

Hockey Bears defend their crown with style. p. 17

Sports

A look at the baseball year. p. 17 & 18

Bears hit rock bottom, lose to Bisons

Bears 21 at U of M Bisons 27
by Dean Bennett

Winnipeg— Coming off a 46-7 humiliation at the hands of the Calgary Dinosaurs in the Shrine Bowl, the Golden Bears were ready to head east this past Saturday and gain some revenge by tuning in the worst team in the WIFL — the University of Manitoba Bisons. But in what is becoming an all too familiar scene this year, the Bears were fed yet another large slice of humble pie. The Bisons capitalized on first half turnovers to stake a 20-1 halftime lead, then held off a determined Alberta comeback attempt in the final thirty minutes to win their first game of the year before 200 shivering fans at Pan-Am Stadium in Winnipeg.

The Bisons definitely owned the first half as the Bears — particularly the offence — could not seem to do anything right. With five minutes left to play in the first quarter, Bear running back Mark Brus fumbled at his own ten yard line and the Bisons recovered. Two plays later, running back Gerry Urbanovich trundled in from the five for the touchdown.

Two minutes into the second quarter Manitoba again capitalized on an Alberta miscue. Defensive back Grant Sears picked off a Kevin Molcak pass at the Bison 41. Six plays later Urbanovich dived in from the one for the major.

The rest of the Bison first half points came off the toe of kicker George McFall. He booted field goals of 27 and 17 yards.

The Bears came out of the gate surprisingly flat and the offense was simply horrible. Kevin Molcak made his first start of the year and could do nothing right. He was overthrowing and underthrowing receivers all over the field, going 2 for 10 for 15 yards. With five minutes left in the half he was replaced by Mark Denesiuk and things got worse. Denesiuk went 0 for 4 and threw two interceptions in the space of 27 seconds.

If the first half was all Manitoba, though, the second was all Alberta. Mark Brus slammed in from the 2 with no time left in the third quarter for the green and gold first touchdown of the game. Three minutes later, Denesiuk hooked up with flanker Tony Pierson for a 14 yard TD pass. Kevin Molcak then came in to replace Denesiuk who suffered a knee injury on the subsequent two point conversion attempt.

At 8:14 of the fourth Molcak connected with wide receiver Steve Camp for a pretty 62 yard pass and run play. But a last ditch effort by the Bears was snuffed when Molcak threw his second interception of the game to Bison Grant Neilson with less than two minutes to play.

Although it is an excuse to say the refs beat you, the Bears may have a legitimate gripe this time. The refereeing was inconsistent and at times extremely slipshod. For example, at 10:52 of the second quarter the Bears (first and 10 on their 35) were called for rough play, but not only did the ball go back 15 yards, the Bears did not get the down over (like they were supposed to). Donlevy complained to the officials but to no avail. What should have been first and 25 was now an almost insurmountable second and 25.

Of course it doesn't help matters when your chain crew is composed of children. Each member of the down and distance crew could not have been over ten years of age. Seriously.

This situation would be laughable except for the fact it probably cost the Bears the game. With five minutes left in the game and Alberta down by six, linebacker Russell Schoeppe stripped Bison ballcarrier Urbanovich of the ball at the U of A 25 yard line and scampered unimpeded into the endzone. However, the refs apparently lost sight of the ball and blew it dead after Schoeppe was already fifteen yards downfield.

"The ball never touched the ground," said Schoeppe. "They (the refs) lost sight of it and whistled it down. The first TD of my life and they call it back. I guess maybe I should've showed it (the football) to them."

CJSR radio commentator Doug Fischer consulted with the local TV crew covering the game and they confirmed it was a live ball.

In his post game analysis, Bears' Head Coach Jim Donlevy felt his team dug itself too deep a hole to extricate itself from. "Offensively (in the first half) we couldn't execute. We just weren't doing it. We were a little in awe once the game started. In the second half, though, we proved we had the character to hold on."

Denesiuk agreed the team was not ready. "We came out flat. We weren't sharp mentally. We left the defense on the field too long (in the first half) and they got tired."

This loss drops the Bears to 1-3, tied with Manitoba and Saskatchewan for third place or the basement, depending on how you want to look at it. As for making the playoffs, the loss to Calgary put Alberta in the pine box but this setback nails the lid shut. Even the ever-optimistic Donlevy is waving the white flag. "UBC and Calgary are so tough it will take some kind of miracle to get them out (of the playoffs). . . . Our new kids are gonna start getting a lot of playing time."

