

Bisons trample Panthers in Winnipeg final

By Tony Sauer (who was there) and The Shadow

The UPEI men's basketball Panthers have once again returned home without a berth in the CIAU National Men's Basketball Finals.

The team was defeated Saturday night by the Manitoba Bisons in the final of the CIAU Midwestern Regional, held in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

This was the climactic game in an excellent basketball tournament involving four teams: the Manitoba Bisons, the Calgary Dinosaurs, the Panthers, and the host Winnipeg Wesmen.

The first game of the tourney saw the Bisons defeat the Dinosaurs with very few problems.

Later on Friday night, UPEI took on the hometown Winnipeg Wesmen. The Panthers came out flat and found themselves in a hole early in the game.

They walked off the floor at halftime down by a score of 32-26.

The second half saw a turnaround, though, as the Panthers stormed back playing with intensity and aggression.

They finally tied the game at 50-50 with just over five minutes to play.

From then, nothing could stop them, neither the Wesmen nor their cheering crowds.

The Panthers won by a 66-61 score; thanks to high scorers Aion Pettigrew (16

points) Mike Morgan(12), and Tyrone Norman and Delroy Adams each with 10. Tejan Alleyne, Trevor Willock, and Dan Stoberman had 8, 6, and 4 points respectively.

The Panthers had fewer turnovers and a better shooting percentage, but were out-rebounded by the Wesmen.

The win advance the Panthers to the final with the Bisons.

The game started well for both teams, with extremely intense play and end-to-end action on both sides.

The teams at halftime were deadlock at 34.

The second half belonged to the Bisons, though, with a runaway scoring streak building up an insurmountable lead.

Tejan Alleyne and Trevor Willock were both fouled out of the game, leaving a huge hole in the Panther attack.

Coach George Morrison has a strong bench, though, and the replacements played strongly to the end.

Norman was high scorer this time with 21, while Morgan had 13 points and 12 rebounds. Other tallies: Tejan Alleyne with 9, Trevor Willock and Aion Pettigrew with 6, Glen Grant with 4, and Delroy Adams and Dan Stoberman with 2 apiece.

The final score was 75-63 for the Bisons, giving them one of the four spots in the national finals, to be held in Halifax this weekend.

Two Panthers were selected for the All-Star team, centre Mike Morgan and swing Tyrone Norman. Tony Kaufman of the Bisons was the tourney MVP.

In other Regional action, the biggest upset was the Eastern Regional. The St. Francis Xavier X-men pulled a 75-74 overtime victory over top-ranked Acadia for their first victory in 8 meetings with the Axemen this year.

In the Western Regional, Victoria beat York 75-62. The Vikings are defending five straight Regional titles this weekend in Halifax.

In the Midwest, the Waterloo Warriors pulled a 75-73 victory over McMaster.

For the second year in a row, the Panthers have lost in their regional final playoffs, and once more they will have to wait a year to try for a national crown.

With a 24-8 record, and a third-spot nationally going into the Midwest regional, the 84-85 season was the most successful ever in the history of UPEI men's basketball.

Though without the services of star centre Mike Morgan for most of the season due to injuries, the team rallied some big wins over the Axemen and Mount Allison Mounties to earn the Number One national ranking early in February.

Three cheers to all the players for their efforts this year, and thanks for the tremendous season!

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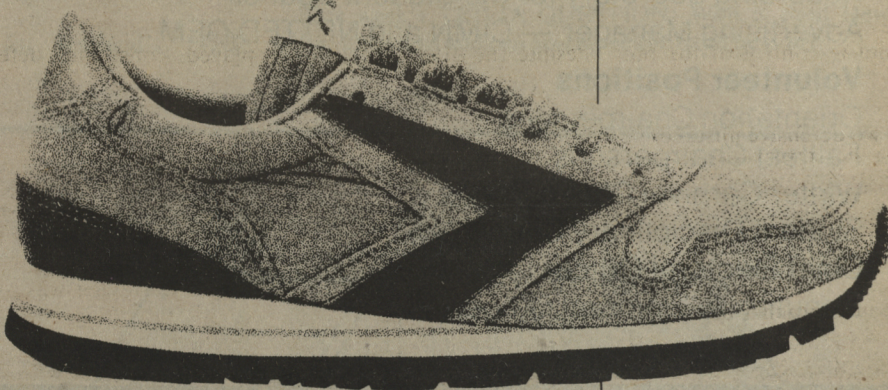
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