

Bob Stauffer

What is tradition? I suppose for us sports fans, we can say the Montreal Canadiens are a tradition. We can add to that list the New York Yankees, or perhaps the Boston Celtics. Here on the U of A campus we have another sports tradition: the Golden Bear Hockey team.

This past summer Clare Drake's tenure as Golden Bear hockey coach ended. He left behind a legacy of six National Championships, 17 Canada-West titles, and a lifetime winning percentage of .721.

Longtime assistant Billy Moores was given the challenge to replace the legendary coach, and in the process the question was asked whether Moores could continue the winning tradition. The Bears are currently 7-3-2 this season, and in some people's minds this indicates that the Bears are struggling. But I say fear not Bear fans — the tradition continues!

In coach Billy Moores the Golden Bears have a classy, well-liked "thinker" of the game. In conversation with Bear captain Howie Draper the other night after the Bears 2-2 tie with Regina, Draper told me that "even though the team is struggling offensively at this time, the true Bear character will come through after Christmas."

Goaltender John Krill reiterated the point by saying "we play our best hockey after Christmas." If we look at the Bears record from this time last year, we can see that they had the same number of points. This despite the loss of the two previous CIAU Most-Valuable-Players in Stacey Wakabayashi and Sid Cranston; not to mention Wes Craig who contributed offensively, and Darwin Bozek who was a leader defensively.

Yes, the Bears are having problems putting the puck in the net, but the Bear tradition is one intangible that cannot be matched by any other team in Canada-West. As Draper says, "the Bear tradition is not just hockey — but a way of life. It's a maturing process which sees boys become men."

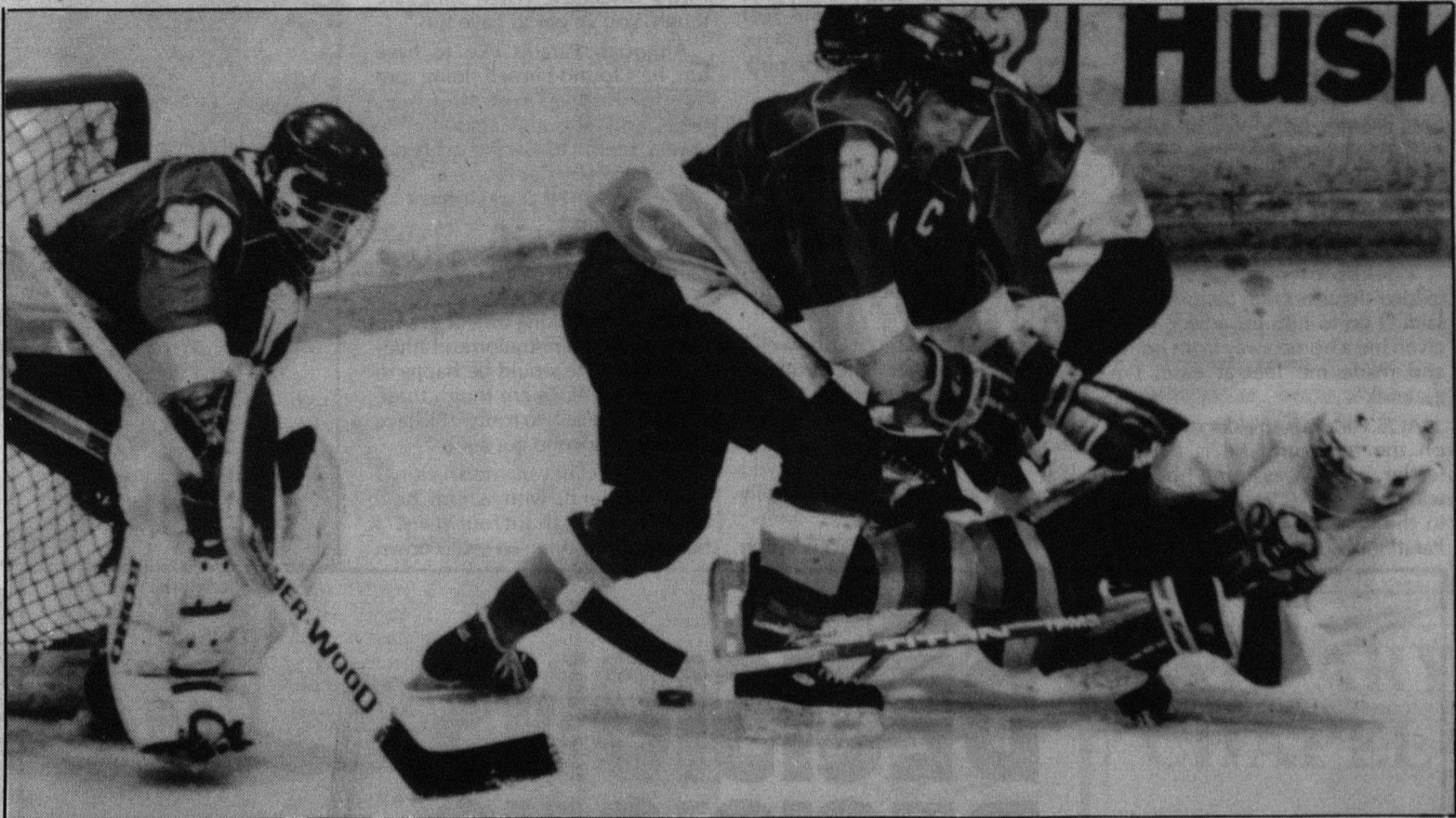
For Draper, the Bear tradition was passed to him by players such as Dennis Cranston, and his brother Sid. Draper hopes to pass that same tradition on to first-year Bears such as Todd Goodwin and Stan Marple.

