

SILVER! Dal medals at Nationals

BY CARMEN TAM

The Dalhousie Tigers earned their stripes last week with their best ever finish in CIAU competition, earning a silver medal in the 1997 national tournament hosted by the University of Calgary.

Over 2000 fans were on hand at the Jack Simpson Gymnasium to witness the Tigers' first-ever showing in a championship final after 18 straight appearances at Nationals. Dalhousie finished second behind the Alberta Golden Bears, a team they had beaten twice for bronze in both 1994 and 1995. This year the Bears swept the Tigers 10-15, 7-15 and 8-15 in the gold medal match.

Entering the tournament, the Tigers were originally ranked fourth in the national standings but were unceremoniously dropped to sixth the weekend before the quarterfinals. However, that move failed to shake the Tigers' confidence as Dalhousie displayed remarkable composure in the opening match by stunning the third-seeded Saskatchewan Huskies 3-1, sending them to the consolation division. After dropping their first set 8-15, the Tigers rebounded 15-4, 15-11 and 15-8 in the best of five series to move on to the semifinals.

"A lot of people didn't even give us a hope of winning our first round match against Saskatchewan," said captain Eric Villeneuve. "We were given the shaft in the final seedings going in to the Nationals, but we used that to our advantage and had something to prove to the naysayers."

Villeneuve and Jason Trepanier had 18 kills each in the upset vic-

tory while middle Terry Martin was named Player of the Game for Dal with 24 kills, 7 blocks and 5 digs.

In semifinal action, the Tigers were on top of their game by ousting the seventh-ranked University of Calgary Dinosaurs. As in their previous match, the Tigers were down early 6-15 before rallying to even the score, winning their second game 17-15. Dal then settled into cruise control taking the next two games 15-5 and 15-10 to set up an East versus West showdown in the final.

"Against Calgary we were again overlooked by a lot of people and again showed them what the Tigers are all about," said Villeneuve. "We came back from being down and beat them with a lot of heart and desire."

In the gold medal match, Dal started the game strong, jumping 4-0 in the first set. However, the Golden Bears powered back steadily to an eventual 14-8 lead. Dalhousie stalled Alberta for two more points before the Bears prevailed to win 15-10.

In the second game, the Tigers were not able to find their rhythm and were overwhelmed by the Golden Bears' offensive combo of Mike Siebien, Richard Schick and Chad Hatatla. Alberta snagged a 2-0 advantage with a 15-7 score.

Dalhousie was set back by an early 10-point deficit in the third set at a 13-3 count. Inspired play by Martin in combination with the Tigers' never-give-up attitude surfaced as Dal gamely fought back to narrow the score 14-8. The Tiger's momentum was just getting started but Dal was not able to overcome the Alberta lead. The Tigers made the hometown favorites work for the win, hold-



Dalhousie men's volleyball team shows off their silver medals at the 1997 National Championships in Calgary

ing the Bears at match point eight times. The CCWUAA champs closed the doors with a service ace to take their first gold since 1981.

"I really can't complain about finishing second," stated Villeneuve. "Alberta had the better team and they fully deserved to win. They didn't have any weaknesses in their lineup and they played near-perfect volleyball in the final."

Villeneuve tallied 21 kills while Martin, the AUA's MVP, collected 16 kills, 5 digs and 5 blocks. Halifax native John Hobin, a two-time AUA all-star, suffered a knee injury at practice but had a solid performance, contributing as one of the top blockers in the tournament. Alberta's Siebien, winner of

the TSN award, was the top player for the Golden Bears with 20 kills and 5 digs.

In the end, the Bears, ranked number one throughout the 1996/97 season, edged out the Tigers with their experience and size. Despite losing former all-Canadian Greg Procter to graduation, Alberta fielded a strong, versatile line-up that showcased CIAU Player of the Year and tournament MVP Doug Bruce.

Alberta's Terry Danyluk was named CIAU coach of the year,

an honour Dal's Al Scott earned in 1989. Danyluk was also a 1984 volleyball Olympian.

