

# Football Conference Needs Change

The Atlantic Football Conference is a farce. It is not competitive and offers very little to the person who wants to pay for and see close football.

Here's what I mean:  
 St. Mary's 54 U.N.B. 1  
 Acadia 51 Dal 0  
 St. F.X. 61 Dal 7  
 St. Mary's 56 Mt. A. 1

The only persons who want to see that kind of football must belong to the Masochist Union. Those scores do very little for participants because the winner's don't get much satisfaction, while the losers can only suffer embarrassment and humiliation.

I don't think St. Mary's, which has a full-time football coach and admits to having a tremendous football program, should be punished for its success. But on the other hand, schools like UPEI and Mt. A. shouldn't be put through a chamber of horrors three or four times during a football season.

As it stands now, college football in the Maritimes is in serious trouble and unless something is done, we won't have the sport for too long. UPEI is having a hard time getting bodies to try out, and Mt. Allison is tired of spending money and being downgraded every time they play St. Mary's.

The universities are looking for another school to join the league. They're crazy. Who'd want to join? Who is foolish enough to enter? Nobody wants to get killed.

"Universities with different philosophies shouldn't compete against each

other", says Dal house's athletic director Doug Hargraves.

He's right. Dal's approach towards intercollegiate sport is totally different from Acadia's and St. Mary's. When Dal plays a game they hope to do well and get something out of it to better themselves. The Dal aim in football is to try and do their best.

Do you know what the aim of St. Mary's football Huskies is? From the first day in camp the players are geared towards winning the ultimate and that means the Canadian collegiate football championship, and every outing is a step towards that goal.

I don't think there is anything wrong in trying to be the very best in the country. The odds are against you but one shouldn't be condemned for trying. However, the way to get there shouldn't ruin intercollegiate football.

Do you realize last week's game between St. Mary's and Acadia is the only decent one you'll see this year. They play Dal later this month, and the only question is whether St. Mary's can score more than the 61 points St. F.X. racked up against them this week.

If St. F.X. should upset St. Mary's this weekend it would force a three-way tie (St. F.X.-St. Mary's-Acadia) for first. Then it's going to be the old points for and against deal to see who makes the playoffs and the teams that are going to get killed are Dal, UPEI, and Mt. A.

How do we solve this

problem without changing school ideas? I think there is only one way, a tier or division system.

Let the universities that want to compete for national honours, those who place emphasis on their football program, those who actively recruit players, compete against each other.

Here's the way I see it;

TIER 1	TIER 2
St. Mary's	UPEI
Acadia	Dal
St. F.X.	Mt. A.
.....	UNB

As it stands the fans get one game a year between Acadia-St. Mary's and if you are an Acadia fan, the game wasn't in Wolfville this year. If a fourth club could be found to enter the Tier 1 it would mean a home and home schedule for each team. It would rectify the imbalance in the league, create a better rivalry, and probably increase interest in the sport in the Maritimes.

Some 5,000 fans turned out for the game between St. Mary's and Acadia; imagine the rematch later in Wolfville. It could happen under the Tier system.

Acadia defeated St. F.X. in their first game 35-29. It was a close one and I'm sure X would love another shot. They can't get it because of the current set-up.

The best games this year have been between the weaker clubs. Dal edged Mt. A. 29-24 and Mt. A. just got by UPEI 25-21. Under the tier system more of these

games could be possible.

If a tier system were put into operation more schools may want to join the weaker division. Maybe the U. de M. or St. Thomas would consider taking their chances with UPEI, Mt. A., and UNB. Right now they see St. Mary's, Acadia, and St. F.X. rolling over people and they say, "we don't want any part of it". Who could blame them.

Perhaps it is time for the athletic directors and football coaches of the Atlantic conference to arrive at a solution, before the universities that are getting killed say, "to hell with it", and cancel intercollegiate football.

(The Editor is grateful for the use of this article from the Fourth Estate written by Alex Walling.)

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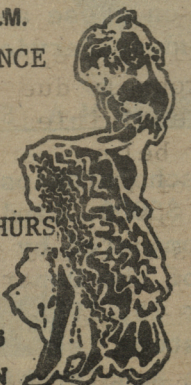


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