

VIEW From The Cheap Seats

By Mark Savoie

It's hard enough to get on a computer as it is, so I probably shouldn't be reminding you of this, but all students here at UNB have free access to the wonderful world of e-mail and the Internet. I don't know much about either, so I can't get into the technical stuff about how it works (nor do I care, so long as it does), but I do know that it is a bonanza for the sports fan.

Imagine that you're a fan of the Golden State Warriors of the NBA. This is a bad team based out of Oakland, California, so it's going to be very hard for a fan living in Fredericton, NB to find out anything about the team. Unless they have Internet access. Somewhere in the alt hierarchy is a newsgroup devoted to the Golden State Warriors. All you have to do is subscribe to it, and then you'll be privy to in-depth discussions about the team by fans who are really dedicated to and knowledgeable about the team. In fact, unless you are already extremely knowledgeable about your team, you will likely find the level of discussion to be far more detailed than you can initially follow.

For the record, every team in the NHL, NBA, NFL, and MLB [major league baseball] has a newsgroup of its own in the alt hierarchy. On top of that, there are newsgroups for several of the more prominent college teams from the United States. All of these, however, are very sport specific. What if you are a fan of the Saskatchewan Roughriders, or some small college football team? The Roughriders don't have a newsgroup of their own, and neither do most small college football teams. Fortunately, in the rec hierarchy there is a newsgroup for the discussion of football in general. From here you can easily post a message asking for information about your team of choice to be posted either to the newsgroup or, preferably, to your own e-mail account. If you are lucky, you will discover that some keen enthusiast of your team has started a mailing list for the team, and with a simple e-mail post you can be included on that mailing list.

You will find it amazing just how many people out there want to talk to you about your/team. This is particularly true of the more obscure, lesser known teams. I have an interest in a third division soccer team from northern England named Preston North End. For those of you who are neophytes to English soccer, a third division club has more teams between it and the FA Cup than do the Fredericton Canadiens between them and the Stanley Cup. In short, in absolute terms, the team is not very good. In order to find out more about the team I posted a message rec.sports.soccer asking if there was a PNE mailing list out there for me to join. I was not optimistic. Nevertheless, within 48 hours I had received posts from three PNE supporters who informed me that no such mailing list existed, but also pledged to help me in my plight by keeping me up to date on scores and events. Since that time, one of these three has taken the initiative to start a mailing list of his own about the club.

There are dangers, however. I am also subscribed to a mailing list for Glasgow Celtic, a very prominent soccer club in Scotland. While I love getting e-mail as much as the next person, but logging onto the computer and finding 32 messages one morning was just a little bit of overkill. The problem with the Internet is that it is both extremely time consuming and addictive. It becomes very easy to spend hours at a time 'surfing the net.'

For this reason you will have to discipline yourself. This is harder than it seems. There is so much interesting stuff on the Internet that it is almost too tempting to resist. Once I first figured out how to subscribe to newsgroups I joined the groups for all of my favourite teams; plus general groups for baseball, basketball, cricket, football, hockey, and soccer; plus groups for Leonard Cohen, Jimi Hendrix, Robert Jordan, Led Zeppelin, Courtney Love, and J.R.R. Tolkien. All of these but the sports teams and the Tolkien groups I have since dropped. I held onto soccer for a long time, but ultimately decided that the some 150 members a day took far too long to read. Even still, I generally wind up taking an hour or more a day keeping up to date.

Another danger of the Internet is self-inflicted and inexcusable. Don't join the newsgroup of a team you dislike for the purpose of calling that team down. If you are lucky, all that will happen is that a couple of people will e-mail you and ask you to kindly get lost. If you are unlucky, there will be a concerted effort by the newsgroup in question to shut you down by overloading your mailbox. If 32 messages in a morning can seem overwhelming, imagine what a couple of hundred on a daily basis would be like. A fan of the Toronto Maple Leafs was sending inappropriate posts to the Montreal Canadiens newsgroup for much of last month. Finally, a suggestion was made that he be mail bombed. Whether or not this was carried out, I don't know, but I haven't seen his name in a while. Embarrassingly enough, it was a STU student that was sending these posts.

