

**NACMA Awards Entry
University at Buffalo**



**Single-Day Attendance
Promotion**

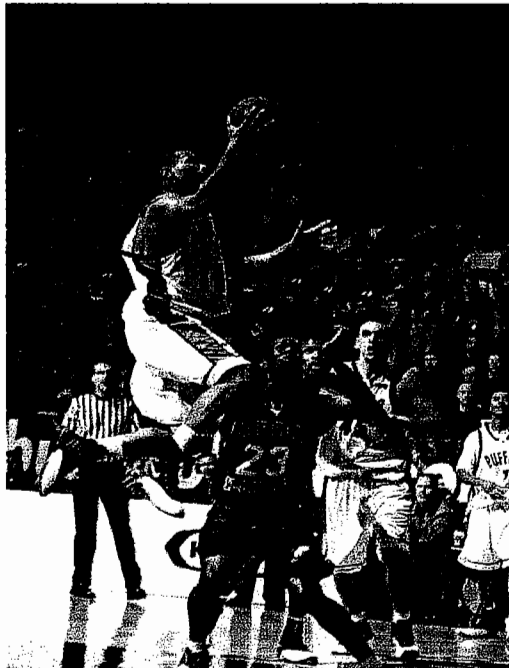
Project Overview

**Sea of Blue Single Day Attendance Promotion
Men's Basketball**

The 2003-2004 University at Buffalo men's basketball campaign was truly a season to remember with 17 wins and the first-ever men's MAC home playoff game held at UB's Alumni Arena.

Through a branding campaign encouraging all fans to wear blue, students as well as the general public were encouraged to attend this historic game in UB's basketball history. A comprehensive marketing plan was developed targeting both the Western New York Community, the University at Buffalo campus, and the student body.

The objective for the External Relations group within the Division was clear. A sell-out would ensure a huge home court advantage to the Bulls and help to elevate their confidence to compete in Cleveland at the Mid-American Conference Tournament.



Media Partners

The Division of Athletics entered into advertising agreements with the following media partners to air supporting promotional spots for the MAC playoff game.

- The Buffalo News
- Spectrum (campus newspaper)
- Sports Radio WGR 550 AM
- Sports Radio WNSA 107.7
- WKBW TV Channel 7, ABC
- WGRZ TV Channel 2, NBC
- Empire Sports Network

TV Spot Enclosed



The Process

On March 1, 2004, initial planning sessions were held to develop promotional campaigns for both the Western New York community and a campus/student marketing strategy. Earlier in the year, a crowd of over 6,000 had attended the UB versus Kent State game and the Bulls had won six straight for the first time in MAC history and 10 of their last 12 games. Based on this momentum, it was determined that would attempt to sell out UB's Alumni Arena and create a "sea of blue" in support of the playoff run. Print ads as well as radio and TV media were incorporated in the entire promotional plan.



Be a Part of History!

SEA OF BLUE II: Title Wave!

MAC First Round
PLAYOFF GAME | TONIGHT | 7:00 PM
Alumni Arena

THE DIVISION OF ATHLETICS HAS PURCHASED THE FIRST
2,000 TICKETS FOR STUDENTS TO TAKE THE SEA OF BLUE
TO A "TITLE WAVE" LEVEL!

THE FLOOD GATES OPEN AT 5:45PM

**SEE YOU
TONIGHT!**



Contributors

Various individuals interfaced with the Division of Athletics to develop these campaigns.

- Ent/Gates Productions – A television production house in Tonawanda, New York
- UB Student Relations Coordinator
- Division of Athletics External Relations Department
- Division of Athletics Communications Department

