

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Reds conquer MUN on Rock

Donna Retson turns on the offense in twin romps

by Matthew J. Collins
Sports Staff

Last weekend, the women's team proved once again that they are probably the most dynamic and versatile team in the AUAA conference.

In Saturday night's match-up against the Memorial Seahawks, the Reds had four out of five starters in double figures as they downed the MUN squad 78-66. And in Sunday's 76-59 victory, all five starters struck for double figures. With this kind of firepower, opposing teams are having a nightmare trying to find a way to contain the Reds attack.

Well I might as well tell them right now, this team is unstoppable. It is simply impossible for any one team to defend their battle lines when they are being attacked from all angles. Memorial chose to focus their defensive efforts on the Reds two leading scorers, Jackie Flieger and Laura Swift.

That's fine if your successful. But while Flieger struggled offensively on Saturday, Swift picked up the slack with 26 points. And when Swift got into foul trouble on Sunday, Flieger moved up a notch with 14 points and 5 assists.

But this is only a tip of the iceberg. Erin Savage displayed a re-

newed confidence in her ability on the court as she averaged 13 points, 7 rebounds, and 6 assists in the week-end victories. Krista Foreman got back into form as she combined for 22 points and 9 boards. Bridget Gamble put in some valuable minutes and showed that she is ready to play in pressure situations. And rookies Ali Crandemire and Heather Medley have shown steady improvement in the last couple of weeks.

However, last weekend belonged to the second-year forward, Donna



Donna Retson

Retson. More commonly known for her defensive prowess, Retson came through big for the Reds Saturday night shooting an incredible 13-17 from the field, scoring 27 points and grabbing 4 boards. She followed this performance up with a 15 point outing on Sunday.

While Retson usually scores

around 10 points a game, Coach Lordon was not surprised by her sudden surge on offense. "She's been in the gym shooting a lot lately. Although some days she gets her 10 or 12 points, she's always ready to score more. She'll hit the big shots because she's been putting the time in the gym."

Retson has often been singled out as a defensive stopper, usually responsible for guarding the opposing teams' star player. But she remains humble with this praise, stating that defense is a team effort. "Everyone has to work together. It's not just one person trying to shut down the opposing teams' best scorer. I don't think that there's one best defensive player on our team, it's a joint effort involving everybody."

And Coach Pauline Lordon has been more than pleased with the combined effort put forth by her team. "It's really good to see people contributing and taking shots when they're open. And some of our younger athletes are playing big minutes and making good hoops. That's important, you've really got to have a well balanced attack." Last weekend's performance only reiterates this point.

You can get chance to determine this for yourself, as this team of all-stars will be in action tomorrow night at 6:30 when they face the Cape Breton Capers in 'the Pit.' Come out and cheer the women on to victory as they continue their bid to bring the AUAA Championships back to UNB.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Seahawks match Reds' attack

by Matthew J. Collins
Sports staff

The Varsity Reds were in Newfoundland last weekend for a weekend set against the Memorial University Seahawks.

While MUN is considered to be one of the weaker teams in the highly competitive AUAA conference, they proved to the Reds that they have the ability to play in the league. The Seahawks downed the Reds in both games, beating them Saturday night by a score of 85-75, and again on Sunday by a slim 89-87 margin.

Now for those of us who have ever been involved with basketball, it is generally an unwritten rule that you should never blame the outcome of a game on the referees. When I played ball I tended to agree with this, however, the team I played for was seldom on the losing end of things.

But as of late, the Varsity Reds have had to deal with losing and deal with the factors which go along with that. And last weekend, one of the most identifiable of these factors were the referees.

The officials from 'the rock' obviously had heads of rock as they did everything possible to control the flow of the games. And more than often, the manner in which it was controlled was in the favour the Memorial Seahawks. This undoubtedly played a role in

the course of both games. As co-captain Marc Aube explains, "There were quite a few questionable calls made, but you can't control that. You've just got to deal with it and try to overcome it. The referees seemed to try and do what they could to control the game at crucial times."

Examples of these crucial points in the game were especially prevalent in Sunday's two point loss. With about 2:30 to go in the second half and UNB up by five, a whistle was blown on the defensive end and a foul was called.

The official singled out #42 Duff Adams as the culprit and went to the scorers table to report the call. However, when he relayed this to the scorers he credited the foul to #44 Brian Elliott.

What would have been Adams third foul became Elliott's fifth foul and he was consequently forced to leave the game. This was a huge loss on the inside for the Reds, especially since MUN has a 6'10 center. Anyone who has seen Elliott play knows what kind of force he is. Consider these numbers: in only 17.5 minutes a game he is averaging 10.5 ppg and 7.6 rpg.