Ultimately, the Internet is an ideal way for a fan geographically removed from his/her favourite team to maintain an involvement with that team. It is also a great way to express your feelings about how your team is being handled or mishandled. I have no idea of how many teams are using the Internet at present or checking out the sentiments of the newsgroups, but I am sure that those teams who are not doing so now will be doing so soon. This gives you free access to the management of your team, an opportunity to vent your frustrations or express your appreciation. Best of all, it gives you a chance to talk with people all over the world about the team you live and die with. And isn't talking about your team with people who care as much as you do one of the best things about being a sports fan?

Volleyball con't

of eight, and this year will be seeded eighth once again. This forces them to play which ever team is ranked first in the nation as their first round opponent.

Despite the team's eight seeding, McGarvie is hopeful that the team will

improve on last year's performance. "We're a little closer to the sixth and seventh teams in the CIAUs this year. I think we have the capability of picking up a match, maybe even two. We're just going to go out and play our best and try to win a match. That's a humungous task in itself, just to win a match against those Western teams."

Hockey

Heartbreak losses for stickman

Tommies Humble Reds

by Neil Duxbury
Bruns Sports

The Varsity Reds hockey season ended last weekend as the STU Tommies defeated the Reds 2-1 in the first round of the MacAdam division playoffs. The Tommies won Sunday's decider 9-3 after UNB had squared the series Saturday.

The Reds came into the weekend with their work cut out after the Tommies won the series opener in overtime at the Lady Beaverbrook Rink. The Reds took a 3-1 lead into the second period where they started "playing awful hockey" according to assistant coach Shane Easter. "We didn't put the nail in the coffin and the Tommies got some life." The Reds conceded 2 goals in the last 7 minutes of the third and lost in the first period of overtime.

The Reds took the lead Saturday from Chris Nadeau's blue line shot. The Tommies came back in the second to level the game, causing frustration among the Reds whose play became more tense, especially after many near misses on the Tommies net. Towards the end of the period the Reds attack became more composed. This continued at the start of the third until the Tommies took the lead when Mark Rupnow broke down the right and fed a charging Shayne Gaffar whose shot from the top of the crease flew over Frank LeBlanc into the net. The Reds

kept their calm and within two minutes they were level as the rebound of Dan Sherstenka's shot fell kindly for Craig Brocklehurst.

With just 3:40 left in the game, Derek Cormier put the Reds ahead after Ted Naylor intercepted a pass in the corner. Shortly afterwards Rupnow was penalised for hooking. On the resultant powerplay Mike Cavanagh's first time rocket was



No Rejoicing - only remorse.
Photo Jud DeLong

parried by Johnny Lorenzo, however Todd Sparks was on hand to tuck away the rebound.

Sunday's match-up started similarly with the first period ending with the teams tied at two. Twice the Reds took

the lead on quality attacks out of defense and twice the Tommies quickly replied. The Reds goals came from Billy Wright, who beat Lorenzo on a pass from Alastair Still, and Sherstenka who finished off a breakaway manufactured by Toby Burkit and Sparks. The first period also contained the game's main source of controversy, as with only 6:02 elapsed Rob Knesaurek was thrown out of the game for checking Vojtech Kucera from behind. Kucera was knocked out for 30 seconds and was taken to hospital. However it was the second period that decided the outcome of the series. After failing to take advantage of 99 seconds of double powerplay the Reds went behind to a goal from Billy Weir after Gaffar broke down the right. In quick succession three more goals were scored on LeBlanc, who was then replaced by Jason Payne.

Despite a quick reply from Brocklehurst UNB could get no closer despite keeping Lorenzo off balance at the end of the second. In the third STU played all-out defense as the Reds pushed hard but were hit three times on counterattacks as the game finished 9-3.

The game was the last for Still, Karl Taylor and Cavanagh as Varsity Reds and may also signal the end of the varsity careers of Knesaurek and Sparks. Easter hopes that the first year players will learn from this experience and looks forward to "a hell of a rivalry" next year.

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