

Algonquin Humbles along

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Green gall against Pan

PACKERS 24, PANT

BY ERIK MATUSZEW

CHARLOTTE · Ahm scored three touchd... the Green Bay Packe... defending NFC char... olina Panthers 24-14... in the first Monday... ball game of the seas...

Green rushed for... and two touchd... caught a three-ya... pass as the Packers... regular-season ope... third time in four ye...

Green is the thi... back to score th... downs in the open... the National Foot... season, joining Ka... Priest Holmes, Seat... Alexander, Denver... Griffin and Pittsbu... Bettis. Philadelp... Terrell Owens al... three touchdowns.

Jake Delhomme... of touchdown pas... Panthers, but also... and an interceptor... America Stadium in... olina. The Packers... both turnovers.

The Panthers ar... consecutive team... per Bowl and then... open the next sea... na won the Nation... Conference cha... game last season b... to the New Englan... the Super Bowl.

Green Bay's Brett... threw four intercep... year's season-ope... Minnesota, threw... and a touchdown... throw an intercept... tending his NFL re... secutive starts by a... to 190.

Ryan Longwell k... yard field goal for... with 3:28 left in... to open the scoring.

Delhomme tosses... touchdown pass... Hoover with 7:43 le... ond quarter, putti... ahead 7-3 before G... the end zone.

Green scored his... down on a seven-ya... 3:25 left in the sec... He added a three-y... rur... qu... 7... 1... to... ei... ca... ht... th... sc... D... Si... te... th...

CAURLING

Coach: Ron Port (20th year)
Men's OCAA titles: 7 (1972, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1987, 1997, 2000)
Women's OCAA titles: 3 (1972, 1996, 2004)
Mixed OCAA titles: 4 (1985, 1986, 1998, 2003)
Watch: Robyn Mattie, Chris Mulholland

Last year: Gold, women's; silver, men's; silver, mixed

Outlook: The program has won more provincial titles than any other at Algonquin and there's little reason to expect that will change. Mattie, who finished second at the world juniors two years ago representing Canada, could easily repeat as provincial titlist. It has been 12 years since nationals were held, but the Canadian Curling Association is now looking into a possible resurrection of a joint universities/colleges championship.

The Ottawa college is playing on a more level field than it did in previous years, reports WAYNE KONDR.

It's nothing short of amazing what a few academic eligibility rules can accomplish.

For years, Toronto-area colleges collected most of the medals in Canadian Colleges Athletic Association (CCAA) and Ontario Colleges Athletic Association (OCAA) championships.

But in the late-1990s, the OCAA decided something had to be done about athletes who retained eligibility through program hopping rather than demonstrating progress toward a degree.

Suddenly, with players having to earn a minimum number of credits to remain eligible, institutions such as Algonquin College discovered they could actually compete with their Toronto brethren.

Not that they aren't still disadvantaged. The Algonquins of the world typically offer only two-year degrees, as opposed to the four-year units of many Toronto programs, which allow them to retain athletes for longer periods.

Toronto-area schools also often have affiliations with universities, providing them with an expanded pool of athletes. Seneca, for example, can use any student attending York because of their link.

Then there's funding. The Humber and Durhams pay for athletics through student fees in the range of \$80/semester, as compared to the \$15 Algonquin charges.

Still, the academic requirements alone have changed the landscape of OCAA sports and made it a more even playing field.

Algonquin has quickly capitalized by becoming far more competitive in the six CCAA sports and two other OCAA sports in which it fields varsity teams.

Prior to the academic rule changes, Algonquin had won exactly two national medals — a pair of bronze in badminton. They've since won three, including gold in men's soccer in 2002, silver in men's basketball in 2002 and silver in men's soccer in 1999.

For Algonquin, things should only continue to improve.

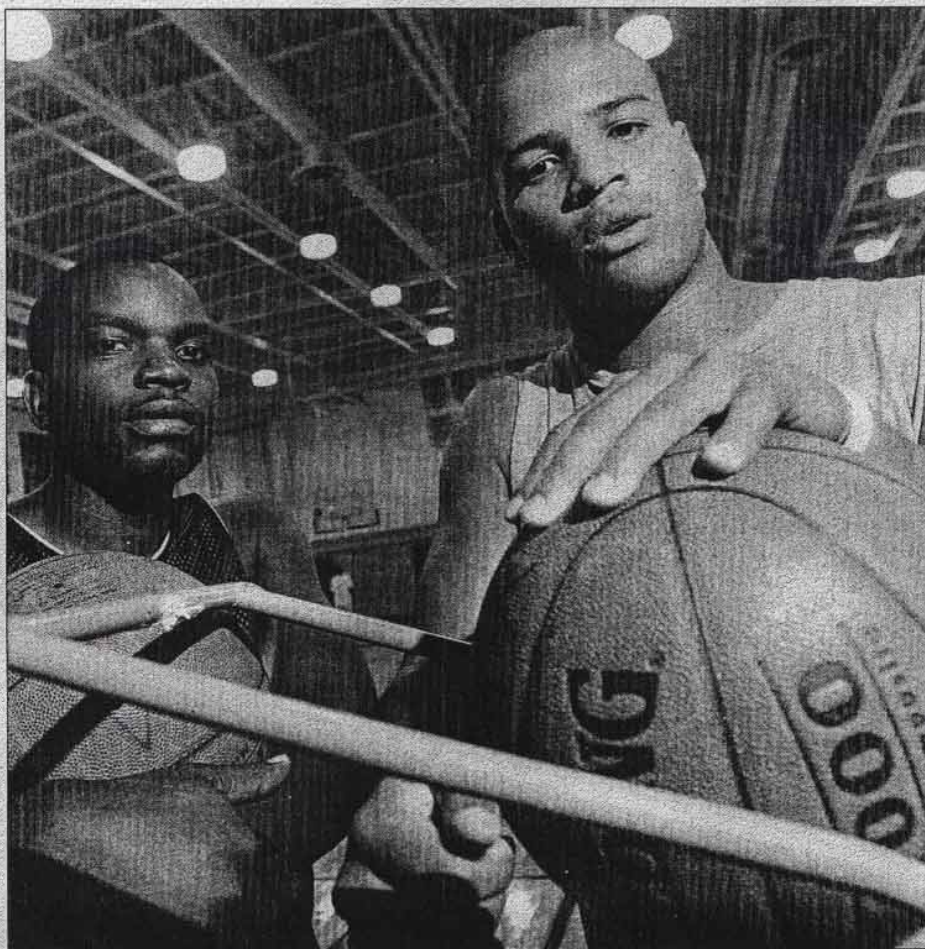
The explosive growth in enrollment should increase revenue (now about \$500,000) from student activity fees, as should the forthcoming construction of a \$5-million field turf facility, scheduled for completion in 2005. The pitch should significantly bolster the \$300,000 in external revenue Algonquin athletics now earns from facility rentals.

