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watching films, talking, becoming more of a team, because you did not have to be there, but you wanted to be."

6) Increased Presence From the Members of the AD and the Executive Staff of the University

This is a solution that requires no increased investment - save time. A basketball player recounted the pride of watching former President Willy Elliot sitting in the front row, and the rush to play well in front of him. The current president, as far as we know, has been to one game this year. A member of the Rugby team sounded amazed that though a member of the AD is heavily involved with the CIAU rugby administration, he had not seen one of their games. A member of the basketball teams said *this:*

"The only time we see the Athletic Director is when she tells us not to go overboard on rookie night."

This is the easiest, and therefore the most baffling problem of them all. A university is made of all the people inside it and while we put the burden on students to support our teams, surely we must ask the same, if not more, from our administration.

The President, the Athletic Director and all the members of the AD staff should heed this wake up call. Go to the games, support your teams, the return will be tenfold. If, indeed, *'paths are made by walking'* as

Wade MacLauchlan likes to say, then ladies and gentlemen cut yourself a path to the Field House (and to the Civic Centre and the playing fields) and make yourself a presence.

7) Compose a Student-Athlete Steering Committee

The need for some sort of student athlete steering committee is obvious when one listens to athletes who can speak freely and who all genuinely care about the fates of their programs and the AD (and indeed UPEI) in general. This would provide a valuable unbiased outlet for athletes to vet their interests. It would also serve as a way for

on track) The student-athlete (athlete-student) that receives support is one who is better equipped to handle the pressures, and the time commitment required to balance school and sport. This is not to say that we bemoan the plight of the poor athlete. A member of the hockey team could offer nothing but praise for the way he was treated, especially in the light of the fact that the team has such a poor record. Again, this recommendation is not intended to further raise the athlete above the common student but to rather note that being a varsity athlete *is* different, and we should have pride in helping our teams win,



the athletic department to have a greater awareness of athletes' concerns. Obviously, this is presently lacking and highlights the greatest problem of all-care

8) Hire An Academic Advisor

This does not need to be done outside the university but rather could be a team of volunteer professors (we asked three just for fun, and they all said they would be interested in helping the AD get back

just as we should have pride in every group that represents this university, the Varsity teams simply represent it in the most public of ways. One would think with the talk of the "Brain Gain" the university would see athletics as a simple way to raise the school's profile, and increase interest both in and out of the province.

These are some suggestions to improve things. From all the athletes gathered one could sense how losing grates

these people. Nobody likes it. But when there concerns start drifting away from performance to other aspects then there are some fundamental things wrong. These people want to do better and we sense they *can* do better if some things are improved upon. Whether it can be done under the present direction of the AD is questionable. The sense from some athletes was that they were not to sure how supportive the AD is. Some sports were flat out told to be lucky to have what they have and to not expect any improvement on conditions. It is this type of attitude which perpetuates the conditions as they exist now. Would a change lead to improvement? That is difficult to speculate on however we see that some accountability must lie with the head of the AD, how much is hard to say. A member of the basketball team put it well:

"It is not necessarily a change of the Athletic Director, or a change in the Athletic Department personnel, as much as it is a change in philosophy."

It is not so much an investment in dollars as much as it is an investment of time and of passion. In the mid-eighties, early-nineties UPEI was one of the powers of the AUAA. Now, nearly across the board, teams are losing at a record pace. The once mighty hockey program appears in complete shambles as rumors and innuendoes float all around campus, even down to The Cadre. Leadership must be strong in times of

crisis, and make no mistake about it, we are in the land of athletic crisis. Leadership is from the top down and presently, it is lacking. Can the AD turn the ship around? One sensed skepticism from the athletes when confronted by the question.

The Forum did serve to create a greater sense of community among the athletes and was revelatory to all who attended. It should not have been the Cadre who founded a forum like this but we are indeed glad we did. We invite any response from all areas of the university and welcome any further suggestions on how to improve things. This Forum, is, after all, an exercise in how to create positive change in an area that desperately needs it. We are not privy to the AD's books and we are sure they are stretched as much as any area of the school. But we are not proposing a major capital investment. The Cadre welcomes any and all members from the AD or the Executive of the University to respond, and we shall give them ample space to do so.

Let us hope that this serves as a positive exercise in discovering the new glory years for UPEI sports which will no doubt foster a sense of spirit and a reduction of apathy, that seems to be the constant complaint about the student body. After all, the goal is to have the best varsity athletics in the Atlantic, and have those athletics add to the quality of university life- not subtract from it- which is the present situation. **END**