Alberta trounced the fourth-seed Winnipeg Wesmen 15-5, 15-7, 15-7 on their way to the final. The Wesmen then bounced back to take third place with a 15-13, 9-15, 15-4 and 15-8 win over Calgary in the bronze medal match. Fifth-ranked Toronto won the consolation finals, nipping number two-seed Sherbrooke 3-2 with game scores of

Cont'd on p.19: "Silver"

Tigers shocked in AUAA's

BY AARON BLEASDALE

Women's basketball entered the AUAA's with high hopes, but they never even got off the ground. They were upset in their first game by Acadia, 50-53. The Axettes went on to lose to the St. FX X-women in the final.

The Tigers had earned a bye into the semi-final round and were well rested, but it can be tough to jump into action without having the chance to work out the kinks.

Dalhousie stood in good stead. Dal's five starters all had AUAA titles under their belts: Sue Parke, Danny Moe, and Carolyn Wares had won with Dal last year; Patti Hutchinson won one during her first Dal basketball stint in the early eighties; and Erin Savage won one at UNB three years ago. There was a lot of experience on the court.

"I went with the players who had been there before and knew how to win a championship," explains coach Carolyn Savoy.

Dal contained the Axettes' potent inside attack and went into the half with a 35-29 lead. The Tigers held Acadia to 53 points in the game, which is usually enough to guarantee a win considering Dal boasted a 65 points per game average throughout the season, but the Axettes played tremendous defense in the second.

They held Dal to a 22.7 per cent from the field and only fifteen points.

"Acadia did a good job of knowing our plays," concedes Savoy. "They were really well prepared. They're a very experienced team."

The Axettes triple-teamed Carolyn Wares. When she got the ball, the Axettes would collapse on her. This aggressive style led Dal's post tandem of Wares and Parke to turn the ball over twelve times combined. As a team, Dal committed an unusually high 22 turnovers which led directly to 25 Acadia points.

Patti Hutchinson had a tough day running the Tiger offense. She was prevented from getting the ball in the backcourt and was played tight in the front court. All season she usually made her living driving to the paint, drawing fouls, and dropping the resulting free throws at an 80 per cent efficiency rating, but on Saturday she drew not one foul. In fact she scored not one point.

With seven minutes left in the game, Dal held an eight-point lead, but failed to score another point. Acadia closed the gap and hit a three-pointer with eight seconds left to seal the upset.

"We just couldn't seem to get it going," details Savoy. "It was like the girls felt like they were just hanging on instead of attacking."

Dal dominated the league for much of the year, but one bad game last Saturday put an end to their season. That's the nature of AUAA basketball; the championship tournament is held in a neutral site, which negates any potential home-court advantage, and one game series make for lots of upsets. Dal has won the league in each of the last three years, and won the AUAA tournament only once.

The loss has been tough for the team to handle. Savoy expresses her sympathies to those players graduating on this note.

"There'll always be opportunities for me to coach, but for a lot of these players it will be their last chance to compete at this level."

The loss of those players will seriously affect the team next year. Parke, Moe and Savage have all used up the last year of their eligibility, and they'll be missed. Wares and Hutchinson both have a year of eligibility left, but Wares finishes her degree this year, and Hutchinson has many other commitments that could prevent her from returning.

Despite the bitter note to end the season, the Tigers had a great season, and Savoy hopes that, "this sick feeling [losing] will be motivation for the players to come back next year, work harder and work smarter than the rest of the teams in the country."

Women's Basketball AUAA All-Stars

First Team -

Jadranka Crnogorac (SMU)
Theresa MacCuish (SFX)
Eireann Rigby (PEI)
Lynn Robertson (ACA)
Carolyn Wares (DAL)



Susan Parke



Carolyn Wares

Second Team -

Jennifer Deveraux (MUN)
Jennifer Johnston (PEI)
Bonny Munn (UNB)
Susan Parke (DAL)
Shelley Ryan (UNB)

Rookie of the Year - Anne Murrin (MUN)
Coach of the Year - Tracy Ellsworth (PEI)
Most Valuable Player - Carolyn Wares (DAL)

AUAA Championship Basketball

The best men's basketball teams in the Maritimes are coming to the Metro Centre this weekend.

Their first game's: Friday at 7 p.m. against UCCB.

If they win, they'll: Saturday at 8 p.m. against St. FX

Tickets are \$8 for students.

Come out and support the Tigers as they press for basketball gold.