

Tragic end for soccer Yeowomen in campaign for first provincial title...

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# Yeowomen lose to Western in sudden-death shocker

by Riccardo Sala

It wasn't supposed to end this way.

Not for the soccer Yeowomen.

Not for Cheryl Punnett.

In a painful 1-0 loss in sudden death overtime to Western in the OWIAA quarterfinals, the Yeowomen saw their dreams for a provincial title shattered.

York lost Punnett, its all-star keeper, to a broken nose in the first half.

Their defeat Friday was a shock for York, which came to the championships (held at McMaster) with a 10-0 record for the OWIAA season, the East Division title, and a number one ranking in the CIAU.

Western was ranked fourth in the West coming into McMaster.

This was the first meeting of the year for both clubs.

Afterwards, Bell suggested the Western squad wasn't playing fairly.

"It (the game) was no surprise. We knew that Western were going to be tough and that they were going to play tough and dirty. We would've beaten them if we had had Cheryl Punnett," York coach David Bell said.

Punnett was injured when a charging Western attacker plowed into her. In typical Punnett fashion, she managed to hold onto the ball even after that contact had knocked her to the turf.

She had made several impressive saves earlier, including one that saw her dive to the corner of the net, robbing the Mustangs of an almost assured goal.

The loss of Punnett hung over a stricken York bench.

"I almost couldn't continue coaching. It was such a shock," Bell explained.

Punnett had to go to hospital. Her place was taken by Philomena Nevin, ordinarily a striker, but on this day an understudy asked to fill in for the toughest role on the team.

Especially on this day.

Western had come prepared for a fight, and they took it to York. The Mustangs forced a fast tempo game that made it hard for the Yeowomen to establish their passing game, especially in the first half.

By the second York had settled the ball, and was marking closer plays to the Western crease. The Mustangs stayed as stubborn as ever.

York wasn't helped by injuries, especially to Sam Hellens, who injured her ankle in the

second and was hobbled for the rest of her game. Barely, though, as she continued to fight and in vintage Hellens style kept working away at Western's defence.

The second half came and went, as did the two overtime periods, all without a relenting of the fierce battle on the field.

Sometime around the second period the U of T Blues arrived to watch. They stayed by Western's bench, cheering the purple on, hoping that the Mustangs would accomplish the one thing that the Blues couldn't do all season - beat York.

The game went into penalty kicks, then sudden death. After a save by Western's Elizabeth McLachlan on a shot from Patty Mitchell, York's one hope was on a similar stop from Nevin.

That wasn't in the script, and when Julie Verbeek took the kick for Western, Nevin couldn't hold. The curtain dropped for York.

It was a disconsolate York side that made the trek back to the showers. Awaiting them

afterwards was a team bus that few would have predicted would be taking them back to Toronto so soon.

Western eventually wound up in the final Sunday against McMaster. The Marauders won that game, and the OWIAA title.

Bell and the Yeowomen could take some consolation from individual honours that ended up York's way.

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Team captain Portia Bariffe, Heather Gough, Punnett and Hellens were named to the OWIAA All-Star team.

There was nothing but praise from Bell for his club.

"You've got to admire a team that can play for 80 minutes without a key player. I've never been prouder of the team. They did a fabulous job, and but for a whisker they could have won it all," he said.

## In field hockey championships at St. Mary's Yeowomen grab CIAU fifth

by Riccardo Sala

Grey and rainy weather at St. Mary's in Halifax set the stage for this year's CIAU field hockey finals last weekend.

The York Yeowomen, playing as a wild-card entry, finished fifth at this year's championships, two notches down from last year's bronze medal.

The University of Victoria (UVic) won the national title, with the University of British Columbia taking silver. This year, it was Liz Hoffman's UofT squad that took home the bronze.

The Yeowomen had three matchups over the weekend, and didn't exactly get off on the right foot. In their first match, they were crushed by UofT 7-0, then lost 3-0 to UVic. They finally bounced back to shut out the host St. Mary's side 4-0 in their final matchup of the tourney on Saturday.

York coach Regina Spencer said afterwards the drubbing at the hands of UofT was simply a matter of execution.

"We had chances against U of T but we couldn't capitalise. I think that [the Yeowomen] were still recovering from the shock of last week," Spencer said.

She was referring to the OWIAA championships of the weekend before, where York lost 6-1 to the Blues in the final.

Still, Spencer was pleased by her squad's performance against the

powerhouse UVic team.

