

Reds & Tommies renew rivalry

BRANDON MACNEIL
THE BRUNSWICKAN

The annual installment of the "Battle of the Hill" has arrived as the St. Thomas Tommies battle the Varsity Reds at the Aitken Centre tonight. Every year, UNB hosts STU in their home opener, a rivalry that never disappoints.

"It's going to be exciting for sure," said head coach Gardiner MacDougall. "Any time two rivals like this face off, it is bound to be entertaining."

Being the home opener, the Varsity Reds 2008 AUS championship banner will be unveiled, and raised to the rafters.

"Of course we'll look for a spark from that," said MacDougall. "It will just serve as a reminder of what this club is capable of."

In the opening game of the season last week, the Reds suffered an overtime loss at the hands of UPEI. They countered strongly over the weekend, defeating Dalhousie on Friday night, followed by an overtime victory over Acadia on Saturday.

STU, on the other hand, has had a miserable start to the season. The 0-4 Tommies will be

desperate for a change tonight, especially against a bitter rival.

"A lot of the games in this league are only decided by one goal," said MacDougall. "There's going to be a lot of close games. We need to capitalize when we are given opportunities. That's how we'll win games."

Coach MacDougall has seen some positives so far in the young season, but knows there is always room for improvement.

"I've seen some good elements in our game. Guys are playing well so far, but we need to cut down the turnovers. You never know when a bad turnover can cost you the game."

Despite getting back on track over the weekend, the Reds are still bitten by the injury bug. To add to the list of shoulder injuries within the team, Ryan Seymour has recently been sidelined indefinitely.

John Scott Dickson and Daine Todd are both still nursing similar shoulder injuries. Their return dates are still up in the air.

"It's tough to have to watch from the stands," said Dickson, a veteran with the team. "You want to be on the ice with the guys, whether it's a game situation or even practice."

Although he wishes he could be on the road with the team, Dickson did find an upside to sticking around town for the



Gary Manning / Special to The Brunswickan

Members of the Reds standing at the blue line before action against Acadia on Saturday night. UNB went 2-0 in weekend play.

weekend.

"It does give me a good opportunity to support the other varsity teams. It's hard to do when we're on the road throughout the season. We have some high calibre teams on this campus; it's nice to watch them

win."

After tonight, the Varsity Reds hit the road again for the weekend. On Saturday, they take on St. FX in Antigonish. Sunday afternoon, the Reds head to Halifax to battle the St. Mary's Huskies.

The renewing of the rivalry will give the rookie V-Reds a chance to finally see the intensity of what has been dubbed the 'Battle of the Hill.'

"I have heard a lot about the rivalry," said rookie goaltender Travis Fullerton. The Riverview,

N.B. native is excited to see the environment in the Aitken Centre tonight. "We've all taken part in these rival situations before; we know how intense they can get. It's going to be fun."

The puck is set to drop at the Aitken Centre at 7 p.m. tonight.

Prepared to swing at title

BRANDON MACNEIL
THE BRUNSWICKAN



Andrew Meade / The Brunswickan

A strong list of returnees are poised to take a run at the AUS championship once again. UNB kicks off season play this weekend at MUN.

The days of Dalhousie dominating the AUS in men's volleyball seem to be coming to an end. Leading the charge is the UNB Varsity Reds. After falling one game short of a berth in nationals last season, the Reds are back, looking to snap a 22-year streak.

Dalhousie has been an absolute powerhouse in the past, dominating the three team league every year. UNB head coach Dan McMorran believes this year's team has the potential to put an end to the impressive streak.

"Of course I feel we can do it," said McMorran. "We competed with them every time we faced them last year. We managed to defeat them three times in seven games. I feel that's pretty impressive."

It is even more impressive considering that Dalhousie has been accustomed to perfect or one-loss seasons for years.

"We have a good returning crew," continued McMorran. "We have definitely narrowed the gap between us and Dal. There may not even be one anymore."

If UNB does live up to McMorran's expectations, the AUS will once again have two of the top teams in the country.

"With our good size and faster offence, we should be even better than last year," claimed McMorran, a former all-star UNB player.

Numerous key players have returned to this season's roster. Among them is AUS all-star and academic all-Canadian Jacob Kilpatrick. The six-foot-nine tower should dominate this season in the middle. More force in the middle will come from the versatile fourth year veteran, Ryley Bolden.

