Reds off to CIS tournament

UNB misses Atlantic gold by 10 points in the AUS final against StFX

by Nathan White

The Varsity Reds men's basketball team fell just short of winning the school's first Atlantic University Sport championship since 1967, but they still have a shot at national gold this weekend at the Final 10 tournament in Halifax.

UNB dropped a 74-64 decision to St. Francis Xavier X-Men on Sunday at the Metro Centre after needing overtime to get by Memorial Sea-Hawks 72-62 on Friday, then edging University College of Cape Breton Capers by a score of 68-65 in a close Saturday match-up.

Fatigue was "certainly a factor," in the loss, said Reds head coach Thom Gillespie, whose team led at halftime but could not seal the deal at the end of their third game in three days

As Baldwin Division champions, St. FX got Friday night off and were able to execute better than UNB, who missed all 13 of their three-point attempts in the second half. However, the AUS Coach of the Year was not about to complain about his team's schedule.

"If you want the bye, you've got to be first, and we weren't first," he said. "Now we're looking ahead and we're all business trying to win a CIS national championship."

UNB forward Tom Spink said that "everyone took a beating" over the weekend, but wasn't blaming tiredness for keeping them from winning.

"We were certainly in a position to win the game, being up at halftime," said Spink. "The last five minutes, we just couldn't execute and put the ball in the hoop. They did the things they needed to do and we came up a little short unfortunately."

The team now looks ahead to tomorrow night's sudden-death elimination game against the Brandon (Manitoba) Bobcats. The Bobcats sit one place behind UNB at 10th in the national rankings, and are a team the Reds have not seen.

"Almost every team we've played this year we'd seen before. It'll certainly be different not knowing the strengths of each individual player and how they play as a team," said Spink, who says the team is "banged up and pretty tired" but too excited to let that stop them at this point.

"We're all pretty pumped up to try to bring back the banner for the first time in 37 years. We're certainly motivated and we're definitely going to do all we can," he said.

To go all the way, UNB will need to win four games in four days, something they haven't had to do all season.

"If any team can win four games in four days it's us...You've got to go in and believe in yourself," said Gillespie, but he pointed out that they can't look any further than the game ahead of them at this point.

"We can only go one game at a time," he said. "We have a mountain to climb, but we've got to beat the Brandon Bobcats first."

Should they get past Brandon, they will have a Friday showdown against the country's number one team, Carleton Ravens, who were undefeated during the regular season.

"We'd be huge underdogs [against Carleton] no question," said Spink. "But I guess we'd be going out with nothing to lose and they'd have everything to lose, really, so they'd have a little bit more pressure on them."

Spink's squad lost by just one point to the Ravens earlier in the year, and he says the Reds are confident they have what it takes to beat them. "We've been right there every time," said Spink. "We have to play a strong team game and play together, and just really be smart...We just have to work our asses off and do what we need to do to win."

Spink, who along with guard Dan Goggin was named co-athlete of the week for his efforts last weekend, had 21 points and eight rebounds in the Carleton game, but Gillespie said it will take more than just one or two players for the team to taste national gold. "Everyone's going to have to play great for us to get where we want to be."

The Reds begin their quest at 6 pm tomorrow night at the Metro Centre. Spink said he hopes to see some students make the trip to cheer on their team. For ticket information, go to WWW.FINAL10.CA or phone the Metro Centre box office at (902) 451-1221.



File Photo / *The Brunswickan*

Tom Spink is a tough contender, but StFX was able to hold him to four points to take the final.

AUS major awards: basketball

by Cindy Smith

The UNB men's basketball team may have missed out on a first place AUS finish, but Thom Gillespie and Joe Thompson still have something to celebrate.

Gillespie and Thompson are both among the AUS major award winners announced on March 11th.

