

# No wonder Ben cracked

by Brian Lennox

Last week's events in Seoul will be remembered as probably the worst moment in Canadian sport history. Witnessing Ben Johnson losing his gold medal came as a shock to all Canadians. There were those people close to Canadian sports, specifically track and field, who had suspected that Ben Johnson was using anabolic steroids. The media coverage given the Johnson story has been incredible, and Johnson has become a virtual prisoner in his own home. Unfortunately, many of the stories and much of the public opinion may have missed the broader issue in this incident and that is the overemphasis on winning.

Yes, the Olympic Games are the biggest sporting festival in the world and billions of dollars are spent by nations preparing for the Olympics. Many nations such as East Germany, the Soviet Union and some other eastern bloc nations use sport as a vehicle for their nation-state. East Germany spends over \$750 million a year on their sport programs, which are totally devoted to elite sport. In contrast, Canada spends approximately \$60 million on sports, with most of the money allocated for elite sport with some provisions for recreational activities. The East Germans and other eastern bloc nations send their most promising young children to schools designed to produce elite athletes. Realistically, we cannot expect to compete with these countries, and our medal standing at the Olympics show that we are ranked 19th in the

world. Many people are complaining we did not do well, but what is the alternative? I am proud we can send athletes like Dave Steen who will have productive lives following their athletic careers. Steen readily admits the decathlon does not consume his life and that he has other interests besides track and field.

Sadly, even Canadians place their hopes on an athlete who is one of the world's best. With our system we cannot produce many world-class athletes. When we do, there is much pressure on that athlete to win. Johnson was one of Canada's best chances to win a gold medal. There were other

favourites, such as Carolyn Waldo in synchronized swimming, but John was in the highest-profile sport at the Olympics, and he was racing for the title of The World's Fastest Human. Since he set the world record at Rome in August of 1987 there was tremendous pressure on him to win the gold at the Olympics and beat the great Carl Lewis. Throughout the winter and spring, the Canadian press kept us informed of Johnson's progress. We became concerned over his hamstring injury in May, and many more people became skeptical of his chances after Lewis beat him in Zurich last August. We hoped he could beat

Lewis in Seoul and make us proud.

The pressure Johnson faced had to affect him and those around him. As it appears now, someone in his camp believed they had to cheat in order to win. The potential financial profits of a gold medal victory were too great to leave the race to chance, and to ensure victory a banned substance was thought to be necessary to win the race.

Ben Johnson should not be singled out, even if it is proven he was knowingly using steroids. When numerous other athletes are using performance-enhancing drugs, how can we

condemn only Johnson? The use of performance-enhancing drugs is really a product of our society's placing so much emphasis on winning that we will resort to any means possible.

The vast majority of athletes, coaches, and sports fans have lost total perspective of where sport lies in our society. Everyone who competes in any sport would like to win, but when the goal is to win at any cost we lose the real aim of sport, which is enjoyment. Debbie Fuller, a Canadian springboard diver, said it best: "If the Chinese want to take their children and put them in special sport schools, fine. I want to enjoy sport and have fun." Debbie Fuller came tenth in the three-metre springboard competition. She probably enjoyed her Olympic experience more than most of the medal winners.

## Tigers tie Acadia, lose to UNB 2-0

by Brian Lennox

The Dalhousie men's soccer team now knows what it feels like when you're on a winning streak and every team is looking to knock you off. Over the weekend, the Tigers played two games. On Friday, the Acadia Axemen and the Tigers played to a 1-1 draw and on Saturday UNB handed the Tigers their first loss, 2-0.

Earlier in the week, Dalhousie found themselves the sixth-ranked team in the nation. This certainly provided motivation for Acadia, who played a very physical game against the Tigers. Mike Herasminko scored Dalhousie's only goal off a set play at the 35-

minute mark. The game proved costly to the Tigers, as three starters suffered injuries: Keith Souchereau (knee), his brother Kelly (broken nose), and Jeff Conatser (charley horse).

On Saturday, the Tigers felt the loss of those three starters as UNB scored early in the second half and added an insurance marker 10 minutes later. Coach Ray McNeil was rather pleased with the play of some of his reserves.

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