

# SPORTS

sports@gateway.ualberta.ca • tuesday, 18 march, 2008

## Underdog Badgers crowned new CIS kings

ROBIN COLLUM  
Sports Editor

OTTAWA—In a tournament full of upsets, the seventh seeded Brock Badgers walked away with the CIS men's basketball championship.

With three of the top four seeded teams losing in the first round and the fourth falling in a semi-final, the Badgers downed the fifth seeded Acadia Axemen 64–61 to win the WP McGee Trophy and end the Carleton Ravens' five-year reign as CIS champions.

The game was close all the way through, with three lead changes and five ties at various points in the play, including one with barely more than two minutes left. Brock came out stronger in the first quarter, leading 14–7, but the second quarter saw a complete reversal of their fortunes. Acadia outscored Brock 24–7, and went into halftime up ten.

"It was nervousness. You're playing on a national stage, you're playing to be the best team in Canada, so it's natural to be a little uptight," Brock head coach Ken Murray explained. "Acadia, on the other hand, wasn't initially. Then, in the second quarter particularly, it was like they just woke up and 'Bingo,' and we fell asleep."

The Badgers surged back after the break, and they finished the third quarter with the score tied 50–50.

"The third quarter, which has been our nemesis all year, was our turnaround point today, which was nice," Murray said. "We were down ten points at halftime, and most teams would say, 'We're struggling,' but we knew that we were going to come out in the third quarter."

Momentum swung back and forth between the two teams in the fourth, with neither squad able to pull ahead. Acadia took the lead to start the quarter, but Brock, little by little, claimed it back, taking a 62–60 lead with under a minute to



**A NEW NUMBER ONE** Carleton's title streak ended at five as the Brock Badgers claimed the CIS title by defeating Acadia 64–61 on Sunday in Ottawa.

play thanks to a shot from fourth-year forward Dusty Bianchin. Bianchin then secured the victory for Brock with a long jumper with 11.4 seconds on the clock.

Badger Michael Kemp, who led the game with 23 points, scored 15 of them in the second half.

"We thought initially that if it was close going into the fourth quarter, that we were going to win it because they might be a little tighter from last night," Murray said. "And sure enough, they made a couple mistakes; we took advantage; we

starting hitting a couple shots—we didn't shoot the ball well today, but we hit a couple shots, and Dusty had a couple real big shots today. Michael kept us in the game, and Dusty finished it off."

Brock had been considered underdogs going into the game against not only a higher seed, but a team that had bumped off the defending champions, as Acadia did beating Carleton in double overtime on Saturday—but Murray said that he knew his team was capable of surprising people.

"We may be the best seventh seed ever at CIS

nationals," he said. "I thought when we started on our run in February that we had a pretty good chance of being here at the national championship, but I didn't realize until we actually got here that our chances were really good."

The Laval Rouge et Or defeated the UBC Thunderbirds 86–84 in other action on Sunday, winning the consolation final and securing fifth place. Carleton and the Western Mustangs tied for third, while Alberta and the St Mary's Huskies tied for seventh.

## Bears downed in first round

Carleton defence, rebounding stifles Alberta in quarter-finals

ROBIN COLLUM  
Sports Editor

OTTAWA—The Bears basketball team defied expectations this season to make it to the national championships, but once they were there, they were unable to continue their success.

Alberta's first game was a punishing 66–57 loss against the host and top-seeded Carleton Ravens on Friday night, while Saturday afternoon's consolation final against Laval saw a lacklustre effort from the clearly dispirited Bears result in an 87–79 win for the Rouge et Or.

**"They're not really a great offensive team, I don't think, but obviously their forte is defence, and we got a good taste of that tonight"**

ALEX STEELE  
GOLDEN BEARS GUARD

Alberta entered nationals as the eighth seed after coming in second at the Canada West finals, drawing Carleton—undefeated in the regular season and playoffs—as their first round matchup. It was an unenviable draw, but the Bears were confident that they could hold their own against the Ravens, the five-time defending champions.