The refs were blind by the end of this game as they missed what was probably the most crucial call of all. Down by one with 33 seconds remaining, the Reds came out of a timeout with control of

the ball and a full 30 second clock. With the clock winding down to about :11, Duff Adams came off a screen and launched a twenty footer which barely caught a piece of the iron. From a guy who is considered to be one of the best shooters in the league, it is hard to believe that his shot could be that far off. There was a reason for this - Adams was clipped on the arm and the officials didn't call the foul.

The Reds had one last chance at victory with a desperation shot from half, but it just wasn't meant to be. This loss was pretty disheartening considering the guys shot 30-32 from the free-throw line and had five players in double figures.

Leading the way for the Reds were Adams and Elliott, each with 14 points and five boards, followed by Andy MacKay and Stan Mitchell, each with 13 points and three rebounds.

Although Coach Hamilton would not openly admit that his team got hosed by the hometown officials, he did have this to say: "When you come into Memorial, you've got to be twenty points better or you're not going to win. It is a tough place to play. A lot of factors go into the game. You have to put yourself in a position where the factors outside of your control do not dictate the game. We didn't do that."

VIEW From The Cheap Seats

By Mark Savoie

I have tried to avoid talking about the Nancy Kerrigan - Tonya Harding fiasco, but find myself unable to avoid doing so. I am of the opinion that figure skating is not a sport, and as such beyond the scope of this column. However, given that the popular impression of the activity is that it is a sport, perhaps it is my responsibility to add my less than lucid musings to the morass of dead trees that have already given their lives to the pursuit of this topic.

The first problem with the whole mess was the United States Figure Skating Association's decision to allow Kerrigan onto the team despite her failure to compete in the National Championships. This decision was made before it was known or suspected that there was a connection with Harding to the attack on Kerrigan. The championships are intended to determine which skaters will represent the US at the Olympic Games in Lillehammer. Each competitor enters the competition with an equal chance of making the Olympic team, regardless of past performances. Granted, given the subjective nature of judging at figure skating competitions this is not actually the case, but the ideal is nice. As nice as it is stupid. The National Championships should only play a small role in the selection of the Olympic team. The bulk of the determination should be based on performance throughout the year, thus making the National Championships only a single component of the makeup of the Olympic team. It is this policy that was actually followed when it was decided to allow Kerrigan on the team.

However, it sets a dangerous precedent. What has been done is that the rules have been ignored in order to accommodate a special case. Common sense has prevailed in this case, you may think. And in a way, this thought is correct. And if the US Figure Skating Association were to change their policy for the future as well, I would find myself forced to agree. However, this is just a one time deal not applying to future competitions. As such, the danger of a repeat occurrence remains possible. Ignore for a moment the manner in which Kerrigan had her knee busted up. Hypothesis briefly on what would have happened if Kerrigan's knee injury had been the result of a fall during training. If this injury were to have caused her to miss the National Championships but left her available for the Olympics (as did the actual assault) would the Figure Skating Association allowed her to join the team in that instance? Here, once again, common sense says that as the best figure skater in the country she must be included on the team. However, as the result of an injury which was the direct result of her own actions she was not able to meet the requirements of the Figure Skating Association. Thus, she should not be allowed to compete. By allowing Kerrigan to compete this year the US has opened the door for future violations of this rule. My argument is that if common sense dictates that a rule must be broken, then it only makes sense that the rule should be eliminated or at least revised such that it won't be broken.

The case of Tonya Harding is much simpler. As it stands right now Tonya Harding should definitely be allowed to retain her spot on the Olympic team. Should criminal charges be brought against her then she should not be allowed on the team. It is that simple. The very basis of our criminal system is innocent until proven guilty, but in reality this is a farce. The reality of the situation is that a person is considered innocent until charged, and at that point is in a state of limbo between guilt and innocence until the matter is determined by a jury. While Harding is in such a state of limbo it would be irresponsible to allow her on the team. But she is not yet in this state of limbo. She has not been charged with anything as of yet. It remains only conjecture that she was involved in the assault. If she were to be forced off of the team now she would be able to sue the US Figure Skating Association for a massive amount of money. Financially, this would be the best thing that could happen for her. As it stands right now, her potential endorsement income has dropped to nil, unless you count such products as Tonya Harding Bail Bonds. Were she to be prevented from competing in the Olympics the award she would win would take into consideration the type of endorsements which have been offered to previous figure skating champions. These would be larger than those available to her now that the Kerrigan assault took place.

However, Harding is fortunate in that the United States Figure Skating Association is not composed of the same types as is the University of New Brunswick's administration. The figure skating authorities have refrained from acting precipitately, and are not allowing Harding any sort of moralistic attack against them in her defence. Thus, unless the courts take action, both parties will continue to wait for the other side to blink. So long as she retains the stance which she is currently holding, Harding can only lose if charges are brought against her. If none are brought to bear, expect to see her in Lillehammer, where the farce that is figure skating judging will be exposed in the most blatant fashion.