

SPORTS

Hoopin' it

Basketball tournament raises thousands for charity

By PERRY KING

With good will, good basketball, and a referee in a chicken costume, the Gamecocks charity basketball tournament raised more than \$2,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society.

Taking place at Royal St. George's College (120 Howland Ave.), the tenth annual tournament raised funds for the Thomas J. Webb Memorial Scholarship Trust, in honour of an old friend and teammate of the event's organizer, Sean Loucks.

"Thomas was a great friend and teammate we lost way too soon in life—only 35 and married less than a year—he was a fantastic friend, basketball player, and great supporter of our old charity 3-on-3 tournaments for Sick Kids back in the day," wrote Loucks in an email.

The tournament's participants were organized into four divisions: an under-14 division, one for high school, a "legends" division for players over the age of 40, and an open social division, where Loucks and his Gamecocks team were the eventual champions.

For Garfield Mahood, 70, who competed in the Legends division with Loucks, his best memory of the day came when the Gamecocks squad was beaten by a squad of ladies.

"It was an excellent delight," said Mahood. "I'm still chuckling about it. The women were aggressive, fast and competitive ... I don't know how these guys were checking these women, but I kept turning around and seeing these girls under the basket. I'm still laughing about it."

The Gamecocks played to win. Consisting of Loucks, Mahood, basketball coach Dave Downey, and Silver Laku, who currently plays pro basketball in Iceland, the squad wanted to shoot wisely and focus their defence on the post. "We had a lot of size, so we didn't waste time shooting the ball, we just posted up players that were smaller than me," said Laku.

"This year was big, I was planning on trying to win the whole thing. The team was interesting, there were two of us that were younger guys and we had Sean and his friend, Dave. The plan was to have fun, go out and play

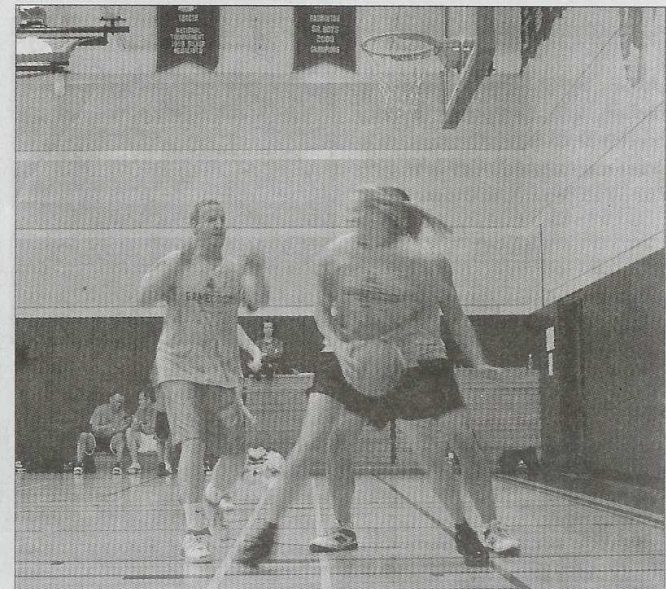
aggressive. You could tell Sean got tougher when he got to the semi-finals and finals."

The Gamecocks did lose in the Legends division, but they emerged as victors in the Open Social division, where Downey and Mahood took a rest and two other players took their place. Laku enjoyed himself. "It was just a fun experience and I wanted to win it for him because he hasn't won it for years," he chuckled.

With the tournament's success, Loucks is looking ahead. "In the future, I'd like to continue this event, twenty years is a good run, but I think for the 21st edition, I'm thinking of a different format," said Loucks.

To make things easier in the future, he would like to make the event invite-only. "Do the registration ahead of time, get to the gym, throw names into a hat, random teams, play, get in and out of the gym and have a good time and have a shorter day."

Loucks used to organize events like this on his own, but this year he had lots of help. "It's a lot of energy and organization to make it run smoothly," he said.



The tournament had four divisions for players of all ages, including this Open Social division match up.

TSM, *cont'd from previous page*

opera studio, culminating in fully-staged productions with orchestra, along with an ancillary Academy for superbly talented young musicians from all over the world."

Paolucci agrees that TSM is exactly what Toronto needs. "It's a really big success story because it really fills a kind of void in the

summer time for classical music lovers," said Paolucci. "And our patrons are really enthusiastic. They really love Toronto Summer Music, they love chamber music, and we're just looking forward to engaging them and celebrating with them."

For more information about the Toronto Summer Music Festival, please visit www.torontosummermusic.com.