

Gateway reporter goes through the U of A's Be Fit For Life Check! p. 13

Sports

A poor start for a promising Bears soccer team. p. 14

Born to lose

by Tim Enger

If the words to Bruce Springsteen's classic "Born to Run" could be changed to apply to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers of the NFL it would probably go like this: *The sidelines jammed with broken heroes, At the end of their American Dream. Someones rushed over 100 yards today, But they're on the other team. Someday coach, I don't know when, We'll get to the top and win the Super Bowl. Baby this team breaks the bones in your bod It's a death trap. It's a suicide rap. We got to get out while we're still of use. 'Cause baby Buc's like us, Baby we were born to lose.*

With apologies to the Boss, this song seems appropriate for a team that seems to have been created for the sole purpose of giving opponents an easy Sunday workout.

Since their creation in 1977 Tampa Bay has had the worst record of any NFL team, and only two winning seasons. They have been to the playoffs three times, those rare occurrences having been dismissed as the result of their playing in the NFL's weakest division (and the "everybody makes the playoffs" strike shortened season of 1981).

Even today their victories are rationalized as "a bad day for the Lions" or as "an act of God". Sportscasters have been known to say "Well, the Vikings had a rough time against the Packers last weekend but they should bounce back against the Buc's this Sunday." Should!

It's never "could," or "might," or "stand a good chance." It's always should.



But who can blame them — it took the Buc's two-and-a-half years to win their first game (when they caught New Orleans on "a bad day").

When they finally did get competitive they rode an easy schedule right to the NFC Central Championship in 1979. They upset the Philadelphia Eagles to earn a spot in the NFC Championship where they lost 9-0 to the L.A. Rams. 9-0!

Who loses 9-0 in a playoff game at home!

The next two times they made the playoffs the Buccaneers faced Dallas, and QB Doug Williams wore the Cowboy front four in 38-0 and 34-10 slaughters. No wonder he left for the USFL.

And when he came back to the NFL it's no wonder he signed with the Washington Redskins.

Their other seasons are too dismal to mention, but suffice it to say that their story is one of the sorriest in professional sports history . . . and it's not over yet.

Their greatest nemesis, though, has been a team that has only played them twice, the Seattle Seahawks. They entered the NFL at the same time as the Buc's, and were instantly competitive (7-7 their first season). Seattle is now one of the strongest teams in the league, making Tampa Bay look even worse.

Of course, the Seahawks beat the Buc's in both those games.

It's not for lack of trying; they do have some talent. But they seem to be beset by the most bizarre set of circumstances that simply refuse to let them win. In 1978 they were on the verge of their first victory, on the Packers ten yard line with two seconds left. The Buc's lined up for the field goal. The holder fumbled the snap; last year, down by five with 3:00 left, Tampa's Ron Holmes picked up a Dieter Brock fumble and appeared to be running untouched towards paydirt. He mysteriously fumbled the ball through the endzone. Safety touch, L.A.'s ball at the ten.

Their history is littered with bloopers like this which stick out as brightly as their orange and red jerseys. It's too bad, because Tampa is a great football town and deserves better. The Buccaneers only get into the media spotlight on draft day, when they usually have the first pick (and even then they don't sign Bo Jackson).

Maybe someday Tampa Bay fans will look back on all this as just a bad dream. But for now, they know things are bad when teams like the N.H.L.'s New Jersey Devils, the N.B.A.'s Golden State Warriors, and baseball's Cleveland Indians can say, "At least we're not as bad off as the Tampa Bay Buccaneers."



photo Bruce Gardave

Johnson a boost to swimmers

by Carolyn Aney

The 1986-87 season for the Bears and Pandas swim teams has a new and interesting look, as well as a new coach. Dave Johnson, Head Coach of the Edmonton Keyano Swim Club and one of Canada's national coaches, will now take charge of coaching operations.

Johnson's services are contracted for the season with the help of a special grant received from the Canadian Amateur Swimming Association and the C.I.A.U. Although Dave Johnson will double up as Head Coach of Edmonton Keyano Swim Club, this move is not an amalgamation of club and university.

The overall responsibility for the swim program still rests with John Hogg, former Head Coach, who will assume a new role as Executive Manager to the teams. The University will retain its independence.

Another new facet is the three tiered system of commitment within the team structure. National level swimmers will be expected to train more intensively since they will be involved with an all year round program, while the Intercollegiate group will be striving to swim well at CWUAA and CIAU level. A 'Booster' group

will allow for talent to develop on a more individual pace.

A real problem that hastened the decision to restructure the team is that the University program is trying to operate a program of excellence without a long course facility. In the past five years less and less recognition has been afforded 25m or short course competition. Of the top 12 university teams in Canada, 11 of them have a 50m facility. It is almost certain that the CIAU National Championships will revert to long course in the near future and the University of Alberta will be somewhat disadvantaged.

It is very difficult to access 50m training in Edmonton since it is tied up with club swimming. However, time at the Kinsmen has been accessed with the help of Dave and this will certainly help the national class swimmer.

With the combined expertise of Dr. John Hogg and Dave Johnson this team should develop into a major force, and it is hoped that the results will be in evidence immediately this season. In a time when finances are hard to come by and university sport is struggling to retain its significance at the National level, the Bears and Pandas are making every effort to meet their needs and to secure their program on campus.



The hockey Bears are on the road this weekend in Saskatoon. The University of Saskatchewan hosts the Labatts Classic and Alberta heads east to defend the championship that they won last year. The Golden Bears are 4-0 in exhibition this season, and are coming off three straight victories and the title of their own Golden Bear Invitational held last weekend at Varsity Arena. We'll have the results on Tuesday.

photo Rob Schmidt