

UPEI Athletic Department responds to Criticism

By Sarah Murphy
NEWS EDITOR

A little bit of exposure may be all that it took to push UPEI Panthers to victory and the crowd to the stands in recent weeks.

When asked by The Cadre what was wrong and what could be fixed within UPEI's Athletics Department (AD), athletes representing hockey, rugby, basketball, and field hockey took the opportunity to bring up the lack of full time coaches, and therapists. Lack of promotion was also a concern, along with lack of presence from the members of the Athletics Department. Improvements to the department's equipment and venues were also suggested.

"There were lots of inaccuracies in [the previous article]," said Barb Mullaly, UPEI Athletic Director. "I think there were a number of things that were attributed to the Athletic Department as a whole, that really we don't have a whole lot of control over." These included university budgets, and work done by maintenance. "[These things] I think could have been handled in a better manner if somebody had checked them out before."

Mullaly maintains that the Athletic Department requests a yearly upkeep of the UPEI playing fields.

This was done, she said, but little can be done to prevent service vehicles such as snow plows who drive out on the field accidentally.

"These are the types of things you don't have control over," added Mullaly.

Mullaly also defended claims of poor attendance at Panther games.

"We have the best audience in all Atlantic universities," said Mullaly, then quoting an attendance of over 1000 people at this weekend's basketball games. According to her poor attendance at prior events was not due to lack of interest, but simply to the fact that people are sometimes simply too busy to attend the games.

Mullaly cannot justify the need for an academic advisor. A large portion of UPEI athletes have an excellent academic record she pointed out, and those who may be struggling can get help from their fellow team members who are more successful academically.

"I'm not sure that there is a need for such a thing," said Mullaly. "45% of our athletes have an average of 75 [per cent] and above. We have 28 academic All-Canadians out of 112 athletes."

Like many other things, purchasing new uni-

forms and equipment is dependent on budgets.

"The coaches determine [the need for new uniforms]," explained Mullaly. "We give the coaches budgets, and coaches have to decide within their budgets." Travel, accommodation, and food for away games must also be covered by coaches' budget, added Mullaly.

"Coaches pick out uniforms, the Athletic Department doesn't pick out uniforms," she continued. "Coaches decide how much money goes to equipment." Increasing coaching budgets would lead to a tuition increase, said Mullaly.

But coaching staff disagreed.

"I don't think that is right," said a spokesperson for Tracy Ellsworth, Lady Panthers basketball coach. "We had a sponsor pay for the uniforms, we didn't get the money for it. It must be in Barb's budget."

Athletes would like to see a full time coaching staff at UPEI, but it is unlikely to happen.

A full time coaching staff is not feasible at UPEI, said Mullaly. Canadian universities with full time coaches have Physical Education Programs which are taught by these same coaches. Bringing such a program to UPEI is unlikely, she

AD Responds

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Thousands of students protest post-secondary education cuts

By CUP staff
Source: CUP member papers and regional bureaux

(CUP)-Thousands of students across Canada took to the streets on Wednesday (February 6) as part of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) Access 2000 campaign.

The CFS, Canada's largest student lobby group, is calling on the federal government to restore \$3.7-billion in provincial transfer payments for post-secondary education. Since taking office in

1993, the federal Liberals have cut \$7-billion from post-secondary education and training.

Students in more than 50 communities joined the CFS in their call for more education funding.

In St. John's, Newfoundland, 1,500 university, college and high school students walked out of classes to protest government cutbacks to educa-

tion. The protest was so boisterous that at one point a reporter from a local radio station asked if there was a party going on.

In Charlottetown, more than 200 students at the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) participated in a Kraft dinner lunch. The gathering was meant to highlight the impact high student debt loads have on students.

"We feel it went well," said Stephen Lewis, vice-president (finance) at the Student Union of UPEI.

"It's hard to get students out on this campus, so we feel this was a successful turnout."

Out in Quebec, cold weather did not keep students from protesting. About 200 students from Concordia University, McGill University and Université du Québec a Montreal bundled up and marched in minus -15 Celsius weather

"The government has gone too far and cut too much from our programs.



Students in Newfoundland brave the cold (Photo by: Amanda Labonte)

I have decided it is not a good thing to not write editorials, it is a good thing to write editorials on the bottom of the page, so you know it is really all