Bear Facts: In the other WIFL game this weekend, the **UBC Thunderbirds** beat the **Saskatchewan Huskies** 38 - 12 in Vancouver . . . at the season's halfway point the T-Birds are a perfect 4-0 with **Calgary** close behind at 3-1. . . the Bears have a bye next weekend . . . as if things couldn't get worse, Alberta's next game is here at home on **October 11** against the T-Birds . . . UBC is currently ranked No. 1 in the nation . . . the last encounter between the Bears and the T-Birds was September 6 in Vancouver: Alberta was thumped 23-5 . . . the 27 points scored by the Bisons equalled their total offensive output in their first three games of 1986. . . **Denesiuk's** 140 yards passing moved him past **Gerald Konyk** and into second place on the Bears all-time passing yardage list. . . yes, Virginia, there is a place in the WIFL that gets less fans than Varsity Field; the crowd at Winnipeg's Pan Am Stadium numbered about 70 at kickoff but swelled to an estimated 200 by game's end.

WIFL STANDINGS

	W	L	T	F	A	P
British Columbia	4	0	1	11	29	8
Calgary	3	1	1	12	60	6
Alberta	1	3	67	103	2	
Saskatchewan	1	3	60	109	2	
Manitoba	1	3	54	112	2	

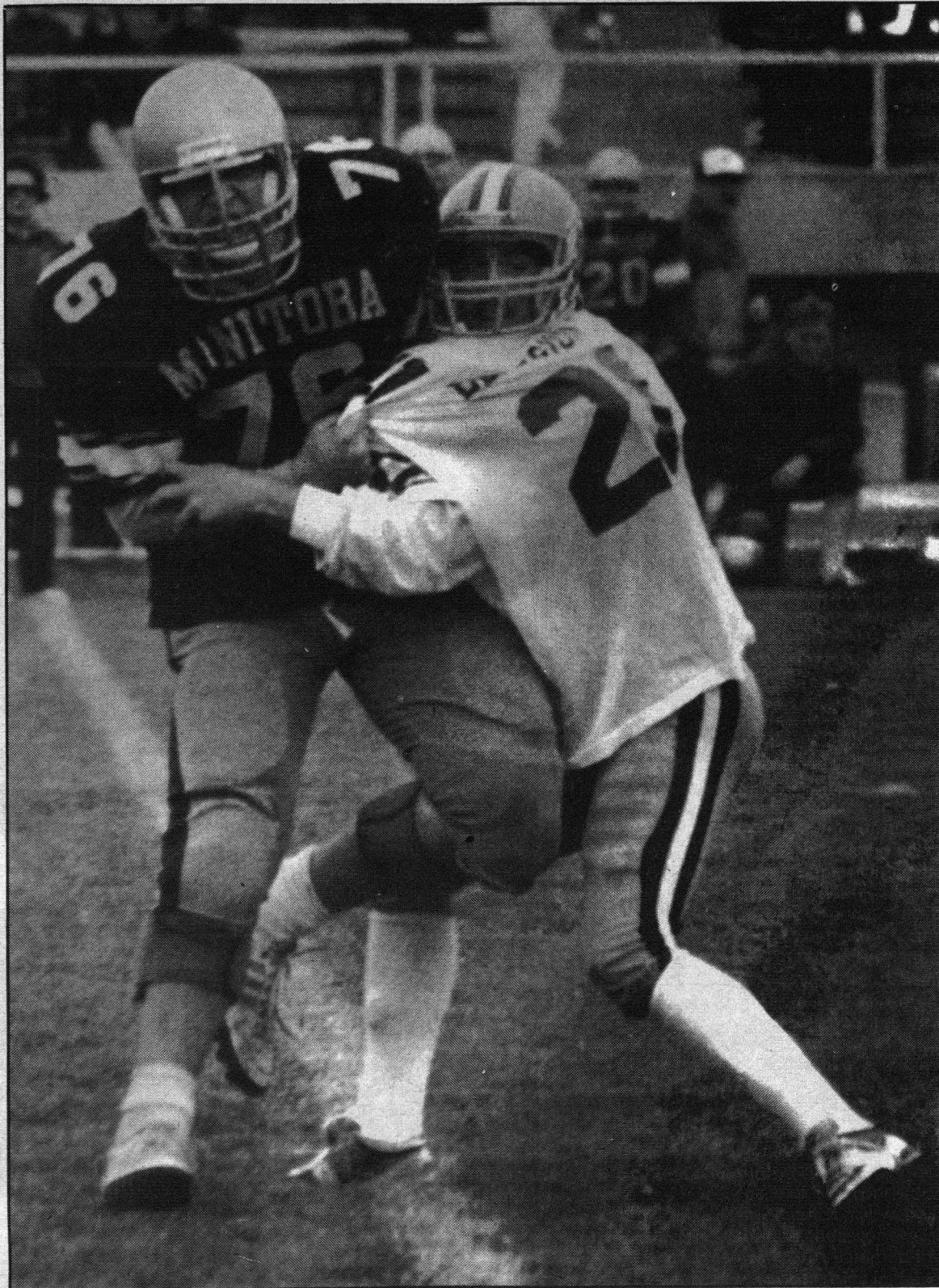
WEEK FIVE

September 27
Saskatchewan 12 at British Columbia 38

Alberta 21 at Manitoba 27

WEEK SIX

October 4
Saskatchewan at Calgary
Manitoba at British Columbia



Bears quarterback Mark Denesiuk gets wrapped up by a Bisons' defender. The entire Alberta team was actually fit to be tied after losing 27-21 to the previously 0-3 Manitoba squad.

photo Dean Bennett

Bisons 27
Bears 21



YARDSTICKS

	U of A	U of M
First downs	22	18
Yards rushing	103	141
Yards passing	225	244
Team losses	10	11
Net Offence	328	385
Passes made/		
tried	14/39	10/24
Interceptions by	1	5
Fumbles/lost	1-1	1-1
Punts/avg.	6/39.2	10/42.1
Penalties/yards	7-66	15-160

Net offence is yards rushing plus yards passing minus team losses such as quarterback sacks or broken plays.

INDIVIDUAL

Rushing: U of A — Houg 6-11, Brus 9-36, Molcak 4-49, Denesiuk 3-3, Pierson 1-4; U of M — Urbanovich 20-87, Andrews 7-11, Pura 6-28, Gregory 4-12, Beswitherick 1-3.

