Winter sports season not all rosy

Young teams seemed to dominate the UW-Stout sports scene last winter, and that can be good and bad. Bad, in that men’s and women’s basketball and hockey didn’t finish as high as they wanted to in the conference standings. Good, in that the three teams combined will lose very few seniors, with the remainder of the team back to do battle again next year with another year of experience behind them.

But national experience was gained on both the men’s and women’s indoor track and field teams as well as the gymnastics squad.

Women’s Basketball
The Blue Devil women’s basketball team started out with a bang, hit a road block over the Christmas holiday, picked the pace back up again in January, then fell on hard times again in February.

Stout (16-9, 10-6) finished third in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC), and had three named to the all-conference squad. Leading scorer Shannon Berg (Jr., Ellsworth) and point guard Rachel Traynor (Jr., Ellsworth) were named to the first team and Charysse Minder (So., Ellsworth) was an honorable mention pick.

The Blue Devils said goodbye to four-year starter Staci Rademacher (Sr., Sun Prairie), who was named to the WIAC all-defensive team.

Men’s Basketball
The Blue Devil men’s basketball team also got off to a fast start, winning seven of their first nine games—the new year hit, and it was only three wins in the remaining 14 games.

Injuries played a big part in the Blue Devils’ (10-15, 4-12) downfall, with key starters Jeremy Preston (Jr., Madison) and Andy Myers (So., Eau Claire) missing much or parts of December and January.

Preston, who was named to the all-conference honorable mention squad, averaged 18.4 points to lead the team in scoring, despite missing eight complete games and part of several others. Myers, who was second on the team in scoring with 13.5 points, missed only one game, but was hobbled in several.

Stout is expected to return their entire team, with the exception of four-year player Tim Schulte (Sr., Sun Prairie).

Hockey
Blue Devil hockey coach Terry Watkins will use the offseason to determine why his squad made little progress in their second year back at varsity status.

Stout finished with a 7-19-1 overall record, one less win than the year before, and were 3-16-1 in the Northern Collegiate Hockey Association.

Greg Foster (Jr., Roseau, Minn) was named to the honorable mention team of both the NCHA and the WIAC. Leading scorer Mark Corbett (Jr., New Hope, Minn) was an honorable mention WIAC pick.

The Blue Devils had an opportunity to learn a bit about international hockey when they took a trip to Sweden during Christmas break where they played three games.

Gymnastics
It was a record-breaking year for the Blue Devil gymnastics team and Stout sent not one, but two, performers to the National Collegiate Gymnastics Association (NCGA) national championships.

Under the tutelage of WIAC coach of the year Suzy Smith, the Blue Devils scored 134.60 points to set a new team school record. It was only three wins in the remaining 14 games. Winning seven of their first nine games—then the new year hit, and it was only three wins in the remaining 14 games.

Women’s Indoor Track and Field
Dominating is the only way to describe Katie Jacobson’s (Jr., Eau Claire) performance during the 1998 indoor track season. After finishing sixth at the NCAA Division III Cross Country Championships, Jacobson followed that up by shattering the school middle distance records of the 600-, 800- and 1000-meter runs, then went on to win the 800- and 1500-meter runs at the WIAC Championships, where she was named the meet’s most outstanding performer. In the 800, Jacobson set a new conference and fieldhouse record with a time of 2:13.65.

Jacobson advanced to the indoor nationals, after automatically qualifying in two events, and placed third in the 1500-meter run. At nationals, Jacobson’s finish placed Stout 23rd and the Blue Devils finished seventh at the conference meet.

Men’s Indoor Track and Field

Jacek Leham (Sr., Bruce) has been making a name for himself the last several years in the weights, and this year his fellow weight-men have been able to give him support.

Leham cracked the school record in the shot put (56-0) and the 35-lb. weight (52-4), and qualified to the national meet in the shot put where he placed second.

As a team, Stout placed sixth at the WIAC Championships and were 14th at the NCAA Division III Championships.

Freshman pole vaulter Jamie Bucholz (Bloomer) served notice he will be a name in the conference, provisionally qualifying to the nationals. The 4X 100-meter relay team also qualified provisionally, but did not make the cut.

For more information on the individual teams, see the UW-Stout Athletics Web site at http://www.uwstout.edu/athletics