

Calgary having bad case of deja vu

by Mark Spector

The whole affair regarding the Golden Bears hockey team skipping their league playoffs to play in the World Universiade Games in Czechoslovakia was brought to a boil when Alberta travelled south to play Calgary . . . The Dinosaurs were the team that was most directly effected last year when Alberta won the CIAU crown from the position of tournament hosts. In case your memory needs refreshing, the Bears lost out in the semi's to Saskatchewan while Calgary was defeating Manitoba in OT in the rubber game of their best of three . . . The Dinos then disposed of the Huskies in the league finals, but didn't come out unscathed. When they left for a CIAU Regional series (now extinct) in Trois Rivieres, they left behind several key

players due to injury. They lost two straight, then watched as the Bears skated the silverware around the Agricom . . . With the identical scenario developing this year, Calgary

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protests. "It's the same situation as last year," says Dinos coach George Kingston. "They play one weekend of hockey and then start preparing for nationals. The rest of us knock each other off." . . . Bears coach Clare Drake, who coached Kingston when the Calgary mentor wore the green and gold of Alberta, is getting sick and tired of all the abuse his team has collected for playing out what Drake considers a

once in a lifetime chance for his boys. "People here have known for quite a while (that Alberta will be in the nationals). It's the same format as in 1980-81 when Calgary was the host team. It hasn't changed since then." . . . Something that has been gas-on-the-fire for the whole situation in Calgary is that (once again) a team from Edmonton is benefitting at the expense of the home side . . . also, the fact that a very similar situation occurred in 1980 when the Dinos beat Alberta in the league playoffs but were then eliminated in the CIAU's by the host Bears also stings . . . But it's no coincidence that they had their largest crowd of the season (even going head to head with basketball) with Alberta in town . . . The home faithful had begun to enjoy their team's dominance over the Bears, having won six of the last seven regular season contests between the two rivals . . . Some boos could be heard as Alberta scored four unanswered goals in the second and third periods, the loudest coming from Thierry Nihill, who covers the hockey beat for the U of C paper, The Gauntlet . . . Dinos goalie Ken Hryniuk came

under the wrathful eye of Nihill, who denounced the 19-5, number one ranked Dinos as a team that "will have to make some changes if they're going to win at nationals." . . . This between tirades of "The Bears should be expelled from Canada West for missing the playoffs," as the Gauntlet writer had scribed just days previous . . . Kingston partially agreed with Nihill though, stating that "there's no doubt that we have to get better goaltending." . . . The Dinosaurs have worked on a three man system with backstops Ken Trousdell, Jamie Bowman, and Hryniuk. Trousdell, who seems to be Kingston's favorite, was injured earlier on and has collected four of the five Dino losses. Hryniuk apparently has an attitude problem and leaves his feet too easily, which leaves Bowman . . . Two weeks ago versus Saskatchewan, Bowman had played shakily for the first two periods in a close game. In the third he went down after taking a shot flush on the goal pad and stayed down while the action flurried about him. After getting up and playing superbly to close out the

Dino win, Kingston took a couple of strips off of his goalie after the contest for staying down in the heat of the action . . . Bowman missed his turn in the rotation Friday, as he was supposed to backup but wasn't even dressed . . . Winning the Pampers Tirade Of The Week award for this week is Manitoba coach Wayne Fleming. After one of two Bison losses to the seventh place Regina Cougars, Fleming hurled his briefcase down an arena hallway, apparently mad about the way his team conducted themselves on the ice . . . After losing a reputation as a penalty orientated team over the last couple of years, the Bisons reverted to their old form in the frustrating losses . . . Manitoba squandered a perfect chance to claim first place, as they remain three points back of the Dinos who lost two to Alberta . . . Calgary visits Regina while Manitoba hosts the Bears this weekend, then in the season finale the Bisons travel to Calgary for a pair . . . The Bisons were without three of their top four scorers with Harry Mahood, Chris Saint-Cyr, and Rick Strachan all injured.

