

'Birds Better, Bears Bounced

by Bob Dwernychuk

The U of A Golden Bears have done it again. They came up with a winless weekend and Mendryk's marionettes learned the hard way that the Thunderbirds are not Blunder birds.

Friday's 81-62 drubbing and Saturday's 75-59 defeat firmly entrenched the Bears in the league basement.

A half time 'Bird 42-32 margin Friday, darkened the Bear outlook but VGW cage fans came alive as the Bears caught fire in the third quarter, tying the T-Birds 56-56 with less than ten minutes remaining.

BEARS SWEEP AWAY

Then the game Bearmen were unmercifully swept away by a deluge of unanswered BC field goals. "We had been pressing all game and just ran out of energy," explained Bear coach Steve Mendryk.

All-star BC guard Jack Cook led the wonderbirds with a sparkling 26 point showing. Predinchuk's 18 points for the 'Birds did not exactly help the Bears either.

For the Bears, Smith, Korchinski, and Blott netted 16, 11, and 10 points respectively, while Blott and Korchinski led the Bear rebounders in the losing cause.

Saturday's game was a contest for only one quarter. Behind 19-18 after ten minutes, the Thunderbirds pulled away for a 38-30 half time lead.

BEARS STRIKE

Later, in the second half Bear fans were given a short but sweet glimmer of hope as the Bearmen struck for three unanswered field goals,

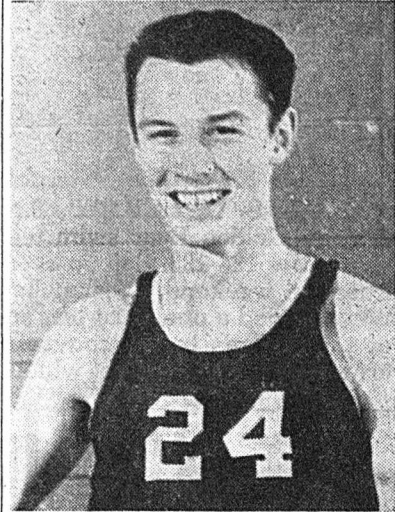
narrowing a 56-41 three quarter time B.C. margin to eight points.

Not to be beaten, BC then just ran up the score and ran out the clock.

An impressive BC 48 per cent field goal average beat the 46 per cent Albertan free throw average.

Cook once again lead the individual scorers, potting 25 points for the 'Birds, followed by Erickson with 11.

Garry Smith's sets set the pace



GUARD JIM WALKER quit the Golden Bears last Saturday after getting what he thought was a raw deal from head coach Steve Mendryk during the last few games. photo by Jens Tabor

for the Bears. Following Smith's 16 point performance was Semotiuk with 12 points and Fisher, with 11. Semotiuk excelled on offense in Saturday's encounter and proved himself to be a brilliant play maker.

Fans last weekend may have noticed that guard Jim Walker was benched for all of Friday's bout and absent from Saturday's game.

WALKER QUILTS

When queried about his absence, Walker replied, "I felt that, if I was going to be sitting out the last three games, I wouldn't be doing the team any good. If the team would have needed me, it would have been a dirty thing to do, but my time spent at team practices could be put to better use, as I'm quite busy now."

The ex-co-captain then added, "My not playing would also give the fellows who had been sitting out games all year more of a chance to play."

Walker feels that Mendryk's benching him stems from the Manitoba matches three weeks ago when he was called in to fill in for then injured guard, Garry Smith. Filling in for Smith is not quite the easiest cage chore, and Walker admits that he did not live up to Mendryk's expectations.

In regards to Walker's quitting the team, Mendryk explained that the guard was displaced by vastly improved freshman, Darwin Semotiuk. "Semotiuk has the ability to play ahead of him (Walker)," in the words of the coach. Moreover, Mendryk feels that, of the guards, the whole team would probably choose Semotiuk over Walker.



The Sporting Life by Winship

Thank heaven, for wrestlers, swimmers, and yes, little girls. For wrestlers, coached by Gino Fracas, and swimmers coached by Murray Smith, bring home WCIAA championships. And as Maurice Chevalier has made well known, little girls grow up—thank heaven!

I was beginning to feel like that character in Al Capp's Li'l Abner who walks around under a black cloud and spreads disaster like the plague.

For those of you who haven't been keeping tab, Golden Bear athletes, up until last weekend, had but one title under lock and key—the tennis championship. That is, if you overlook the football trophy shared by Bears and the UBC Thunderbirds.

I had just about convinced myself my tenure as sports editor and the Golden Bears' drought were more than just coincidences when Alberta athletes claimed two titles. One more title (which I expect from the curling team skipped by Ron Anton in this weekend's WCIAA finals at Saskatoon) and I can rest easy, knowing that the Bears produced one more victory than the year previous.

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The victory of the Bear swim team provided the overflow VGW crowds at the PEB pool an excellent excuse to exercise their vocal chords. The title was decided on the last event, the 400 yard freestyle relay. Dave Cragg, anchor man on the Bear relay squad, swam the last lap to a standing, shouting ovation from the partisan crowd.