Three returning outside hitters will look to have an impact on the team this season. Kyle VanGenne made great improvements last season and will have physical presence on the wing. Tyler Veenhuis had a terrific second half last season and will be a force in either outside position. Matthew Sweet of O'Leary, P.E.I. will also be counted on in a variety of clutch situations.

Michael Johnson of Whitby, Ontario shared libero duties last year. However, he will get the starting minutes this season.

After a one-year hiatus, Greg

Halley will return to the roster. He will assume the starting setter position. Also, after not being with the team for a year, six foot eight John Sheehan has rejoined the Reds.

Along with the veterans, UNB has added six new faces to the club. Brett Watson of Lethbridge, Alberta has joined the Reds for his fourth year of eligibility. He is an outside hitter with a well-rounded game. Watson is expected add a great deal of experience and leadership to the squad.

Scott Brannigan is a six-foot-six middle/outside player who coach McMorran said, "has a bright future ahead of him as a Varsity Red."

Dave McConnell of Moncton, N.B., Dale Worsley of Lower Onslow, N.S., and Jeremy Hughes are the final first-year additions rounding out the roster. All three will be assuming some backup duties.

Despite the key additions to the team, UNB lost their former all-star, Davin St. Pierre is currently with the national volleyball program, training full time. He intends to remain with the national program until Christmas. He will then decide whether or not to stay with the program, or play professionally in Europe. St. Pierre would also have the opportunity to return to UNB for the second half of the season. This idea excites coach McMorran, although he feels it unlikely.

"We would love Davin to return to our team," said McMorran. "At the same time, we want him to do what is best for him. We sincerely wish him the best in whichever path he takes."

The Varsity Reds competed

in an exhibition tournament at Queen's University last week. UNB managed three victories over Laurier, Ryerson, and York University, while dropping games to Laurier as well as Western.

Regular season action begins this weekend while the Reds travel to Newfoundland to battle Memorial. The team faces back to back games on Saturday and Sunday before returning home. UNB's home opener is set for Saturday, Nov. 15, when Dalhousie comes to town for the first crucial meeting between the two clubs.

The high cost of gold



VIEW FROM
THE SIDELINES

Tony
von Richter

When the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC) announced last year that they were awarding prize money to medal winners at the Beijing Olympics, there was some debate as to whether this was an appropriate decision.

For years, Olympians had been considered amateurs; people that were driven to compete not for financial rewards but for the love of the game, and a desire to be the best in the world. Thus, providing them with prize money seemed to some to go against the "Olympic Spirit."

Originally, I agreed with these people thinking that paying athletes for medals wasn't the proper way to go about things, despite the fact that other countries had been doing it for years.

Eventually I changed my mind, deciding that the prize money was no different than the funding that athletes received prior to the

Olympics.

Apparently the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) didn't feel the same way.

According to the Toronto Star, Olympic medal winners received a letter from the COC earlier this month, explaining that the CRA supported the opinion that the winnings were taxable income.

Of course this follows the Income Tax Act that explains that the only prize money considered to be non-taxable are those that are awarded for "meritorious achievement in the arts, the sciences or service to the public."

So if it's a law, it's a law, I get that. I may not like it, but I understand it; the CRA is simply enforcing the Income Tax Act. The question then isn't whether or not the CRA has the right to tax these winnings - they clearly do - but should they be taxing them?

I don't think that they should be, especially because the other funding that athletes receive from the government is tax-free, and there is already a provision allowing for exemptions of awards.

Why should the exemption in the Income Tax Act be limited to achievement in arts, sciences, or service to the public? Why not

include Olympic athletes as well?

One argument could be that opening the tax exemption to athletic endeavors could open up a huge problem with what events to be included and perhaps opening some kind of loophole where professional athletes are concerned.

I'm not a tax or legal expert so those things could very well be true, but I'm sure there would be a way to rewrite the Income Tax Act to specifically include awards from the COC for medal winners in the exemption.

Really, it all comes down to how much do we want to support our athletes.

Every couple of years, when the Olympics come around, there are always people calling for more funding for athletes, and that with more funding we'd be able to compete with the elite nations of the world.

If we decide that we want to provide increased support for our elite athletes, then let's go all the way for it and not put a tax on success.

Tony von Richter is Sports Bureau Chief for the Canadian University Press, as well as a former Sports Editor of The Brunswickan. Email him at managing@thebruns.ca

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