"We regrouped...and lost only 3-0. Two of those goals were penalty strokes," Spencer added.

York finally hit its stride in a 4-0 decision against St. Mary's. Sherri Field scored a pair in that game, with Annette McClelland and Jackie Degoiej notching one goal each.

"All the goals were scored on penalty corners. They finally worked for us," McClelland noted.

Off the field individual honours came York's way also.

On Thursday night, the Canadian All-Star teams were named. Yeowomen Jillian Sewell and Sherri Field were named to the first team eleven, while keeper Michelle Capperault made it to the second team eleven.

Jillian Sewell was later named to the first team CIAU championship squad.

"Our accomplishments didn't go unnoticed, so I was really impressed," Spencer said.

The presence of Marina van der Merwe and Catherine Broderick at the Nationals was another pleasant surprise for the Yeowomen. The two York coaches, who were in New Zealand until recently coaching the Canadian team, got to see the Yeowomen in the final swing of their 1991 campaign.

With their duties to the national

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## Still in his prime...at 36

by Jim Sheppard

Don't tell Eddy Watt he's too old.

At 36, Watt is past what is usually considered to be an athlete's prime.

Still, since arriving at York as a mature student in 1989, Watt has been a leader both on and off the court for the York badminton programme.

In his "rookie" season, Watt won the silver medal in OUAA singles, losing only two matches, while leading the team to a fifth place finish in the standings.

As York's number one seed, Watt plays against the top player from each of the other nine Ontario universities. Most of his opponents are at least a decade younger, but he has still managed to win roughly seventy per cent of his matches.

Last year, despite a lingering wrist injury, Watt finished fourth in the league, and led the team to an OUAA bronze medal.

Fred Fletcher, who coaches the Yeomen side, says watching Watt is a marvel.

"Despite being older, Eddy is fitter, faster and smarter than virtually all the other top players in the league," said Fletcher, who added, "he also provides leadership and some excellent coaching for the other players."

## Yeomen b-ballers looking good in pre-season win against Laurier

by Sydney St. Nicholas

If their game last Tuesday was any indication, the Yeomen basketball squad is going to be playing some pretty exciting ball games this year.

Last week, the Yeomen dumped the Laurier Golden Hawks 101-85 in an entertaining OUAA pre-season matchup.

The Yeomen held the advantage in a fast-paced first half which saw both teams trading

buckets right up until the buzzer.

The Yeomen's first half assault was led by veteran shooting guard Mark Bellai, who grabbed 27 points in a remarkable display.

Fifteen of Bellai's first half points came from behind the three point line.

Rookie guard Wilton Hall, in for the injured Jeff Krupski, also did an impressive job running the fast break for the Yeomen.

But the Yeomen also had some defensive problems, none more glaring than their inability to box out their man and secure the rebound.

The Golden Hawks were repeatedly given second and third opportunities to score. As a 53-48 halftime lead for the Yeomen testified, the Golden Hawks were able to capitalize often.

The second half, though, was a little different, as the Yeomen kept Laurier's rebounding machines, Tom Pallin and Shawn Roach, off the glass.

Much of the Yeomen's second half success goes to the team's defence, which tightened up the middle.

The Yeomen offence fulfilled their end of the bargain, though, opening up a 68-56 lead after a Laurier technical foul gave them a pair of shots early in the half.

The Golden Hawks narrowed the York lead to 89-82 midway through the half, but that was as close as they got.

York coach Bob Bain got a bit of a scare late in the game when Bellai collided with a Laurier player, banging up his already heavily-braced knee. Bellai came out of the game, but Bain said he was just being cautious.

"He had surgery on that knee before, and he was a little worried about it—that's all," Bain said.

But before the Yeomen start off the regular season next week, they have some obstacles to overcome, including a distinct lack of height.

The Yeomen coaching staff, however, has implemented a new defence, which they hope to mix up with their regular defensive sets. The new scheme in their own end of the court combined with the Yeomen's fast break offence should keep the team competitive against even the likes of Laurentian and UofT.

The Yeomen have a chance to test their mettle next weekend, when they take on Waterloo (Friday) and Guelph (Saturday) at Tait McKenzie.



photo by Michele Boesener

OFFENSIVE workhorse of the Yeomen, Mark Bellai scores two of his game high 34 points, watched over by teammate Marc Gardner. The Tait matchup last Tuesday saw York trounce Laurier to the tune of 101-85.