The Bears played some of their most dogged basketball of the season: outscored in the first two quarters, Alberta went into the half down 35–23, but hung tight throughout the second half—outscoring the Ravens in the frame and cutting the lead to four in the last five minutes. Ultimately, however, the Bears were undone by

the Ravens' nearly impregnable defence.

"They're defending national champions for a reason," Alberta head coach Don Horwood said after the loss. "There's none of my guys that I think I can fault. I thought we battled as hard as we could, but Carleton is just a tough team."

"This team is very good; it's not luck that they won five years in a row, and you can see today that, offensively, we just couldn't do anything against them," Bears guard Neb Aleksic echoed. "They stopped everything we could do, and it just showed that they're a great defensive team."

The Ravens did a great job of shutting down the Bears' scoring, holding them to 41.7 per cent shooting and only 48 shots, and outrebounded them as well, limiting Alberta to only 4 offensive rebounds while grabbing 18 of their own.

"They're not really a great offensive team, I don't think, but obviously their forte is defence, and we got a good taste of that tonight," fifth-year Alberta guard Alex Steele said.

"They scrap," Horwood agreed. "They scrapped after the loose balls, and how many times did they miss layups or shots and still get the rebound? It's pretty tough to beat a team when that's happening."

Alberta also struggled with serious foul trouble on Friday night. While the Ravens weren't ignored by the refs—they were called for 20 fouls—the Bears had 32 called against them, sending the Ravens to the line 32 times. Five Bears, four of them starters, fouled out during the course of the game: Steele, Harvey Bradford, Justin VanLoo, Andrew Parker, and Braydon Janzen. The Bears also had to play the fourth quarter without Aleksic, their leading scorer of the day. He rolled his ankle on a rough foul with two minutes to go in the third.

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## Flamboyant seniors bid farewell

Known for their style on and off the court, Bates, Parker, and Steele formed the backbone for the Bears this year

ROBIN COLLUM  
Sports Editor

OTTAWA—For Andrew Parker, Alex Steele, and Richard Bates, the buzzer at the end of Saturday's consolation semifinal against Laval also signalled the end of their careers as Golden Bears. The three each played their final year of eligibility this season, and to end with a loss was even tougher for them.

**"Richard is an excellent post presence. He shows how a big man should play."**

ANDREW PARKER  
ON TEAMMATE RICHARD BATES

But in spite of a disappointing finish, the three Bears are happy with the way their season—and their careers—have gone with Alberta.

"It's hard to take now, but looking back, it's been a pretty good year. We got to nationals, and that's what we wanted. It didn't go our way, but we got here, and I'm proud of the guys and the year we've had," Steele said. "It was definitely a really good season, the best season we've had in a few years and since I've been here."

Probably the three most distinctive players on—and in Parker and Bates' cases, off—the court for Alberta, the three starters have made a big difference to the Green and Gold in their years with the team.

Bates, a 6'11" centre, is the longest-serving Bear of the three, having started at the U of A

straight out of high school in Sherwood Park. He's known as much for his distinctive outfits as he is for his towering presence on the court. While some of his teammates show up before the game in warm-up suits, Bates can routinely be seen pre-game in ensembles such as a full white suit and light blue shirt.

On the court, Bates' size has also been his greatest asset, and he led the Bears in rebounds this year, averaging six per game.

"I thought Richard had a much better year than I thought he was going to have, and certainly from the middle of November to the middle of February, he was probably our best post player," Alberta head coach Don Horwood said.

"Richard is an excellent post presence," Parker agreed. "He shows how a big man should play."

At 6'4", Andrew Parker doesn't have Bates' size, but he stands out just as much, if only for his dunks. A local legend with some impressive YouTube clips to his credit, Parker almost always makes a point to demonstrate his massive slams in pre-game warm-ups to intimidate the opponents and rile up the crowd. He's also put down a few in games, always to thunderous applause—his flamboyant style and obvious enthusiasm have made him a crowd favourite.

Always the loudest voice on the bench during games, Parker has also been undoubtedly the most energetic Bear.

"I thought Andrew gave everything—from the minute he came on our team, he gave everything he had. He loves the Golden Bears; he loves being part of the team," Horwood said.

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