Gillespie was selected as the AUS Coach of the Year for the second time in three seasons, after leading the ninth-ranked Varsity Reds to a 13-7 regular season, as well as a second place finish at this weekend's AUS finals. The Reds lost to Baldwin Division leaders StFX in the championship final, but still got a ticket to the CIS championships starting tomorrow night in Halifax.

Thompson, a fifth year Civil Engineering student and Reds' team captain was named this year's TSN Award Nominee. Thompson has been able to excel in basketball while maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.1. He was also named an Academic All-Canadian in 2002-03 after posting a 3.5 GPA.

Thompson has made just as much of an impact on the court as he has in the classroom. This season, Thompson led the Reds in assists, averaged 8.2 points per game, and regularily defends against the opposition's top perimeter scoring threat.

Thompson is also heavily involved in UNB's 'Heads up with the Reds' school program. The program has Varsity athletes speaking to elementary and middle school students about a variety of different topics, including respect, self-esteem, discipline, and the importance of academics.

Thompson is also active in the Junior Reds program and the Varsity Reds' athletic council.

Most valuable player honours went to Gabe Goree of the SMU Huskies for the second year in a row. Goree led the conference in scoring, finished second in rebounding, sixth in assists, and ninth in steals.

Garry Gallimore, from the StFX X-Men took home rookie of the year honours. Gallimore averaged 11 points per game with the AUS champs and finished among the conference leaders in free throw percentage and steals.

NHL trade deadline frenzy, Part II & the Bertuzzi incident

View From the Sidelines

Tony Von Richter

It has been an interesting week in the NHL, and unfortunately for the league it has mostly been for all the wrong reasons.

As most of you have undoubtedly seen countless times over the past week, Vancouver Canucks forward Todd Bertuzzi viciously attacked Colorado Avalanche forward Steve Moore in retribution for a hit on Canucks captain Markus Naslund a few weeks beforehand. The hit knocked Naslund out of the game and also forced him to miss the next three games with a concussion. After the game the Canucks vowed revenge on Moore, and they planned on getting it the next time the two teams faced off. Not much happened in the next contest, but unfortunately that all changed last Monday. In a game that was out of hand, the Avs would eventually go on to win 9 – 2, Bertuzzi took matters of retribution into his own hands and unfortunately caught up with Steve Moore.

Moore suffered two fractured vertebrae in his neck, a concussion, and deep facial lacerations as a result of Bertuzzi sucker punching him and driving him into the ice. Bertuzzi for his part was suspended for the rest of the regular season and the playoffs, with a possibility of the sentence carrying into next year if Gary Bettman sees fit. The incident is also being investigated by Vancouver police and Bertuzzi may face criminal charges.

Opinions on the suspension have been varied. Some (mostly Canucks fans) call the suspension too harsh, and Bertuzzi is being made an example of. Others have called for a longer sentence, one akin to Marty McSorely's one year ban. Most people, myself included, feel that the suspension is just and Bertuzzi deserves his punishment. The incident cast a shadow over the entire hockey world at a time of year that every hockey fan looks forward to, the trade deadline.

Deadline day was last Tuesday and it's time to examine the winners and losers of one of hockey's most exciting days of the year.

The Winners:

Toronto – My beloved Leafs made some excellent moves at the deadline this year without giving up much. The best move made by first year GM John Ferguson Jr. was to acquire Brian Leetch from the New York Rangers for two prospects and two draft picks. Leetch would help any team and the Leafs were especially in need of some defensive help and they paid a small price to get it. The biggest steal of deadline day may be the acquisition of Ron Francis for a fourth round pick. Francis should bring veteran leadership to an already experienced team and could provide some scoring help in the playoffs.

Boston – The Bruins uncharacteristically acquired players at the deadline which reversed the trend of them having one of the cheapest owners in the league. Sergei Gonchar was coveted by many teams but the Bruins managed to get him for virtually nothing. Also, Michael Nylander was a nice addition to a team that already had some offensive talent.