Receiving: U of A — Forrest 1-20, Lamb 2-13, Houg 3-44, Kosakovich 109, Pierson 4-50, Camp 2-74, Brus 1-15; U of M — Galante 4-135, Urbanovich 2-30, Langstaff 1-27, Gregory 2-37, Hainstock 1-15.

Passing: U of A — Molcak 4 for 17 for 85 yards, Denesiuk 10 for 22 for 140 yards; U of M — Lynch 9 for 23 for 217 yards, O'Donnell 1 for 1 for 27 yards.

Bisons on the Marks

by Dean Bennett

WINNIPEG — This is the story of two Marks. Both play in the offensive backfield for the U of A Golden Bears. Both are roommates on the road. Both travelled to Manitoba this past weekend and both incurred the same injury to the same knee during the same drive. Both are out for the season.

Bears' starting quarterback Mark Denesiuk finished his season when he was hit from behind on a two-point conversion attempt. "I was standing watching the throw when I got hit on the outside (of the knee) and I felt something pop inside," he said.

Starting fullback Mark Brus was cut down trying to make a move off a swing pass. "I caught the ball and had one guy to beat. I cut to the outside and got clipped," he said.

According to team therapist Fraser Dods both players have suffered tears of the medial collateral ligament and both are gone for the remainder of the year.

This is a severe blow to a Bears

offense that lags at the best of times. With Denesiuk gone, the starting job falls to second year man Kevin Molcak. Molcak has been unimpressive to date both as a starter and in the backup role. On the year he is 4 for 20 for 85 yards. Look for rookie Brant Villeard to see a lot more playing time.

Brus has been the Bears' most productive runner to date. The freshman from O'Leary has amassed 229 yards rushing over the first four games. Alberta Head Coach Jim Donlevy was looking forward to seeing Brus paired in the backfield with third year halfback Jeff Funtasz when UBC comes here October 11. Now it looks like Funtasz — who is almost fully recovered from a torn hamstring — will team up with Tom Houg.

In any event this latest turn of events won't help Alberta's anemic offense. Over four games they have amassed only 67 points (with 34 of these points coming against the cream-puff Saskatchewan Huskies) Bears currently rank third in the five-team WIFL in points.