

Hoop and Puck Panthers Prepare for Playoffs

by Jason Martell

Sports fan or not, this could be the biggest week on campus since the return of the *Dukes of Hazzard*. The UPEI men's and women's basketball teams as well as the men's hockey Panthers are all in action over the next seven days which will help make the playoff picture in the AUA a whole lot clearer.

After downing the University of New Brunswick 5-3 last Sunday and picking up a win on the road against Mount Allison on Wednesday, the hockey Panthers moved into a tie for third place in the MacAdam Division with Moncton. Although it's still possible to catch UNB for second place, it's likely that the Panthers will open the playoffs against either the Reds or first place St. Thomas.

The Panthers head into the AUA playoffs, which are a best-of-three affair, with a pair of hot goaltenders. Craig Johnson picked up his second win in as many starts in the Panthers 5-3 victory over Mount A. and David Mitchell has a record of 6-3 since the Christmas break.

"It's nice to have both guys playing well at this point in the year," said UPEI head coach Doug Currie, "It should help to raise the level of competition in practice as well."

The Panthers's opening round series will begin on this Wednesday.

The men's basketball Panthers play their final home game of the 1996 season on Saturday before embarking on a four game road trip to Saint Mary's, Acadia, and Memorial. UPEI will host the AUA leading-Dalhousie Tigers in a game that will help decide first place but the February 17 match-up also holds some added significance for the pair of fifth year Panthers who will play their final game at the UPEI Sports Centre.

Curtis Robinson and Peter Lawlor end their CIAU careers in March after having posted impressive numbers over the last five years.

Robinson has a number of awards to his credit including a place on the 1995 All-Canadian team as well as an AUA MVP trophy while Lawlor played in the 1995-96 all-star game in Saint John.

The AUA basketball playoffs begin on March 8 at the Metro Centre in Halifax.

The women's basketball Panthers dropped a pair of games in Cape Breton last weekend but even with a record of 5-10, UPEI is a fairly safe bet to make the playoffs. The women's playoff format has been expanded to match the men's in which six teams make the post-season as opposed to the old four-team set up. As of February 9, the Panthers have a six-point lead on Saint Mary's with seven games remaining.

Eireann Rigby still shows the way offensively for UPEI with a 16.8 ppg scoring average which is the fifth highest in the AUA. Angela MacIntyre and Kara Saunders are in fourth and fifth respectively in the league's rebounding leaders, while the Panthers have a total of four players in the top 10 in field goal percentage.

The women's volleyball Panthers pulled off an impressive five-set win over Memorial last weekend by scores of 15-7, 4-15, 15-10, 13-15, 17-15. Tish Rose was named player of the game for her effort and the win gives UPEI a shot at moving up another spot in the AUA standings. The Panthers sit only two points behind seventh place Memorial with their final two games of the weekend on the 10th and 11th against the 0-14 Acadia Axettes.

AUA SCRAPBOOK: The "I Never Saw a Shot I Didn't Like" Award goes to John Devereaux of the Memorial Seahawks basketball team. Devereaux set an AUA record last week by firing up 16 three-point attempts in a seven-point loss to the Saint Mary's Huskies.

Face Off

by Yvonne MacKean
Seeing Red?

On Feb 3 and 4 the UNB Varsity Reds rolled into town to face off against the Panthers, in what was a very important series for both teams in determining playoff standings.

Game one on Saturday saw the Reds hit the ice in a fury. The Reds dominated the first period, scoring four goals. The scorers were Campeau, Grant, Peach, and Ellis. The Panthers answered with one goal at 1:19. The short handed goal was scored by Forbie MacPherson, who managed to push the puck around the UNB goalie who had come out to poke the puck out of MacPherson's reach.

The second period saw the Reds continue to dominate, as they scored two more goals, by Boland and MacLean. The Panthers got a second goal on the power play. White scored on the rebound of Lemay's shot, the other assist went to Harding. The third period saw the Panthers add a couple more goals, and saw them get into the game. The Panthers first goal was scored by Walker on a pass from Skilliter and MacPherson, eighteen seconds into the period. The second goal was a short handed goal scored by Cory Power on a pass from MacPherson (also Jason Sproul). The final score was 6-4 for the Reds. Player of the game was the Reds' Trevor Boland.

Game two saw the Panthers eager for revenge. This time it was the Panthers' fury that came alive in the first period. Not quite six minutes into the game, Pomeroy scored for the Panthers, assisted by Harding and Lemay. Several minutes later, the Panthers got a second goal. This time assisted by White and Walker, Daryl Lavoie fired one past the Reds' netminder. Before the end of the period, the Reds got a goal by MacLean on a power play with a two man advantage.

The second period produced a near stalemate in scoring, as only one goal was scored. Forty-eight seconds into the period John Nelson scored on a two-on-one, from a nice pass from Ertel and Sproul, who started the play. The third period saw an exchange of goals as the Reds tried to come back. Twenty-nine seconds into the period, Sproul, pitching in from the line, rebounded the shot by White. An assist also went to Nelson. The Reds then went on the attack, scoring two goals in three minutes. Scoring were Boland and Burkitt. However, the rally was stopped when Nelson, assisted by White, deked the goalie and flipped the puck into the net. The Panthers won 5-3. The player of the game was UPEI goalie Craig Johnson, who solid netminding allowed the Panthers to hang on to win. The Panthers face Mt. A on Feb 7, UDM on Feb 9 and finish up the regular season at SMU on Feb 11.

UPEI STUDENTS TO MAKE BIGGEST ROAD TRIP OF THE YEAR

Attention All UPEI Basketball Fans:

Due to the great fan support shown by UPEI students, we have decided to take a bus to the AUA Men's Basketball Playoffs. This bus will be leaving the campus on Friday, March 8, and returning on Sunday, March 10. Students would be required to arrange their accommodations for this trip and the bus will make a couple of stops at the hotels that the majority will want to stay at. We need to know how many of you would be interested in going to Halifax for this event. If you would like to go, or if you require more information, please email pross@upe.ca or call Patrick Ross at the Sports Centre front desk at 566-0627. This is being organized for the privilege of the students, so please show your support and get involved with this great event.