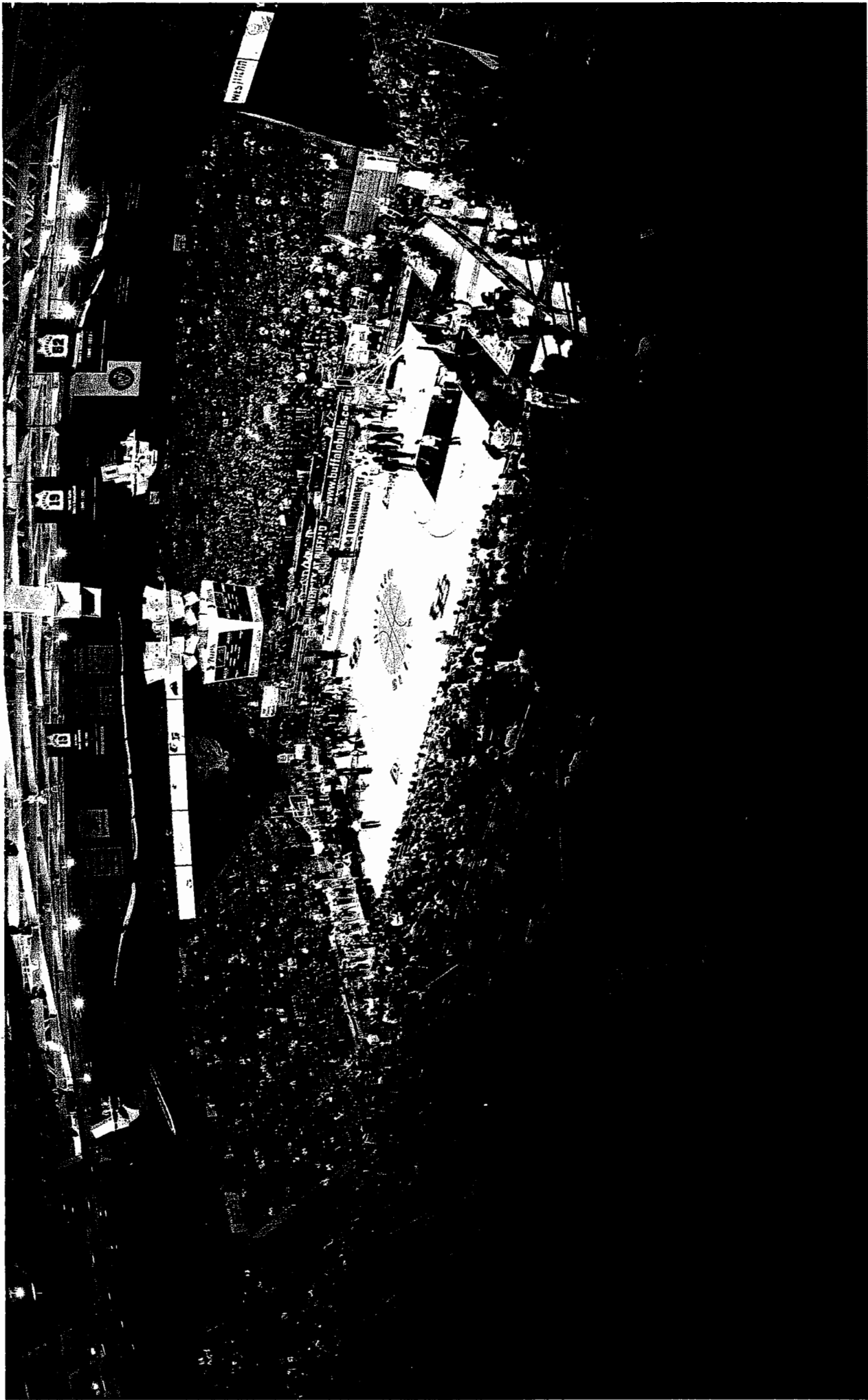


Results

A record crowd of 8,971 attended the game, topping the previous Alumni Arena basketball attendance record set in 1999 when 8,926 showed up to see the Bulls play the University of North Carolina Tar Heels. The most notable statistic for the March 8, 2004 contest was that the other three Mid-American Conference games that night combined only drew 10,086 fans, or just 1,000 more than the sold-out Alumni Arena crowd.

Various supporting materials are enclosed including press releases, photos, and support media.

