

WHY?

by DON JOHNSON

1959-1960

U.N.B. 34; Saint John 7
U.N.B. 34; Mt. Allison 12
U.N.B. 75; Saint John 13
U.N.B. 53; St. Mary's 7
U.N.B. 54; St. Dunstons 2
U.N.B. 69; Moncton 0
U.N.B. 46; Mt. Allison 35
U.N.B. 59; Acadia 0

This is our record, not counting this season, after a three-year winning streak which ended in 1960, U.N.B. has been on the skids. WHY? Are there any future plans to put U.N.B. back on a competitive basis — not necessarily a winning team, just a good team?

I stopped two dapper young gentlemen in red jackets at the entrance to the Students' Centre and asked them why they thought our football team was losing—get this—maybe you said it "Oh jeez, that Coach Nelson isn't worth a damn, nobody out there can play football anyway—maybe a couple of guys, that sure doesn't make a team though." The other said, "Ya, Nelson's a lousy coach. I know a guy up here whose a good football player and he says he won't play for him." This, I believe to be the average student's conception of the situation. Helpful ain't they. The articles appearing in the Brunswickan have helped promote this idea—always a lot of gripe but no give. (Notice they are usually unsigned also—modesty?)

The local effort, The Gleaner, is of about the same caliber except the author is usually known since he gets paid—surprise! For example it reported no spirit on the team—this team (for the records) is one of the best spirited teams to come out of U.N.B.—sober that is.

In writing this article I have talked only to those who are directly concerned with football. Coach Nelson has welcomed the effort and the constructive criticism attempted—I just hope he maintains the feeling after he reads it. All of those asked have been sincere in their contributions, and for the players I hope none of them will be discriminated against in their further athletic endeavours at U.N.B.

Here is what I dug up with an effort to include general comments on the past three years performances.

To quote Coach Nelson "we are in too strong a competition for the particular situation we are in". By this situation is meant

- 1) no subsidization of athletes
- 2) no active recruiting program
- 3) the game of Canadian football is not yet played to any degree in the Maritimes.

"In the past years through luck or fluke, there have been sufficient numbers of players and ability from Quebec and Ontario which is the factor which kept a fair brand of ball at U.N.B. Now with higher academic standards this source of players has been largely cut off." Coach Nelson feels the small

number of players was a definite factor in this year's caliber of ball. "This is one of the best groups I've ever worked with, the boys remaining are giving 100% in every game."

The JV setup was a definite weak point to Coach Nelson—this he said would be changed. At present the JV players are content to play JV football and are not trying to make varsity. This defeats the JV purpose, which is primarily to feed the varsity squad. Next fall the varsity and JV will practice at the same time on the same field, and when the varsity is in need of a player he will be immediately called up and will oblige or cease to play football at U.N.B. It would also be a freshman and sophomore team only.

In regard to coaching at the varsity level: "I think the coaching staff is adequate and have proven themselves in past years—when we had the material."

Another aspect discussed was future source of players. By necessity of entrance requirements this will mean that Maritimers will be used. At present there are few schools playing the Canadian game, so I asked if there was any active promotion program to introduce the game—"We are always ready to support the cause but I personally have not done anything. If the game is wanted by the citizens, it will be introduced—this was the situation in Moncton where the citizens who were interested did something about it."

Dr. Meagher, Associate Professor of Physical Education:

Create a JV developed program at U.N.B. Under this program everyone who wanted to play could play. This would involve three or four teams and three or four coaches. The job of these coaches would be primarily to teach football, not to get ready for games. These teams would play intersquad games and if entry into a league was desired, then an all star team could be picked for these games. To illustrate this point he gave the following example: "Suppose 90 players are involved in this JV program, then the next season about 30 of these could be asked up for varsity tryouts, along with the probable 15 or 20 returnees from the previous varsity team. So in one year you have a minimum of 45 players trying for varsity spots. In four years this would give a very strong setup and a lot of depth and competition. The present JV system fails in its role to supply varsity in that most of the JV players are satisfied to play JV, it doesn't teach enough people. Any player

1960-1961

U.N.B. 15; Shearwater 7
U.N.B. 12; St. F. X. 52
U.N.B. 26; Stad 32
U.N.B. 26; St. Mary's 21
U.N.B. 7; Dalhousie 25
U.N.B. 18; Mt. Allison 33
U.N.B. 6; Mt. Allison 46

playing JV should be out there because he someday wants to play varsity."

Dr. Meagher is also in favour of excluding freshmen from varsity sports—a 22 year old man is more valuable than an 18 year old boy. All major U.S. colleges require that a player be a sophomore to begin varsity sports.

Dr. Meagher doesn't feel that U.N.B. should drop out of the A.F.C. Somehow the students are going to have to exercise a little initiative and police their ranks. Students must realize that athletes are representing this university and must give them a little more support, tell them what they do well instead of what they do poorly at. Contributions by the students must be positive, not negative. A football game is at present little more than an excuse for a trip and a party. The players come under criticism for trying their hardest while a great number of students don't even watch the game when they do go. The bulk of criticism put forth around here is not constructive or helpful—how many people do you hear say what a good job the Winter Carnival Committee did instead of complaining constantly about the cost. Let's clean our own doorstep out first.