Athletic director Ron Port is salivating at the prospect.

"The revenues from rentals will be put back into programming. That will greatly assist us in the development of our teams."

Increased revenue should also allow Algonquin to expand programming to include sports such as rugby, while simultaneously providing existing teams with the resources to upgrade equipment, undertake more travel to gain experience or bolster services such as sports psychologists.

Although the departure of three coaches means there's a raft of newcomers at the helm



Caesar Lukwago, left, and B.J. Charles will be two key players for the Algonquin basketball team, which remains a contender in the OCAA.

of Thunder teams this season, Port is confident the staff is in place to build perennially competitive programs.

"We have a lot of great coaches in place. We have to just make sure that we're building the teams. Make sure you have a competitive schedule, notwithstanding that, as students, they're here to get an education first."

The rundown:

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Coach: Trevor Costello (4th year)
OCAA titles: 2 (1969, 2003)
Last year: 18-0, first East Division

Key players: B.J. Charles, Caesar Lukwago, C.J. Anderson, Angel Medina, Achuil Lual
Outlook: After romping through the regular season, Algonquin was upset in the OCAA quarter-finals. While it loses size on the front line, the addition of Charles, a transfer from Carleton, keeps the team in the title hunt. He instantly becomes the finest player in the Canadian college ranks and helps give the Thunder the best backcourt in the nation. The problem is that beyond the G-6 Lual, who's thinking about jumping ship for Acadia, there's little in the way of proven talent to bang the boards. Still, Costello says the team is a contender. "Our goal is again to win the East Division, get to the provincials on a bye and let nature take its course."

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Coach: Brian White (1st year)
OCAA titles: 2 (1972, 1973)
Last year: 6-6 (fourth, East Division)

Outlook: The Thunder finished fourth at last year's nationals, but return only three starters. "We're

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Coach: Stephen O'Kane (1st year)
OCAA titles: 4 (1977, 1978, 2000, 2003)
Last year: 6-1-1 (2nd, East Division)

Watch: Rich Furano, Huffman Eja-Tabé, Angus Wong, Tyler Rose, Russell Shaw
Outlook: The Thunder return two-time all-Canadian Furano, all-Canadian keeper Wong and two-time provincial all-star Eja-Tabé from the 2002 OCAA title unit. Soccer became a banner program under coach Brian Evans, who has bailed for Wales, leaving the task to former assistant O'Kane, who's confident he can "keep the beast fed." Indeed, the Thunder should feast on foes.

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Watch: Sheena Butt, Kelly Menna, Sophie Caron
Outlook: White steps in to replace Rosie Warden, who seemed to be constantly at war last season with her players over their lack of effort. The Thunder are very thin at the guard spots, particularly the critical playmaking spot, but White likes the front line and sees a playoff contender. "We're pretty solid and should be all right."

MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Coach: Max Larrivee (1st year)
OCAA titles: 3 (1976, 1977, 1978)
Last year: 9-4 (1st, East Division)
Watch: Jonathan Bergeron, Matt Marjanski, Dave Keo, Jermaine Jabocs, Adam Powell

Outlook: Former coach Brian Rourke began building the Thunder into a contender, but then bolted home to Atlantic Canada. He's replaced by assistant Larrivee, a power-hitting graduate of the Laval University volleyball juggernaut of the 1990s. The Thunder are big and physical, but need a bit of technical grooming, Larrivee said. "The difference is going to be the work ethic and the mental conditioning."

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Coach: Everton Senior (5th year)
OCAA titles: 2 (1976, 1977)
Last year: 11-4 (tied 1st, East Division)
Watch: Kim Duncan, Brittany Ward, Sarah Hazelwood, Jennifer Harms

Outlook: Last qualified for nationals in 1998, finishing tied for sixth. Power hitter Duncan returns after leaving midway through last season for personal reasons. Senior projects Algonquin's depth will yield another East Division title, but whether that's enough to challenge the Cambrians, Humber and Durhams for a national berth

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Outlook: The sport is being resurrected after 30 years. The appointed coach is none other than Harrocks, the last man to capture an individual and team OCAA title for Algonquin, back in 1973. He has never coached, but is eager for the challenge, given his initial impression of the talent. "Some of them are grip it and rip it. That's youth, I guess."

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Men's OCAA titles: 1 (1973)
Women's OCAA titles: None
Watch: Melissa Mazoutis, Jimmy Jozwiak

is uncertain. "The key will be having a consistent middle attack."

GOLF

Coach: Brian Harrocks (1st year)
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Women's OCAA titles: None
Watch: Melissa Mazoutis, Jimmy Jozwiak

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The Ottawa Citizen
September 14, 2004