

Gee-gees sweep Panthers

After finishing first in the regular season and sweeping Dalhousie and Moncton in the playoffs to win their first ever AUAA title, the UPEI Hockey Panthers' hopes of a national crown were put to rest last weekend by the Ottawa Gee Gees, champions of the Quebec Universities Athletic Association.

The Gee Gees defeated the Panthers 2-1 Friday night and 3-2 Saturday at the Robert Gurtin Arena in Hull, Quebec, to take the best-of-three Eastern Canadian College Finals 2-0. They now advance to the Canadian Inter-University Athletic Union Finals this weekend in Toronto.

Ottawa outplayed the Panthers in the opening game as the Panthers managed a sporadic attack with only 20 shots on the Gee Gee goal.

The game was close though with UPEI capitalising on a defensive lapse to go up 1-0 early in the third period. While the Gee Gees were the more dominate hockey team, sehlling 42 shots at UPEI goalie Tony Haladuick, the Gee Gees never really had complete control of the outcome.

Two defensive mistakes behind the UPEI net resulted in two third period goals by Rock Voisine with the final goal coming only three seconds left in regulation time.

Ron Carragher broke open a two period 0-0 tied at 4:28 of the third period as he won a face-off to the right of the Ottawa net, and with a tremendous individual effort beat the goalie to give the Panthers the lead.

Tony Haladuick and defenceman Steve Fulton were the definite stars of the game, and provided an inspired defence which kept the Panthers in the game for the first two periods.

UPEI had excellent scoring opportunities as Gordie Roche and Ron Carragher both shot wide on separate 2 on 1 breakaways in the first period.

Ottawa's Benoit Chabot hit a goal post four minutes into the game.

Haladuick stopped Pat Iahey and Brian Jokay on two excellent scoring chances in the first five minutes of the second period as the Gee Gees milled around the Panther goal.

UPEI's first shot on goal in the second period came at the seventh minute mark as Doug Currie, who returned to the line-up after being sidelined with a mild concussion for about a week, and Danny Revell put a scare into Ottawa with their characteristic style of forechecking.

Ottawa thwarted all attempts and stormed right back with another onslaught of shots, but Haladuick came up big again in the Panther goal.

UPEI had two more scoring chances as Randy Muttart fired two point blank shots wide, and Greg Gravel on a breakaway got off a weak backhand shot which went wide also.

After Carragher scored in the third the momentum shifted in favor of UPEI despite the efforts of a wild partisan crowd.

UPEI started to get some quality shots and threatened to score more goals in the third frame, but two defensive lapses gave the forechecking Roch Voisine the opportunity to pick up a loose puck and put it behind a surprised Haladuick.

The reason for Ottawa's domination of sorts in the first game was that Ottawa apparently scouted the Panthers in their final game in the playoffs.

They figured if they stopped Bob MacDonald, Albert Roche and Greg Gravel, they would have a fighting chance.

But no matter how much scouting they did, the Gee Gees only won the two games by the skin of their teeth.

UPEI were supposed to practice Thursday, but after they arrived in Ottawa but a power failure near the Ottawa University forced them to cancel.

The Gee Gees changed venues though and practiced at the Bob Guertin Arena, site of the scheduled games.

The team held a team meeting instead Thursday, and held a light practice session Friday morning at the Hull arena, but it certainly wasn't enough to prepare for the very important game which lay ahead.

Saturday night, UPEI outplayed and outshot Ottawa. However, Ottawa capitalised on its chances while the Panthers missed several opportunities to seal the game.

UPEI worked very hard during the entire game, forechecking much better than the night before and providing a much more consistent attack than in the previous match.

The game was delayed for about a half hour as Ottawa disputed UPEI's right to home team privileges and it took a phone call to the CIAU before the matter was settled, in UPEI's favour. (The home team would have last change.)

Randy Muttart scored at 16:23 as Steve Fulton, who played consistent defensive hockey in both games, set up Muttart on a 2 on 1 to give the Panthers a 1-0 first period lead.

Fulton blasted a point shot in first period, but hit Muttart in the leg with the puck heading into the open side.

Ron Carragher was robbed as he beat the Gee Gees' defence to face goalie Tony Martino one on one.