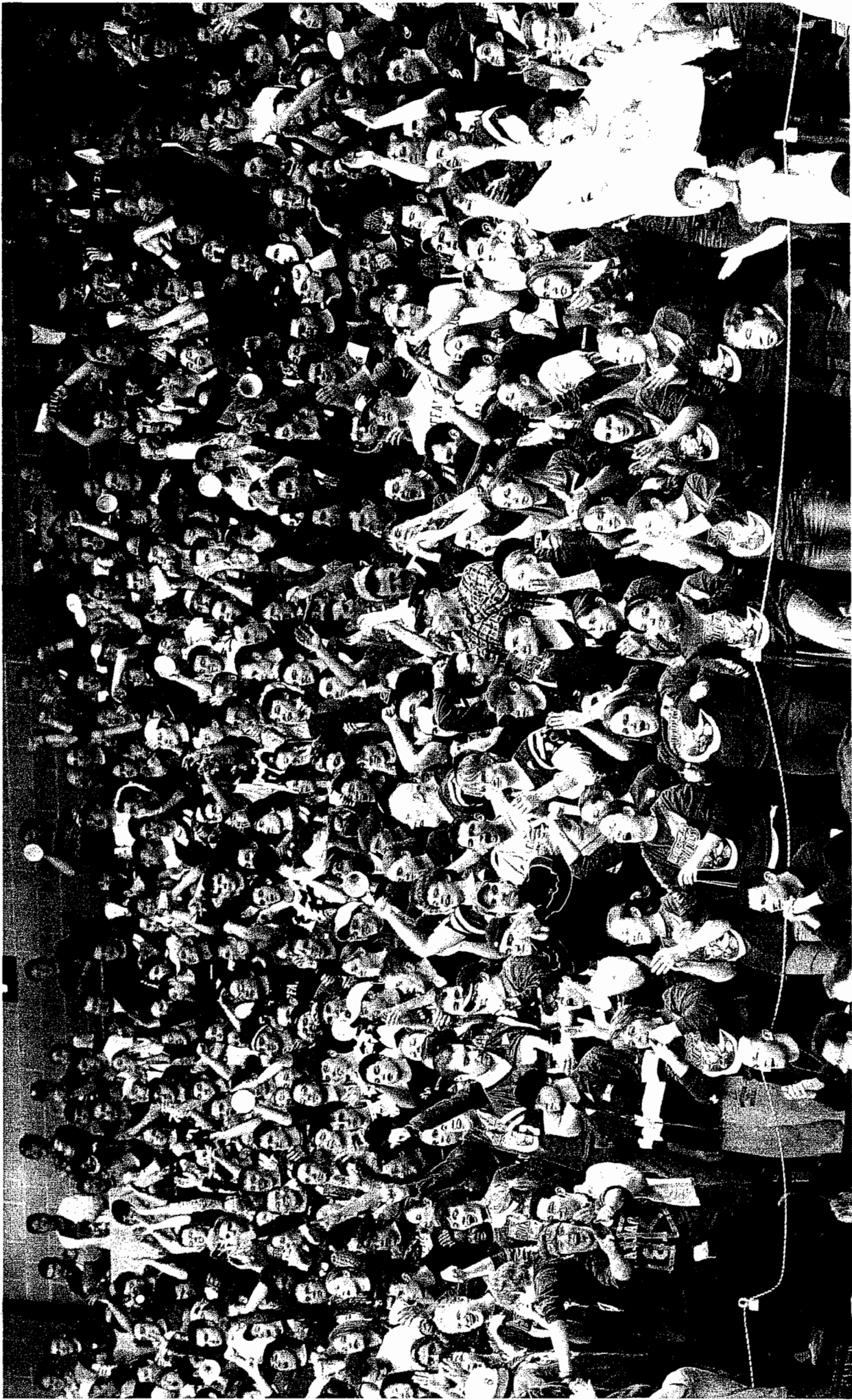




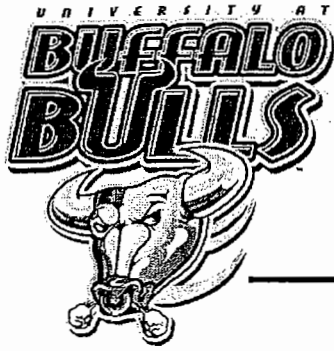
"SEA OF BLUE" PROMOTION
University at Buffalo - MAC Playoff Game - March 8, 2004



