

## **Canadians in the NCAA 2011 – Week 3**

*February 22, 2011 by J.P. (Jason) Donville*

### **Don't Come To Columbus to Party!**

Ohio State's win over North Carolina this past weekend has undoubtedly been the most interesting story to talk about in this still young NCAA season. The Buckeye's came into this past weekend's game largely unheralded and with its narrow win over Detroit-Mercy, more than a few prognosticators were suggesting that North Carolina would defeat Ohio State by a dozen goals or more. It just goes to show you that the game is played on the field and not in the heads of pundits (and that perhaps Detroit – Mercy is tougher than you think!). Johns Hopkins also had a statement game this past weekend with its win over Towson while Jacksonville and Drexel came close to upsetting Georgetown and Virginia respectively. Overall a good weekend for a number of Canadians with "laxers" like Neufeld, Palmer, Mann, Moore, Schuss, Kirk, Gardner, Cudmore, Artem, Jackson, Pecchia, Sheppard and Thouin having particularly noteworthy weekends. Here's my recap of the weekend activities.

### **Div I – Ohio State Wins Big While Jacksonville Comes Close**

The biggest upset so far this year in the NCAA was Ohio State's 13-8 win over #3 North Carolina this past Saturday. Ohio State entered the 2011 season unranked but have clearly sent a message to the rest of Div I with this performance – and that message is "don't come to Columbus to party!". Logan Schuss (Delta) was in fine form on Saturday, scoring a hat trick along with 2 assists, a ground ball and a couple of caused turnovers, while fellow west coaster Mike Pires (Saanichton) added 2 goals. Another closely watched game on Saturday saw Johns Hopkins defeat cross-town rival Towson 10-6. Sophomore Zach Palmer (Oshawa) had a great day, scoring 2 goals and 3 assists while rookie Brandon Benn (Brampton) scored a goal and an assist coming off the bench. In another game of interest, Georgetown had a close 15-12 win over Jacksonville in Florida. Travis Comeau (Red Deer) was sharp for Georgetown scoring a hat-trick and grabbing four ground balls while Cameron Mann (Hamilton) did just about everything except make the popcorn as he scored 2 goals, assisted on 3 more, picked up 3 ground balls and had a caused turnover. Much further north, a double header (watched by yours truly) saw Syracuse defeat Denver 13 – 7 and Siena beat Air Force 11-6. In the first game, Stephen Keogh (Toronto Beaches) had 2 goals, 2 assists, and 2 GB's for the Orange, while Mark Matthews (Oshawa) had 2 goals and an assist for Denver. In the second game Bryan Neufeld (Virgil) scored 4 goals, 2 assists and grabbed 5 ground balls for the Saints, who are expected to win the MAAC this year. Bellarmine had a lopsided win over Mercer with Cam Gardner (Calgary) scoring 5 goals and Chad Mitchell (Calgary) scoring his first goal in the NCAA. Hobart had a big come-from-behind win over Robert Morris over the weekend with Evan Kirk (Orangeville) stopping 12 shots in net for the win that somewhat nullified Trevor Moore's (Port Coquitlam) 4 goal performance for the Colonials.

### **Div II – New Brunswicker Shining In NCAA!**

Another Canadian lacrosse player making a name for himself in the NCAA in 2011 is James Sheppard who hails from St John, New Brunswick. Sheppard is a freshman at Pfeiffer University and he scored a hat trick and an assist in his team's season opening win over Lenoir-Rhyne. Catawba is going to be a force to reckon with this year as evidenced by its season opening win over St Andrews. Braden Artem (Acton) had a big say in the victory scoring 4 goals, grabbing three ground balls and producing 3 caused turnovers while goalie Michael Pecchia (Coquitlam) was stellar in net with 10 saves. Limestone also opened its season with a win, a 28 to 5 "beat down" on Lees-McRae. Shayne Jackson (Bowmanville) led the way in scoring with a goal and six assists with Riley Loewen (Burnaby) right behind him with 4 goals and 2 assists. Mars Hill is also off to a good start and is now 2-0 on the season, opening with a 15-5 win

over Malloy. Ty Farmer (Calgary) score 6 goals and an assist, Eric Benesch (Bloomington) had 3 goals and 4 assists while Chris Cudmore (Whitby) generated 4 ground balls and 7 CT's in the first win. Mars Hill followed up its win over Molloy with a 12-6 victory over St Andrews. Ty Farmer had a hat trick in the game while T.J. Cowx (Delta) had a goal and 3 assists and Chris Cudmore had 7 GB's and 3 CT's. Finally, Florida Southern is 3-0 and Mat Thompson (Akwasasne) is leading the team in scoring with 8 goals and 2 assists.

### **Div III - Quebecker Scores Overtime Winner for La Roche**

Start-up Div III program La Roche College had an exciting start to its season with an overtime victory over Albion College. La Roche, which is based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania boasts six Canadians on its roster. Jean-Guillaume Thouin (Laval) scored the overtime winner, which was his second goal of the game to go along with 4 ground balls. Crawford Healy (Calgary) also had a pair of goals while Dustin Reykdal (Red Deer) had a goal and an assist. The other notable Canadian performance in Div III this past weekend was delivered by Keegan Bowman (New Westminster) who scored 4 goals in Carthage's 18 to 10 win over La Roche.

### **Games upcoming – Cornell on Saturday and Syracuse on Sunday are the best bets**

There are a few games this weekend for those willing to shiver in the name of lacrosse. On Saturday, Cornell hosts Hobart in Ithaca and Detroit hosts Mercer. On Sunday, Army plays at Syracuse (at 4PM) and Notre Dame plays at Penn State. Simon Fraser is on the road this weekend. Of course, if you don't want to shiver, the Syracuse – Army game is indoors.

### **Final comments – Thouin and Sheppard**

It may be only a couple of goals for Jean-Guillaume Thouin and James Sheppard but these are extremely important goals to the people involved in minor lacrosse back in Quebec and New Brunswick. Word will get out back home if it hasn't already and kids with lacrosse sticks and laptops will begin to await the results of every game that Pfeiffer University and La Roche College play. And in so doing they will slowly begin to dream a dream that will someday culminate in some of these kids heading south to a school and a team and an education and a lifetime of friendships and memories. It was only a couple of goals, really!