports, usually college football and basketball rank alongside professional football, baseball, basketball and hockey. Fortunately, the same cannot be said for big time Canadian sports. Fortunately, you ask? Bear with me, fellow Canadian patriotes, you'll agree.

Most American universities and colleges are known to plug millions of dollars into their sports departments every year. Can you believe Rutgers, the state college of New Jersey, spends over \$3 million a season on their division II football team. Where does this money go? Much of it is put towards equipment and uniforms as well as staff salaries, however a large portion is paid to athletes as part of athletic scholarships or bursaries. Well funded sports teams are usually successful and successful sports teams give their respective institutions a favorable image. This image attracts potential students who then spend exceptionally high amounts of money on tuition and student fees to fund the sports budget. But this cyclical system victimizes the athlete.

Unfortunately, a majority of those athletes earning \$50,000 "scholarship" salaries are functionally illiterate and were chosen solely for their athletic ability. Granted, they are given the opportunity to make big league sports, but only a select few actually do. Most return to their former lifestyles after tantalizing and abusing themselves with their apparent wealth. And despite graduating with a university degree, they rarely earn it. Many officials in university sports programs would argue that they are providing to athletes with an opportunity they would otherwise not have. However, using (or abusing) an athlete for their football prominence for four years and then giving them a degree so they can return to the South Bronx and become a ventilation duct cleaner is not my idea of providing opportunities. Hence, the American college sports system epitomizes its capitalist political foundation.

In Canada, the government, in one of its few productive moves, has forbidden any university institution to issue athletic scholarships. How has this affected sports programs in our schools?

Varsity sports has become much more tangible. UNB has a very archetypal Canadian university sports program which is flourishing. With a significantly small budget (estimated at 1/12 of the Rutgers football team budget) the program seems much more mundane than that of our southern counterparts. Consequently, the program caters more to the elite amateur athlete than the spoiled professional. Elsewhere in Canada there is speculation that some athletes are paid under the table, however this practice is kept to a controllable level by the evil eye of the government. So why is this good? The athletes that UNB attracts *want* to be here. They are here not only to exploit their physical maximum but also to attain a quality education. UNB athletes are not national heroes, they don't do the talk show circuit and their names don't grace the t-shirts of Notre-Dame students. They are local heroes, they sit next to you in class, they even get their names printed in the Brunswickan once in a while. But almost all of them graduate with legitimate degrees and a good education. Instead of being the financial height of their lives, university is only the beginning.

American college sports is about marketing, it's about making money at the expense of many talented human beings. Canadian university sports is about gracefully passing the torch from an athletic career to an academic career. The right way to do it.

Kudos to the Ottawa Senators and the Tampa Bay Lightning who were initiated into the NHL as the preseason got under way last week. The Lightning hosted the Minnesota Stars and thrilled the sellout crowd with a 4-4 tie. The Senators fared equally well tying their hosts, the Hartford Whalers, 1-1 before a less than enthusiastic 8000 fans. Perhaps the NHL should divert their attention from the possibility of attendance problems at southern venues (San Jose and Tampa Bay) to similar problems in established Hockey towns like Hartford.

Congratulations to all those involved with the Terry Fox Run last Sunday. Thanks to perfect weather and a great turnout, the event raised over \$7,000 for cancer research.

This week's trivia question: Name the current UNB student who is a former national cycling champion.

Last week's answer: The Buffalo Sabres have both their nickname and city name in their logo.

Campus recreation

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Exercise Bikes Monark 817

Two exercise bikes are available for UNB/STU students and Recreation members. The bikes are located on the second floor in the L.B. Gym, near the squash courts. Instructions for use are posted.

Tennis Courts

Four tennis courts located above Tibbits Hall are available on a first-come, first-serve basis only. Reservations for individuals are only accepted during the summer, however, groups can book the courts 24 hours in advance by contacting the Equipment and Facilities Manager at 453-4579 during office hours.

NON-CREDIT INSTRUCTION

SQUASH

Basic and Follow-up classes are provided on Tuesday evenings from October 6 to November 3.

Registration: begins Sept. 16 at the UNB Business Office
Registration deadline is Sept. 30

Fees: \$25 - for students & recreation members
\$50 - for non-members
add \$5 after September 30

WEIGHT TRAINING

Beginner classes are offered at the weight training room in the L.B. Gymnasium on Monday and Wednesday evenings from October 5 to November 4.