"SEA OF BLUE" PROMOTION
University at Buffalo • MAC Playoff Game • March 8, 2004



"SEA OF BLUE" PROMOTION
University at Buffalo • MAC Playoff Game • March 8, 2004



ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

175 ALUMNI ARENA

BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14260

(716) 645-6311 • FAX: (716) 645-6840 • WEB: WWW.BUFFALOBULLS.COM

Date: March 4, 2004

Contact: Paul Vecchio

BULLS TO ROLL OUT "SEA OF BLUE II"

UB men's basketball to host MAC First Round playoff game Monday

BUFFALO, NY – A wave of excitement will continue at the University at Buffalo on Monday, March 8 when the Bulls host a first-round Mid-American Conference tournament game at Alumni Arena. The game, which will be UB's first-ever men's home playoff game in the MAC, is being billed "Sea of Blue II: Title Wave," and promises to be one of the biggest attended events in UB basketball history. Tip off is at 7 pm at the Big A.

The Division of Athletics has purchased 2,000 student tickets which will be distributed to UB students with valid ID on Monday night. Doors will open at 5:45 pm and UB students are encouraged to arrive early to get the best seats for this historic game.

"The response we received to the first "Sea of Blue" promotion (versus Kent State on Feb. 25) was simply overwhelming," said Associate Athletic Director of External Relations John Lambert, "but we think this will be even better. Once again we're asking all fans to wear their UB Blue, bring a wave of noise, and be the sixth man that will allow us to get to Cleveland for the MAC Tournament and a possible shot at the NCAA Tournament."

In expectation of a record student turnout, UB officials confirmed that all three sets of bleachers will be pulled out for the game as the Bulls seek to top the crowd of over 6,100 that turned out to see Buffalo beat Kent State on Feb. 25. The Bulls have won six straight for the first time in their MAC history and ten of their last 12 games.

"The students and the community have made an incredible difference to our team in the past few weeks," said head coach Reggie Witherspoon. "They have truly made Alumni Arena one of the most difficult places to play in the Mid-American Conference. We have enjoyed a true home court advantage and we will need that to continue on Monday to keep our dreams of a MAC championship alive."

Tickets for the game are priced at \$18, \$15 and \$12 and are available at tickets.com in Tops Friendly Markets or charge by phone 1-888-223-6000.

Buffalo puts on its best for NCAA tournament

Sports, as long demonstrated, has been able to bring otherwise differing factions together, knocking down racial and ethnic walls along the way.

On a local level, there are lessons on how sports has been used as to promote the much-talked-about notion of regionalism.



INSIDE STRAIGHT

RICK MALONEY

The NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, due to touch down in Buffalo next week for the second time in four years, continues a successful run of amateur athletic competitions. The event, featuring eight college teams playing six games over a three-day period, will generate millions of dollars for the area and untold word-of-mouth publicity from visi-

tors who will fill hotels and frequent restaurants and bars.

"Every detail is in place but one - the eight teams," said Kevin Clarke, the head of Quebecor's local operation and chair of the local organizing committee.

The field of 65 entrants will be filled out early Sunday evening and then hoop fans will finalize their travel plans for Buffalo and other first round sites.

"Our goal," Clarke said, "is to have all visitors go home with a smile on their face - win or lose."

What's worth looking at, beyond the hard dollars revving the economic engine though, is how representatives from the public and private sector can come together to pull it off.

As a host site the local organizing committee, or LOC, had to raise \$100,000 up front to meet its budget requirements. Through the efforts of about a dozen corporate sponsors here and in southern Ontario, coupled with the state and county governments, that figure was attained.

"That really demonstrates the corporate, political and hospitality commitment," said Ron Foxcroft, founder of Fox 40 International Inc., and lead delegate for the Canadian contingent.

For an area that doesn't boast a nationally known collegiate sports program, Buffalo has nonetheless built a solid reputation as a site for NCAA events. It's an impressive resume, from numerous swimming competitions at the Burt Flickinger pool at Erie Community College downtown, to the NCAA Outdoor Track & Field Championships at the University at Buffalo, the men's subregional basketball tournament, to the "Frozen Four" men's ice hockey championship last April.

While the competition among cities, particularly in the Northeast, is stronger than ever to host these types of events, Buffalo's LOC is confident more and more competitions will be coming very soon.

