

## **“BASKETBALL’S MAGIC”**

by Stacy Dunn

I was completely stunned when I heard that Earvin “Magic” Johnson was retiring from pro basketball because he had acquired the HIV virus. Writing this article, I can not find the perfect words to describe this athlete who contributed so much to the National Basketball Association and to the community. You may have already heard or seen reporters comment how Magic “was” a great basketball player, but I would like you to know that he will remain one of the greatest basketball players of all time. Magic might still be involved in his respected sport if he plans to coach the 1992 U.S. Olympic Basketball team. The media may say terrible things about Magic such as “Woman blames Magic for giving her AIDS” or “Magic’s wife has a nervous breakdown” in the future. Magic’s old team, the Los Angeles Lakers, maybe will have some sportscasters blame losses due to Magic’s absence. Be skeptical of these stories. Definitely ignore the latter one because I know the Lakers will have a great season though Magic can sit only in the stands and cheer for the team with his famous smile. Magic’s enthusiasm is devoted to AIDS awareness now. I was surprised that he kept his positive attitude when he talked about his situation, but I realized that our society needs this attitude to cope with the effects of the disease. I wish all the best for Magic Johnson.

## **Panther Basketball Teams Open Seasons**

By Matthew Beardsley

The UPEI Men’s and Women’s Basketball Panthers opened up their AUAA regular season’s this past weekend, as the women were in UNB for a regular season tournament and the men were at home for two games against the tough University of Cape Breton Capers.

The men are in the early phase of a big rebuilding project. They lost seven players from last year and are faced with the prospects of one of their toughest seasons in years. Yet early season results have been promising for such a young team. The Panthers have only one senior on the team and virtually everyone else is a freshman or a sophomore.

Against the Capers on the weekend the Panthers showed that they will be competitive in some games, but make some rookie mistakes in others.

In the opener the Panthers fought hard for one half but just didn’t have the guns to match the Capers. The Capers used the good inside play of player of the game Troy Fones to take control of the game. At 6’5” and well over 200 pounds, Fones is a real force in the key.

He used a combination of soft turn-around jumpers and slashing moves to score 29 points in the game. The Panthers in the first half were able to cut a 15 point defeat to 4, but the Capers opened it back up to 17 at the half and were able to keep it there for the entire second half as the Panthers were not able to amount a serious comeback threat.

On Sunday the Panthers were a completely different team and gave the Capers a serious run for their money only to fall a little short at the end of the game 74-68.

The first half on Sunday was similar to that on Saturday. The Capers jumped out early but the Panthers came back only this time they refused to go away. The Panthers were trailing when Craig Walker entered the game and sparked the Panthers comeback with some good hustle and good defence on the Capers guards.

The Panthers also received some better defence in the post and were able to keep Troy Fones and Michael Dailey from doing too much damage.

The Panthers received inspired play from Jason Kielly. The freshman from Ch’Town Rural played tough defence and banged inside with the much bigger Caper post players. Time and time again he was able to grab rebounds and put them back for easy hoops. Another bonus was the fact that he was able to get the Capers inside players in foul trouble. The Panthers led 36-35 at the half.

The second half was both teams going back and forth at each other waiting to see who would fold first. The Capers kept coming at the Panthers as guard John Ryan did a great job of penetrating the Panthers defense and dishing off to either Troy Fones or Micheal Dailey for easy inside baskets.