

Point-Counterpoint: the Merits of Overtime

Chris O'Leary/Jake Troughton
The Gateway (University of Alberta)

EDMONTON (CUP) — Imagine you and a friend have stepped into a time machine. Instead of landing in a situation that's both fun and seamlessly flawless, like being Louis XIV, the two of you find yourselves the focus of thousands of Romans, ready to watch the two of you fight to the death. After your standard brutish brawl, you're both bloodied and beaten, yet there the both of you are still alive. At the conclusion of these events, the Romans didn't bellow out to the spectators that both combatants fought valiantly, and since they both made it this far, that they were going to let them go to fight another day. No, it was at this point that things got interesting. And by interesting, I mean they let the lions out.

With the lions on the battlefield, do you think you and your friend would join hands and walk to face your fate together? Hell no. One of you would probably push the other at the lions and all the Romans would go home happy.

While fighting to the death and being fed to the lions didn't quite make it through the ages, the spirit of these competitions lives on in overtime.

As you're growing up, parents and coaches stress that sports are just for fun, but once you get into the competitive stuff the gloves come off. Everyone involved has put in too much time and money to step off the ice/field/pitch/court and have nothing resolved—and that's not even considering the fan's perspective.

Let's say, for whatever reason, you're an Oilers fan. You save up all year and bought the best seat in the house, and before you can even pay too much for your beer, in typical Oilers fashion, the team gets down a goal or two quickly. If you're a long-time fan though, you know how these things go. The Oil fight back, cutting the lead down to one midway through the third. In the game's dying seconds, Edmonton pulls their goalie, and miracle of miracles, they score with two seconds left. Rexall's going bananas, the Flames are reeling, and this game is far from over. It needs extra time.

So why does the game have to end? Overtime is the most dramatic part of the game. It's where legends are made and legacies are formed. How

could you possibly be content with two teams resolving nothing in regulation?

//Counterpoint//

When our parents told us that sport is all about having fun, they were, of course, full of crap. But that doesn't mean it's all about winning, either. It's about sportsmanship—win, lose, or even tie.

The juvenile North American notion that a tie game "solves nothing" is, quite frankly, contrary to that spirit. It elevates base competitiveness above all else, demanding that athletes and fans refuse to accept the outcome of an evenly contested match until one team has been artificially subjected to an undeserved defeat. A tie solves exactly what any other result solves: the question of how two teams match up on a given day. When it happens that they're even, people should have the grace to accept that.

A hockey game, for example, is 60 minutes long. If the score is even at the end of that time, then the game has been tied. Putting the game in the books as a tie is an accurate reflection of what happened that particular day. Sure, no one's going to be ecstatic about a tie, but everyone hates losing, and it's hardly fair to extend a game just to ensure that someone experiences it.

Of course, overtime is needed in the playoffs. Then, and only then, should it be necessary. We can still respect that two teams are even, but since there's only room for one of them in the next round, you have to continue.

Our insistence on crowning a winner above all else wreaks havoc. If we absolutely must break a tie, the only reasonable way to do so is by continuing to play the sport that's being played.

But it seems that's quickly becoming an anachronism. Take a recent Oilers/Flames game. The two teams came out even after battling for 65 minutes, but that wasn't the end of things; instead of settling the draw, the teams were forced to take turns skating unopposed at the net until one team could score more than the other. The "winner" was essentially determined by a skills competition. How is that in any way more satisfying than just accepting the tie?

Mens Basketball Panthers Defeat Cape Breton to Salvage Weekend Split



Josh Lewis
Sports Reporter

The UPEI Panthers pulled off a 84-75 victory over the Cape Breton Capers in mens basketball action Sunday at the Chi-Wan Young Sports Centre. Tyler Wood and Sherone Edwards shared player of the game status for the Panthers, who earned a split with the Capers after losing a 74-72 squeaker a day earlier.

The Panthers led by as much as 12 points in the second half with momentum changing hands frequently, although UPEI never surrendered the lead. With 12:38 remaining, Wood charged to the basket for two points, knocking over a Caper who was charged with a defensive foul. CBU coach Jim Charters was furious, demanding a charging call on Wood, and was assessed a technical foul. Charters had some words for the officials.

"You don't expect to get many of those calls," admitted the coach. "We didn't think we'd get a fair shake on the road anyway, and I guess most coaches think the same way."

The teams traded some huge shots in the final minutes as Cape Breton struggled to narrow UPEI's

lead and the Panthers fought tooth and nail to hang onto it. Wood sank a three-pointer with 5:40 left to give UPEI a six-point lead, and Edwards got a trey of his own with 2:35 left to increase the lead to 10. Doug MacKinney's dunk with 1:54 remaining seemed to bury the Capers, who trailed by nine, but the visitors refused to throw in the towel. A three-pointer with 19.9 seconds on the clock reduced the deficit to five and restored a small sliver of hope.

That was before Sherone Edwards took over.

With 12 seconds remaining, Edwards finished an alley-oop from Kyle Borden to get the crowd on its feet. The Capers were done.

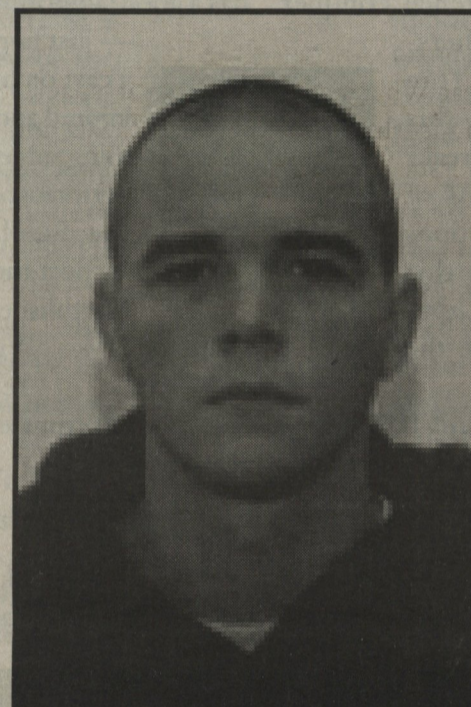
As if that wasn't enough, the big man went in all alone on the next

play and shook the building with a thunderous dunk, ending the game with a bang.

The visitors' coach had nothing but praise for Wood, who only recently made his season debut due to injury. "Wood had a huge impact today. He runs the show," said Charters. "We tried to wear him down, but he's like the Energizer bunny. He never quits."

"P.E.I. is an improved team since the last time we played them. They were a tough opponent."

The Panthers led 35-31 at the half. The team travels to UNB next weekend before hosting the Saint Mary's Huskies on January 20.



UPEI Panthers' Tyler Wood
File Photo

Live Sports Action on Panther Radio

While nothing beats catching live Panther hockey action in person at the MacLauchlan arena, if you can't make it in you can now take it in...ONLINE.

Panther Radio is a multi-faceted Internet-based service that brings exciting live sports action from the University of Prince Edward Island to you. Our first service is live UPEI Panther Hockey, bringing you live play-by-play and colour commentary for every regular season Panther game.

Visit <http://radio.upei.ca> to listen live and to learn more. The first game of the regular season is Friday, October 14 at 7:00PM with the pre-game show beginning 15 minutes before the puck drops.