Registration: begins September 16 at the UNB Business Office
Registration deadline is Sept. 30

Fees: \$25 - for UNB/STU students and recreation members
\$50 - for non-members
add \$5 after September 30

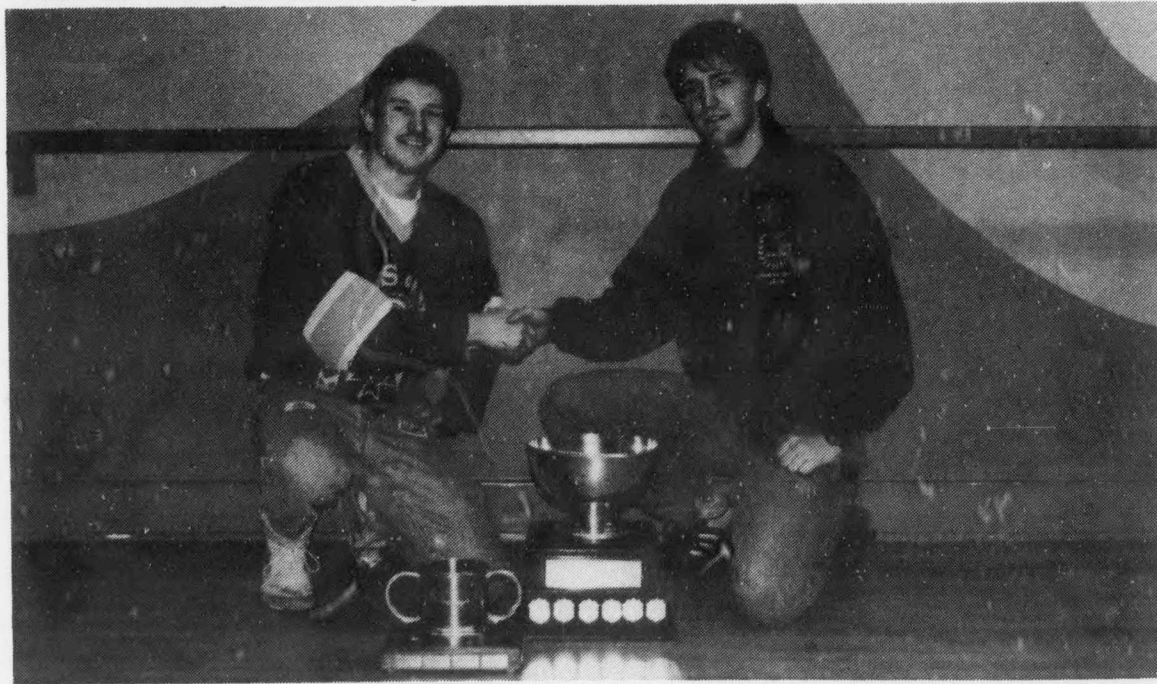
\$\$ LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY \$\$

Referees are wanted for the following sports:

Touch Football	Soccer	Softball
Ice Hockey	Basketball	Volleyball
Floor Hockey	Waterpolo	

Some experience is preferred, training also provided. Please come to the Recreation office and complete and application if you are interested.

1991-92 Inter-residence Sports Champions



Greg Critch, 1991-92 IRSC Chairman, (right), congratulates Roger Rooney (1991-92 Neill House Sports Rep.) on winning the President's Cup and Amby Leger Cup trophies. Neill House nudged out Jones House by four points for the best win-loss record (President's Cup) in eight Intramural Sports during the 1991-92 academic year. For best participation (Amby Leger), Neill House comfortably outnumbered Aitken House.

Co-ed Softball

The last day to register is Tuesday, September 29 at 4pm. Play is scheduled for Oct. 3 & 4 (weekend).

Men's Ice Hockey

The last day to register is Tuesday, October 6 at 4pm. Teams are reminded to submit rosters with names and student numbers. Although teams are accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis, inaccurate or incomplete rosters may result in placement on the waiting list.

Ladder Tournaments

Individuals are invited to register for the squash or racquetball ladder tournaments. Registration begins September 28. Individuals challenge each other throughout the semester with a winner declared in December.