Jocelyn Bolduc scored his first of two goals at 10:31 of the second period to dead-lock the game at 1-1.

Haladuick, who was screened on the shot, never saw the puck tic-tac-toe through a mass of players in front of him to slip along the ice between his skate and the goal post on the short side.

Greg Gravel scored on a power play effort in the second while Pat Iahey was in the sin-bin for manhandling Garth Arsenault.

Gravel, who termed the

losses 'a learning experience' after the game, pounced on a Muttart rebound and jammed the puck into the short side to give the lead back to UPEI.

Jean Poulin trailed on a Gee Gee rush and was set up nicely in the slot beating Haladuick between the pads at 18:18 to tie the game again.

UPEI threatened with three good scoring chances in the third period as the Panthers controlled the frame outshooting Ottawa 14-9.

Jocelyn Bolduc scored his second goal of the night with just over four minutes remaining in the game. The goal came moments after Bob Hicks missed on an open net. Bolduc rebounded Hicks' shot and took the puck down the ice to beat Haladuick for the eventual winning goal.

For the remainder of the period, UPEI attempted an attack but never really got any good scoring chances as Ottawa were content to ice the puck at every chance. UPEI coach Vince Mulligan pulled his goalie with 45 seconds remaining to try and force the game into overtime but he was unsuccessful.

Ottawa, ranked fourth in the National by the CIAU, has twelve victories in its last fourteen games, including an upset win over highly-touted Chicoutimi Inuks for the QUAA title.

The Gee Gees finished in third place with a 10-8-2 record while the Panthers boasted a 20-4 regular season record, winning 11 of their past 15 before facing Ottawa.

Many of the Panthers compared Ottawa with the Université de Moncton in that the Gee Gees have a fast skating club with good goal-scorers.

UPEI did a good job forechecking Ottawa, but the outcome of both games were decided on luck.

Ottawa plays this weekend in Toronto and the final game of the tournament will be broadcast on CTV.



The impact of defeat hits home Saturday in Hull, as the Panthers lose to the Ottawa Gee-gees to finish their historic season and their chances at a national title.

Left, Norman Beck. Right, Coach Vince Mulligan (Photo: Hartinger)

From the Hart



There is not much to add that would ease any pain resulting from two disappointing losses that UPEI suffered on the weekend.

UPEI's two glamour teams both missed out on a chance to play for a national crown, as the MFNs' hockey and basketball team were both forced to hang up their jerseys for the year in the same hour.

Their loss was certainly felt throughout the campus community, and it certainly was a shame that more students couldn't find a way up to Ottawa to see the games.

UPEI's alumni were in full force, as most of the same people who attended the Eastern Canadian soccer final in the Fall between Carleton and UPEI, attended both games in Hull.

It is a sad coincidence that Ottawa had to be the "hurtle they couldn't jump over" as both the soccer and hockey team seem destined for victory.

Although the AUAA conference is the most competitive, I think in the future we will have to take the Upper Canadian teams more seriously.

The mental aspect of playing for a national title and at the same time keeping one's marks up to par is a topic that never really gets discussed to often.

For a student to get mentally prepared for a national title drive and have his or her books in the other hand is a factor each student ATHLETE has to contend with at some time.

So much emphasis is put on winning, and the reception which welcomed home the soccer team in the Fall and the hockey and basketball teams last weekend should be applauded.

It is a small act which really gives each player some consolation and the sense that someone really cares.

The fact that they lost is not wiped out of their minds but at least it gives them a reason to smile.

So what if they lost, all teams represented the university with great honor and in their quest for national titles, UPEI teams have captured two AUAA titles. The Women's basketball team missed out on an Atlantic title by only one point. The Men's basketball team finished first in the regular season and were ranked number one, along with the hockey and soccer teams.

The men's hoop squad lost in the final game of the AUAA final and were sent out West to play in a CIAU Regional tournament, but lost in the Final game as well.

Look at what ALL the teams achieved this year and look closely because by any standard UPEI is the best university on the East Coast.

The dedication of the athletes to their respective teams put most of their courses in jeopardy. To call any of them losers, no matter what scale they fell from, would be rubbing salt into their wounds.

Hurrah for UPEI, and I would like to wish the teams the best of luck next year. I hope all the students will support the teams, because without fans, you don't have a team.