Bears' five point victory (128-123) over UBC, a surprise to some, was no surprise to me! I can now state, quite boldly, that I had it figured all the way. My only disappointment was in the fact that the Bears didn't beat the Birds by only one point—the margin of victory by which the BC team claimed the crown last year.

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Gino Fracas's wrestlers gave Alberta its third WCIAA title by edging the U of S matmen 41-39 at Vancouver. The T'Birds, last years champions (although they later forfeited the crown) could manage but 28 points in this season's competitions.

Well, guys, I guess that shows us what can be done with a few muscles, a lot of talent, clean living, and hard work. You know, somewhere along the line I don't qualify for a spot on coach Fracas's squad.

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While new trophies were being added to the U of A's showcases, old ones were being removed. The Hardy Cup, long the property of the Bear hockey team, will be among the missing for at least one year. The volleyball team lost the silverware it has claimed the past three years in finishing in a third place tie with UBC T'Birds.

Comparing the Bear hockey demise to the decline of the Roman Empire may not be quite accurate; however, a resemblance to the decline of the Edmonton Eskimo football team does seem to be justified.

Year by year the Bears have lost the outstanding individuals so prevalent in former teams, and year by year, winning the title has become more difficult. Now Bears find themselves in a tough spot, without established stars to carry on and without a good nucleus of rookies to build a strong team around.

Unlike the Eskimos, Bears haven't a player of Jackie Parker's calibre to trade for five or six new players to fill the gaps.

We could wait a long time for the next Bear championship squad—dammit!

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Nobody loves a loser. Ergo, nobody loves the Golden Bear basketball team. The latest Bear losses, although expected, added to a growing discontent with the Golden Ones. Only a double victory this weekend can stave off a possible mass lynching. Maybe that's what the Bears need—incentive!

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A hot tip for those wagering on the outcome of today's SU elections: the smart money is on Sandra Kirstein for President of Women's Athletics. Need I say more?!

Cellar Dwellers' Last Stand

Fans who have not as yet seen the Golden Bear Basketball team in action, or fans who want to be around when the Bears might win a basketball game, will have their last chance this weekend when U of A hosts the Manitoba Bisons.

Besides being the Bear's last stand this season, the double-header may decide which of these two teams face the honor or humiliation of being a last place club.

Game times are slated for 8:30 p.m. both Friday and Saturday night.

urday night.

BEARS IN BASEMENT

Current league standing show the Bears with two wins, and the Bisons with three wins and two games in hand. Two victories for the Bears this weekend, and two more losses for the Bisons in their remaining games would place the Bears fourth in the five team league.

	Intercollegiate Basketball				
	W	L	F	A	Pts.
U of A (Cal)	12	4	1114	1011	24
UBC	11	3	958	752	22
U of S	6	6	660	722	12
U of M	3	9	692	785	6
U of A (Ed)	2	12	853	1007	4

One Bear win this week and no more wins for the Manitobans would leave the two teams tied in last place.

"I'd like to win both games," Bear coach Steve Mendryk said, "but I'm going to play everyone, especially the freshmen, even if it may mean last place."

"I can't expect much more from the team," Mendryk offered. "The squad, virtually a freshmen squad, has improved their shooting substantially." A low 31 per cent shooting average last year has been increased to the present 36 per cent mark, still lower than the average attained by other league members.

"They (the Bears) have been up for the last few games," explained Mendryk, "it's just that the opponents played better."

As it is, the Bears would like to "make amends" for their poor showing earlier against the Bisons when they dropped both games of the double header. Smith suffered an ankle injury that has plagued him since in the first game of the earlier matches against Manitoba.

The first game had the Bears blow a 17 point bulge, and lose Smith, while the second game saw the Bearmen play one of their poorest games of the season, and unfortunately, having the last half of that contest televised.

Junior Bear Pucksters Face Red Wings In Playoffs

"It's now or never . . ." So run the words of some past song. The Junior Hockey Bears now face the task of overcoming the first place South Side Red Wings.

CHEM STUDENTS

Learn the elements of the Periodic Table in their proper order (and remember them) this fast, simple way. Send 50c to MURRAY, P.O. Box 234, OUTREMONT, P. Que.

In regular league play the Bears have defeated the Red Wings once. Most of the other games were lost by the Bears by one point.

Coach B. H. McDonald has felt that the Bears would overcome the Red Wings in the playoffs since the beginning of the season. He described the Bears as improved, especially in the position of goalie.

In the coming series the Bears will be depending on players like Wally Yates, Gene Protz, Joe Laplante, Ralph Jorstad and Don Francis to defeat the Red Wings. These are the people most likely to graduate to Senior team status next season.

SERIES STARTS TONIGHT

The first game in the series begins tonight, Friday, March 1, at 7:00 p.m. in the Varsity Arena. The series will be either a three or five game series, depending on the availability of ice time at the Edmonton Gardens



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