5 Bears going to national championships

Bears' gymnasts improving

by Mark Spector

Improvement is the word of the day for the Golden Bears gymnastics team, and so far this season they've climbed steadily.

"We've been improving every week," states team captain Russell Sluchinski of Drayton Valley. "I can't remember the last time we've scored this high."

The Bears were still flying Monday after returning home from a highly successful meet in Vancouver against UBC, the University of Manitoba, and the University of Washington Huskies.

With a score of 191.45, the U of A ran away with the meet, topping second place Washington by 21 points overall. The Bisons, who

brought just four competitors on the trip, finished third, 16 points ahead of UBC.

Along with the satisfaction of winning their second meet of the year and finally beating Manitoba (who had downed them in a dual meet in January), the Bears chances of a CIAU medal were upgraded as well.

Joe Freedman scored a personal best 42.35 to qualify for the CIAU meet in Hamilton March 6th and 7th. That brings the total to five Bears that will take part in the championships to be held at McMaster University.

Also recording personal bests for Alberta at this meet were Malcolm Dunford (who's 48.9 All Around

was second only to an American gymnast), and Gary Kapitzka (third at 48.20).

Sluchinski, who could only compete in three events due to an ankle injury, is running out of time if he hopes to go to the nationals as the sixth Golden Bear. "I'm still working on this ankle injury," he said. "Westerns (Feb. 20th, 21st in Calgary) are my last chance to qualify, so hopefully I'll be ready by then."

Other than himself though, Sluchinski states that the Bears are healthy. "The trainer is pretty happy," he jokes.

And so are the gymnasts, as they look forward to the best finish for a U of A men's team in years.

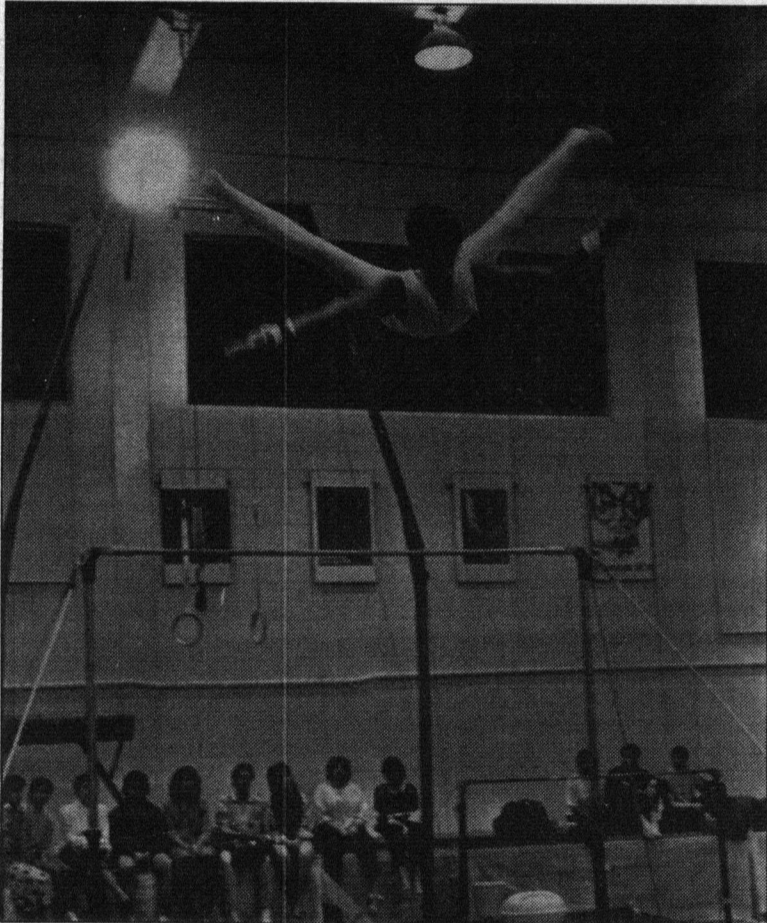


photo Paul Menzies

The Bear gymnasts are flying high after winning a meet in Vancouver over the weekend.

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