The Losers:

Washington – The Capitals gave up Peter Bondra and Sergei Gonchar to complete the fire sale that started when Jaromir Jagr was traded to the Rangers. The Caps even traded away Anson Carter who was acquired in the Jagr deal to Los Angeles for young forward Jared Aulin. Hopefully Washington can revive their team with all of the young players and draft picks that they received but it looks like it will be a few years until the fans are happy again in D.C.

New York Rangers – An unthinkable thing has happened. The New York Rangers, widely known around the league as the bank for underachievers, have actually cut payroll. Glen Sather finally realized that maybe spending an obscene amount of money wasn't the best way to build a hockey team and that he should build through the draft. The Rangers appear to have started a youth movement by trading away big stars like Brian Leetch and Petr Nedved and getting draft picks and prospects in return. Fans of the Rangers may not like losing, although they should be used to it by now, but the team should be much better down the road.

Hopefully the Todd Bertuzzi incident won't ruin any more of the season as it almost did with the trade deadline because with the playoffs coming up it should be the most exciting time of the season for fans. Unfortunately this incident has most media outlets vilifying hockey as a violent and brutal game, when it really isn't. Yes what Bertuzzi did was wrong and it shouldn't have happened but it shouldn't ruin the rest of what is turning out to be an exciting season, and sadly, what might be the last one for a while.

Time to put Cherry out to pasture

by Norman Ed Baskerville
The Martlet

VICTORIA (CUP) — Finally the CBC has muzzled its resident redneck buffoon, but shouldn't Don Cherry have been fired rather than censored?

Since 1980 the host of Hockey Night in Canada's Coach's corner has maintained a pop-culture following by willingly treading over the political correctness line. For years Cherry has been slurring anybody that doesn't fit his image of the good English-speaking Canadian kid, calling them "chicken Swedes" or "dirty Russians," but his comments during the January 24 HNIC, finally forced the CBC to keep his off-handed ethnocentrisms in check.

During a first-period intermission tirade last month, he called players who wear helmet visors weak and cowardly, before specifying exactly who he meant.

"Most of the guys that wear them are Europeans or French guys," Cherry said.

As a result, Harold Redekopp, the executive vice-president of CBC Television, said Cherry will be censored by a seven-second delay of broadcast after his "inappropriate and reprehensible personal" comments.

Hold on there spineless executive-type man—you're saying that after unabashedly slandering French Canadians and Europeans, Cherry is still someone you want representing the CBC?

Now, I know Cherry's die-hard fans will argue that he was speaking about cowardice in the context of the game of hockey. They'll state that that's the appeal of the retired NHL coach—you never know what's going to come out of his mouth.

But let me tell ya, I've been watching Cherry rant and rave for over 20 years, and I know what's going to come out: a few genuinely intelligent observations about the mechanics of the game, and then something offensive. The formula is designed to attract viewers entertained by an "Archie Bunker," Cold War era, don't-know-no-better Neanderthal.



Some think the CBC should permanently send Cherry to the post-season golf course for his off-handed public remarks.

And this isn't the first time Cherry has been in trouble with the network. At the 1998 Nagano Olympics, he criticized the selection of freestyle skier Jean-Luc Brassard as Canada's flag-bearer, calling him "a French guy, some skier that nobody knows about."

Even worse, when Toronto fans cheered the U.S. national anthem days after the song was jeered in Montreal in protest of the U.S. war on Iraq, Cherry said, "Do you think that will make CNN? I don't think so, it's only when those jerks in Quebec boo the national anthem."

Well, as Canadians, Francophones included, we fund the CBC and we expect a little more for our buck than Don Cherry. Like it or not, personalities like Cherry's influence society merely by being on television, and broadcasting his hateful slurs perpetuates and condones bigoted behavior. It's time to stop, not edit out, his stereotyping. Instead of a seven-second delay, Cherry should have been fired.

Don't worry CBC, people would still tune in to HINC, but they'd watch it for the great hockey, not because Grandpa might say something naughty.

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