Don Patton, 2nd Science, played one year JV and one year varsity. Only the guys who really like the game are presently playing and deserve a lot more credit than they are getting. Practices last year were next to useless. They were too soft. Blocking was a minimum and tackling poor. Coaching has not been up to scratch by a long shot, maybe; it's not Nelson's fault but I believe a change, a rest or a complete reshuffling of the present methods must be brought about.

Don Ciotte, 3rd Business; three years of varsity. "Coach Nelson is not iron handed enough. There is little or no competition for sports, once you're on the team there is not much danger of being replaced, because no one gets the chance to do it. The conditioning is not hard enough—our injury rates show it. The toughest game of the year is the intersquad game. That's when there is competition for spots."

Bob Taylor, 2nd Science; 2 years varsity, (not playing this year).

"Last year I placed most of the blame on the players for not working as a unit. There is very little competition for positions which is combined with a soft practice session. With more discipline and harder practices I think the team would do much better.

1961-1962

U.N.B. 6; Maine 31
U.N.B. 6; Shearwater 40
U.N.B. 30; Dalhousie 6
U.N.B. 0; St. F.X. 63
U.N.B. 7; Mt. Allison 33
U.N.B. 21; St. Mary's 24
U.N.B. 0; Mt. Allison 27
U.N.B. 19; Stad 7

Don Wells, 4th Physical Education, 2 years varsity.

"Practices aren't hard enough, running plays against dummies (inflated) does little good. Fundamentals are not stressed enough and full use of available player material is lacking. Coaching football is no easy business and a little support wouldn't hurt."

Claude MacKinnon, 3rd Civil Engineering, St. F.X., Saint John and presently with his first year varsity.

"My reasons are personal, but I think they might help to illustrate a few flaws that can be corrected. There is a supposed player shortage this year. Well, in four games I've carried the ball three times. In one of the games where I played offensive backfield, I never got the ball once. Maybe I'm not much of a football player but I doubt if I'll ever know. I've never been given the opportunity in a game to prove myself. Injuries have been part of the reason for the action, but that doesn't explain all. I've showed up for the past two weeks in light gear because we haven't been doing any rough stuff—not even blocking, just light calisthenics and run through plays."

Pete Violette, 3rd Civil Engineering, one year St. Thomas, one year JV, presently with varsity.

"The players this year are the best bunch of guys I've ever played with—they like the rough stuff and play only because they like football. I think the JV's must practise with the varsity. When you're playing you get the feeling that you don't have to try in practice because nobody is going to take your spot. Discipline is poor and the guys do what they want, not what they are told. We never block one another. The only time I ever block is in a game. I've left the field after an hour's practice—done everything laid on—and wasn't the least bit tired—a team has to be pushed to win. We have to learn the basic things like tackling and blocking. I'm looking forward to playing next year and doubt if past performances will be repeated."

John Fudge, 2nd Engineering first year on varsity.

"Players are the main weakness. I've made the team and never played the game before. All the griping about coaching is nearly pure bunk as far as I'm concerned—more players and harder practices I think will fix the team to a good competitive level."

Tony Dew, 2nd Physical Education, 2 years varsity.

"Players of the right caliber are the main problem. The ones we have now are generally good but

we lack depth. Fundamentals must be stressed until they are perfected. Discipline by the coaching staff must also be increased and practices made more competitive for positions."

D. Crockail, 2nd Physical Education, formerly with St. F.X., JV, now in first season on varsity.

"The lack of basic fundamentals is costly. Many blocks are missed simply because the player can't block—he doesn't know how. Discipline is not what it should be, practices will have to be much harder physically."

Pete Harvey, 2nd Physical Education, 1 year JV, 1 year varsity.

"Players with experience are needed, but a lot of improvements can be made in other areas. You've seen the end runs—no blocking—this is because the potential blockers don't block, probably because they don't know how to block effectively. Fundamentals must be stressed until perfection is attained. The practices are not hard enough."

Ross Eddy, team statistician.

"I don't think Coach Nelson is capable of coaching at this level unless he changes his methods. Fundamentals must be perfected and discipline increased. Use of available material is not made, especially on play analysing."

Dr. Stuart, Chemistry Department.

"I'd like to see more JV players get the chance to play varsity. The JV system is not teaching a large enough number of players and we must start teaching the game here since our supply of good players with experience is dwindling. There are plenty of English rugby players who with proper coaching would make good players of the Canadian game."

Prof. Cogswell, English Department.

"Student support of athletics at U.N.B. depends upon tradition and the convenience of the situation. This year and last I've enjoyed watching the JV team. They may not be as good as varsity but they block and tackle well, which combined with passing gives a good exciting game to watch. The coaching staff seems unable to analyse what is going wrong at the time it is happening. Maybe they figure it out a day later but this is understandably of little use."

Richard "Pooch" Clarke, 4th Civil Engineering 4 years varsity, and team captain.

"I think getting adequate players of the proper caliber is our

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