"Buffalo's ability as a host was reinforced with hockey. The NCAA was overwhelmed with the 'Frozen Four,'" said Foxcroft, a former NCAA basketball official and now supervisor of officials for the National Basketball Association.

The committee recently learned Buffalo is in contention for another shot at hosting the NCAA men's basketball tournament, perhaps as soon 2007 or 2008. The goal is to get the region in a regular rotation as a host site, whether it be basketball or hockey.

"No one else can promote such a Binational commitment," said Foxcroft.

Wonder if these guys know how to build a bridge?

Making a must-see event. The University at Buffalo's creative plan for the men's basketball game at Alumni Arena March 8 was a marketing beauty. The crowd was placed at 8,971, topping the previous record set in 1999 when 8,926 showed up to see the University of North Carolina Tar Heels.

What should be noted is the UB-Northern Illinois match-up was a play-in game, with victory only assuring the Bulls a first-ever trip to Cleveland for the Mid-American Conference tourney. It an important step for the program, no doubt, yet the UB athletic department cleverly played it up so that it almost seemed a direct trip to the NCAA Tournament was at stake.

Here's a little added perspective on the full house:

- Only one other MAC regular season home game - Northern Illinois at Ohio in mid-January - had more spectators in the seats at 9,109;

- The other three MAC play-in games that night drew a combined 10,086, or just over 1,000 more than packed Alumni Arena;

- Also, four conference final games were played - Metro Atlantic (Niagara vs. Manhattan), Missouri Valley, West Coast (featuring highly ranked Gonzaga), and the Colonial Athletic. Granted, these games were played on neutral courts but only the Colonial title game, played in Richmond, produced a bigger crowd - 9,006 - than the UB game.

The quick-sell reinforced the belief there is a market for mid-major college basketball in Buffalo and UB has the right-sized facility as well as the student and community base to support the program.

NHL on trial, again.

With Todd Bertuzzi of the Vancouver Canucks suspended for his vicious assault on Steve Moore of the Colorado Avalanche in a game March 8, the question is: How will the National Hockey League ever cleanse itself of such a reputation?

The simple answer is the NHL, long considered by many observers to be a bush league for its tolerance of fighting, will not do enough because fighting will always be an instrument of the sport and there is way too much appeal to its staunch fan base.

The NHL can, however, at least lessen retributory actions such as the Bertuzzi-Moore incident by muting those at the top.

Leading up to that match, Moore was marked by the Canucks for his earlier hit on their captain, Markus Naslund. Brian Burke, the Canucks' general manager, and Marc Crawford, the coach, in trying to aid their top offensive player, were vocal about the matter, having referred to Moore's unpenalized check as a "cheap shot."

A day after Moore lay hospitalized with a fractured neck and head injuries, Burke, well spoken and well educated, was left to deliver a hollow-sounding plea of remorse on behalf of Bertuzzi. For a change, Burke was left scrambling for words.

Bobby Clarke, the Philadelphia Flyers' president, and coach Ken Hitchcock, contributed their own incendiary remarks before their team and the Ottawa Senators set a new penalty record March 5 following a stick episode in a previous game. Clarke made it known after that game the matter was not settled.

Those executives, through the media, which is all too willing to play up potential confrontations, helped set the table for the on-ice actions of their players.

Bertuzzi, rightly so, will pay a significant price during what's left of his career. His bosses should share in that penalty.

Nick Maloney: rmaloney@bizjournals.com



Last-second shot lifts UB to win over Niagara

UB will host playoff game

UB: Bulls coming together at right time

Bolt out of the blue

UB surprises Kent State

This young University has at times been carefree at night. Not against Kent State. Finished 28th in the voted Press poll, not



First-half domination propels UB past Indiana State

Yassin the dream

By Bob Matuszak
Yassin Idbihi has been given a lot of advice on the game of basketball.

Special to The News COLLEGE BASKETBALL

TERRE HAUTE University at Buffalo State to just 11 first half points went on to beat the RedHawks in an ESPN Bracket game Saturday afternoon.

The win put the Bulls on a 12 game winning streak at 12-11.

UB, Cage shoot down RedHawks

Ball State's Battle earns district honor

Bulls' comeback stuns Ball State

Special to The News

Special to The News

GAME PROGRAM

SEASON SPONSOR