Kitty B

the Ottawa Junior Senators of the CJHL last season, is a six-foot, 200 pound forward who played for them. Last year, B finished the season with an 8-22-2 mark, including an 8-16-2 in the MAAC, resulting in a 10th place finish.

The season was especially disappointing for the Crusaders, after coming off a record-break ing season in 1999 in which they finished 22-9-4 and were winners of the inaugural MAAC Hockey Championship. Had they finished with a similar record last season, they would have earned themselves a trip to the NCAA Division I Hockey Championships, as the winner of the MAAC tournament receives an automatic bid.

But that was last season, and Holy Cross is ready to put the 2000-2001 campaign behind them. The Saders lost only five letterman to graduation, returning 22 letter-winners. This includes their top seven leading scorers from last year, including Greg Kealey, Brandon Doria, Pat Rissmiller, and Tony Deluzio. Doria, a junior, forward, played in all 32 games last year and tied for the team lead in points. Rissmiller and Deluzio, both senior forwards, also saw significant playing time and combined for 17 goals and just as many assists. Coach Pearl calls the threesome, “great leaders. I expect big things out of these guys this year.”

One player who will be sorely missed this year is the sophomore forward Jacob Jackson. Jackson, whose unfortunate death last month deeply affected not only the hockey team, but the entire Holy Cross community, played in 21 of the Crusaders 32 games last season scoring five points. Coach Pearl called the loss of Jackson, “a tough blow to the team. We all loved him and will miss him greatly.”

The Crusaders will be wearing Jackson’s initials on their helmets this season as a symbol of respect for their teammate.

Paul Pearl will be taking the reins for Holy Cross for his seventh year this season. Pearl has amassed an 82-84-13 record after taking over for Bill Bellerose in 1995. This year we have some good seniors and juniors. I expect big things out of these guys this year.

When we started talking, he began by asking about the importance of time management. In this way that Coach Calhoun preached time management to him. He takes the lessons that Calhoun taught him with him always. “When you come into college you don’t always think about basketball. You know how it is. You have your mind on girls, or classes, or friends and of course a lot of times basketball. But here, in the pros, you have to be on basketball all the time. It’s your job. This is what you do. And that’s all there is to it.”

El-Amin went on to talk about how over his first year he doesn’t think he realized this as much as he should have. At that time he said he had other things on his mind, and he wasn’t always 100 percent focused on basketball. He also said that’s what separates the guys who make it in the NBA and the guys that don’t.

A year of experience, El-Amin says now he knows what the NBA being this way, you think about it being this easy great lifestyle where you live like a king and play basketball, but it’s not.”

After talking to these three up-and-coming NBA stars it is clear to see that the road to professional stardom is not one of ease, and is not all the glamour that it is sometimes cracked up to be. There are good times, and though these guys were pointing out the troubles and bumps that they are experiencing, they also are playing the sport that they love, and playing it for a living. They all are thrilled to be where they are competing at such a high level.

As fans, we simply see players on the court and cheer for great plays. When we falter we let them know, and criticize them. We don’t know what they go through in their personal lives, and actually, goes on with them as people. As Holy Cross continues to follow the trend of producing athletes who are going to have shots at playing professional athletics, it is important that we remember to forget their personal lives and actually, goes on with them as people.