

# Carleton Takes Home the Honours

By **Quentin CASEY, The Gazette**

HALIFAX (CUP) -- When one thinks of national athletic powerhouses within the Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS), Carleton University does not really jump to mind.

So it is not surprising that when the Ravens of Carleton won the Final Eight basketball championship at the Metro Centre in Halifax this past weekend, it was their first CIS gold medal—in any sport.

The Ravens came into the tournament heavily favoured as the number-one seed. The fact of the matter was they had been dominant all year long, amassing an overall record of 21-1 in the regular season.

But Carleton faced a hearty task in Friday's last quarter-final game as they were matched-up against the eighth-seeded University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) Panthers. The Panthers, one of two teams representing the Atlantic University Sport (AUS), quickly sparked fan support from the hometown crowd. The Ravens struggled against UPEI, but were able to pull out a 63-60 overtime win.

Michael Smart led the Ravens with 15 points on 6-of-10 shooting, despite the fact that as a team, Carleton shot a measly 36.1 per cent from the field. Smart emphasized that his team had been successful all season long because of their well-rounded performances.

"We shot the ball poorly, but

shooting days come and go. As long as we defend and rebound, that's something we can control. Teams have a hard time scoring on us, if we defend and rebound."

Carleton beat Laval University 57-54 in another close game on Saturday to advance to Sunday's final against Guelph University, a team they had faced three times previously in the season, including the Ontario University Athletics championship game.

The final proved to be an exciting game between two evenly matched teams. Carleton gained control in the second half and held a slim two point lead with a minute remaining.

Guelph squandered a number of chances to close the deficit from the foul-line, and was unable to tie the game with two three-point attempts in the game's dying seconds. As a result, the Ravens pulled out the 57-54 win, a reflection of both the balance of power within the CIS basketball ranks and the number of games throughout the weekend that went down to the wire.

Tournament MVP Osvaldo Jeanty led the Ravens with 17 points, seven rebounds and four assists.

"We just did a good job as a team together, and tried to focus on everything as a team. Just playing for each other and getting it done for each other. All the peripheral stuff like the fans and the national championship are a small part of it. But the fact that we're a family and doing it for each other is what put us over the top," said Carleton fifth-year guard Jafeth Maseruka, who had nine points and eight boards in the final.

"It's great. I've been wanting this for a very long time. I wanted to come out here and actually win a championship," continued Maseruka, a tournament All-Star.

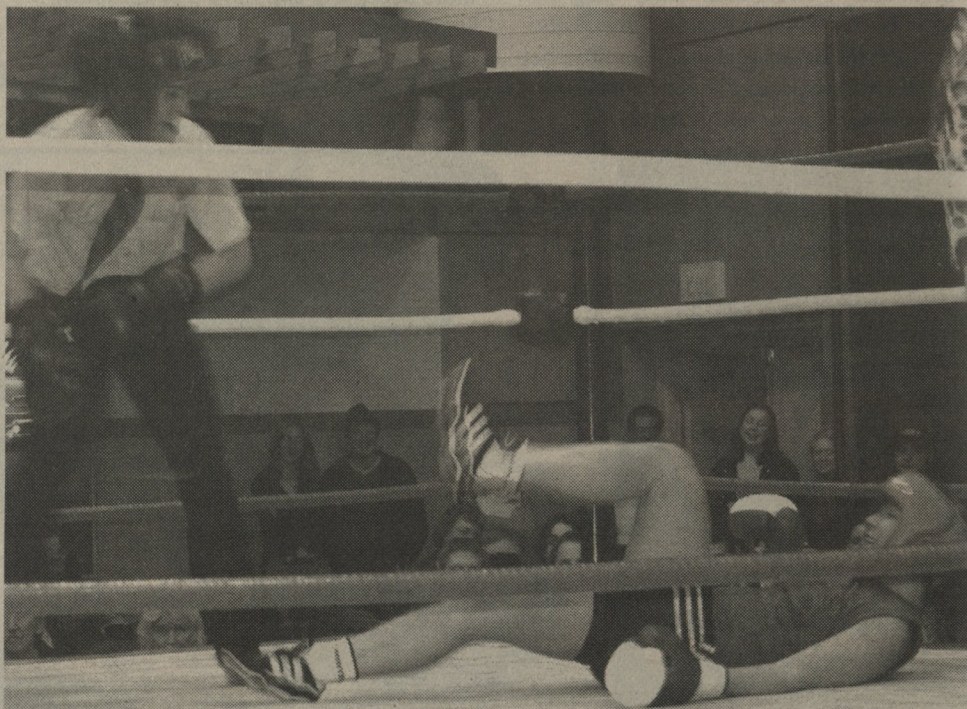
Carleton will have a tough time trying to repeat this season's success, as they lose three fifth-year veterans next year. For the time being, the Ravens are content to enjoy what was a truly winning season.

"It's the greatest feeling ever," said Carleton second-year guard B.J. Charles.

"No one in the world deserves this more than we do."



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