

Hockey Panthers Pick Up Four Points

by Adam GAUTHIER

This past weekend at the Civic Centre, the UPEI men's hockey team played two hard fought games, and came out with victories against two of the top teams in AUS hockey.

On Friday, in front of a sparse crowd, the Panthers played host to the league-leading Dalhousie Tigers. The Tigers re also the third ranked university hockey team in Canada. The Panthers got off to a quick start with a goal by Lorne Misita, with assists from Mike Kennedy and Cleon Smith, just twenty-five seconds into the first period. At the 14:38 mark, Brandon Coalter scored on Tiger goalie Mike Weatherbie, assisted by Brian Passmore and Adam Campbell, to give the Panthers a 2-0 lead going into the first intermission. UPEI was outshot by Dalhousie 18-10 in the first but were kept in the game thanks to the great goaltending of Jason Flick.

Dalhousie was able to penetrate Flick early in the second period with a goal by Chris Pittman, at the 1:27 mark. The second period was filled with good scoring opportunities and a number of penalties on both sides. Dalhousie again outshot UPEI

for the period 9-5.

In the third, the Panthers added to their lead with a short-handed goal on a break-away by O'Leary's Darcy Harris on a great pass by Charlottetown's Kris MacPhee at the 11:05 mark. Pittman again scored for Dalhousie on the power-play at 11:20, but Harris's goal turned out to be the winner. For the remaining ten minutes of hockey, the Tigers could not beat Flick. They threw another thirteen shots at him for a game high of forty, while the Panthers shot eleven at Weatherbie in the third for a total of twenty-six.

Hostility became rampant at the end of the game as the players started shoving and grabbing each other, while Panthers head coach Doug Currie and Tigers coach Fabian Joseph got into a shouting match from their benches. Cooler heads eventually prevailed, and the teams left the ice without shaking hands. For the Panthers it was a huge win and a confidence booster going into Saturday's game against Acadia.

I arrived at the game late on Saturday night and saw that the Panthers already had a 2-0 lead over



Friday's game-winning goal by Darcy Harris.

the Axemen, with just over seven minutes left in the first.

The crowd was larger than the night before, with a number of UPEI students, Alumni and faculty in the crowd. There was still more blue seats than bodies. A former Alumni sitting a few seats down told me that, "The Panthers are still drawing more than the Abbies."

At the 15:54 mark, Acadia's Todd Row scored a short-handed goal to put the Axemen down by one going into the first intermission. Shots in the period were in favour of the Axemen 11-5.

In the second, the Panthers struck at the 4:20 mark with a goal by Mike Kennedy, with assists coming from Brandon Coalter and Brian Passmore. Acadia responded a few minutes later at the 6:14 mark with a goal by Robin Sochan to beat Jason Flick. Shots in the second favoured the Panthers 11-8.

The third was a very sloppy period for the Panthers, with bad passing and too many penalties and icing calls. The Panthers were on their heels for most of the period with the Axemen weaving their way through the Panther lineup.

The Axemen scored early in the third on a power-play goal by Scott Roles to tie the game at three. The Axemen pelted twelve shots at Jason flick in the third while the Panthers were only able to get two on Acadia netminder Mark Cairns. Fortunately for the Panthers one of the two shots went in the net.

After a great glove save by Flick with 2:40 left to save the game for the Panthers, Kris MacPhee took the puck from Darcy Harris and Trevor Tokarczyk, and wired it past Cairns to give the Panthers a 4-3 lead with 2:25 left in the game. The Axemen ended up getting a costly penalty at the 18:00 mark, sealing the game for the Panthers. The Axemen outshot the Panthers 31-18 for the game. For the second night in a row, Flick came up big for the Panthers when they needed him.

With the four points on the weekend the Panthers moved into a tie for third place with nine points on the season. Overall it was a very good weekend of hockey for the Panthers with two close and exciting games, which should encourage more students and faculty to get out and support their university athletes.



"Could you please not point at me? How rude."