

Sports

Soccer Bears undefeated so far

by Rod Campbell

The Golden Bears Soccer team ended their exhibition schedule in Vancouver last Sunday, battling Simon Fraser University to a hard fought 0-0 draw. This result leaves the Bears undefeated in four pre-season games.

There must have been great concern over the Bears initial outing as they scrambled to a 2-1 victory over an Edmonton Scottish side that was reduced to eight men for half of the game.

Fortunately the concerns were unfounded as the Bears promptly strung together back to back victories: 1-0 against Richmond Labatts from the first division Metro League and 3-2 against Richmond Olympics of the Pacific Coast League.

Particularly pleasing for rookie head coach Len Vickery was the way in which his team held S.F.U.

When forward Hanjoo Kim was ordered off the field after only 20 minutes, the Bears were left a man short for the rest of the game. S.F.U. is considered to be a perennial powerhouse in the American NAIA. However, goalkeeper Peter Snyder made some outstanding saves and the Bear's defense swept up everything else to preserve the tie.

These results have left coach Vickery "very optimistic" about his team's chances of capturing the CWUAA for the first time since 1981. And optimistic is what he

a poor one. That game can also be hard on CJSR-FM with the pre-game going at 1:45.

should be, the way the Bears have started to gel into a competitive unit.

The Bears' progress is all the more remarkable when you consider that Vickery has lost 10 players from last year's pool of 19.

Most noticeable is the absence of Norm Odinga. Odinga was a member of the 1984 Olympic team and was the Bears MVP a year ago. He had five goals and was a CIAU all-Canadian. Odinga has since moved to Germany hoping to turn professional.

Fortunately for Vickery, his squad has been bolstered by what he regards as "quality players". Players like Sal Cammerate, Hanjoo Kim, and Dave Hughes, who along with

Regular season begins on Friday

Rob Biro and Frank Saporito all played crucial roles in the Alberta under-21 Selects which won the gold medal at this year's Summer Games in Halifax.

Match these five up with the veteran of the team, all Canadian Vince Reda who gained invaluable experience over the summer with the Edmonton Brickmen, and the team takes on formidable strength. An added bonus for Vickery is the preseason play of goalkeeper Peter Snyder, who has yet to lose a goal.

Also encouraging has been the play of former captain Terry Walgren who has returned to form after spending most of last season keeping the bench warm.

If the Bears have a weakness in

their lineup it could be in their lack of depth. Should injuries arise to any of the key players, especially to the central defenders, Vickery could be facing some agonizing decisions on how to shore up his defense.

The Bears open their regular season Friday in Calgary versus the Dinosaurs and move on Saturday to play in Lethbridge. Last year they lost both games of this road swing, mostly due to player losses due to national club commitments. Would Vickery release his players for the same reason later on this season? "I'll play it by ear," he explained. "It would depend on whether or not we were still in contention."

The CWUAA is a very cut-throat league — winner take all. There is no room for shifting up with the regular season winner being the only one to advance.

It is a system which Vickery personally enjoys, but he still thinks "...playoffs would reflect the team that's improved over the season rather than the one which got off to a good start.

A good start is what the Bears will be looking for on Friday and Saturday. In the harsh reality of their short season, coming home with anything less than a split would reduce their chances of success considerably and immediately put their backs to the wall.

D-Backs

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Key Losses — The other area that was demolished by graduation. Last year's five starters are all gone: WIFL all-stars Rick Magee and Frank Salverda both played out their eligibility; so did Bernie Taylor and Gio Chisotti; All-star Jerry Nash had a chance to return but chose instead to remain on the Saskatchewan Roughriders taxi squad. On a defense which lost 10 of 12 starters this area was hardest hit. And just when John Belmont figures he has a good starting corner in Roger Benjamin, Benjamin goes down in the season opener with knee ligament damage. He is out for the season.

New Addition Trent Brown will back up on both corners. Norm Newman (Queen Elizabeth) will also backup in his rookie year. Darryl Grass comes over from the Edmonton Wildcats and is a backup safety, coming in as a second safety on second and long.

Strengths — Quinn Weninger is a second year Bear from the Okanagan Sun, and will get the starting left halfback spot this year. Sheldon Weinkauff is in his third year and will anchor this secondary. Daryl Rube is probably the fastest back and starts on the right corner.

Weaknesses — Once again it is inexperience. Brown and Newman are both fresh out of high school and have seen little of either the quality of the WIFL passing game, or the quickness of it's receivers.

Outlook — The biggest disappointment is the loss of Benjamin on the corner. That will also hurt the specialty teams, where he had hoped to excell. Otherwise, this is a very inexperienced backfield and opponents should be able to exploit it with the pass.

That in a nutshell, is the team. Their record is currently 0-1 after a loss to defending WIFL champs the Calgary Dinosaurs, and the Bears play their second regular season contest on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. at Varsity stadium against the Saskatchewan Huskies.

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