Perhaps the best indication of what the Bear tradition means is Calgary assistant coach Drew Remenda's comment that "we don't want to play here in March, not in their barn...not with the tradition."

Billy Moores' Bears don't have the offensive punch of Bears' teams of seasons past. They don't have the specialty teams that they had last year. But the tradition remains, and I'll bet you that in March I'll be writing about yet another Canada-West Championship.

Bob Stauffer is the play-by-play man for FM-88 broadcasts of Golden Bear hockey and FM-88 Sports Director.

Hockey Bears Christmas shopping



The Bear hockey team is having a difficult time putting the puck in the net. They head into Manitoba for a crucial pair of games this weekend, the last conference games before Christmas.

by **Todd Saelhof**

Ho, ho, ho! Only 31 more shopping days to go! The gift list is out and University of Alberta hockey head coach Bill Moores is likely asking St. Nicholas for a pair of Golden Bear victories this coming weekend. The stockings, however, need to be filled in Winnipeg where Moores and his hungry Bears take on the University of Manitoba Bisons in the final Canada West hockey action before Christmas break.

Just how important is this weekend to the Bears? "No question about importance. With two good teams, it's going to be difficult out there," said Moores.

The Bisons charged into second place in Canada West standings, one win better than the Bears, with last Sunday's 6-3 mauling of the

league leading University of Calgary Dinosaurs. Meanwhile, the Bears have relapsed into early hibernation, having collected only one point in their past three games, despite having outshot their opponents by a substantial margin.

"We're not putting the puck in the net. It's a matter of bearing down and putting the puck in," said Golden Bear sniper Adam Morrison.

Goal production is definitely essential for Morrison and the Bears if they hope to pull out of Winnipeg four points better. Manitoba has buried a Canada West leading 67 pucks in enemy nets. Moores, however, realizes Manitoba boasts much more than simply scoring punch.

"Manitoba has a good transition

game. They have speed through the neutral zone, make a lot of tricky plays, and are well coached. We have to play sound, aware hockey."

The new Papa Bear is countering with the same hard driven style the green and gold are accustomed to playing.

"There isn't anything too different that we will do. We plan on being a little stronger defensively and doing the small things right. Usually it's the small things that make a difference on the ice," Moores said.

Last weekend, it was the University of Regina Cougars, who battle the Dinos in an upcoming pair of games, who bettered the Bears in the "small things" department. Right winger Rob Glasgow, however, is certain that the Bears will turn

things around after the home series loss to the Cougars.

"It's a matter of trying to get our system going. We want to win. We have to have good team concentration on our game and get back up to a level we know we can play," Glasgow said.

If the Bears can claw their way back into peak Alberta form, then who knows what might happen. With a little bit of help from the Regina Cougars this weekend, the Golden Bears could find themselves with a Christmas present of first place in Canada West.

EXTRA ICETIME: Al Tarasuk will miss the visit to Bisonland as a result of last Friday night's butt-end on a Regina Cougar. Tarasuk's suspension of three games will be complete following this weekend's action.

Pandas/Bears face Huskie test

by **Mitch Panciuk**

After opening the regular season on the road, both U of A basketball teams are in action again tomorrow night here at the main gym in their third and fourth regular-season conference schedule.

The Pandas are currently in last place in the Canada-West conference after two games, and are planning to improve this ranking when they take on the Huskies from the University of Saskatchewan.

In preseason action at the GPAC tournament in Regina, the Pandas easily defeated the Huskies 69-42, but coach Dianne Hilko expects that the Huskies will have improved since then. The Huskies are currently one position higher than the Pandas in Canada-West rankings, for the simple fact that they gave up less points to Lethbridge than the Pandas did to Calgary last weekend.

Panda game start times are 6:30 pm both Friday and Saturday. Games are played in the main gym.

Fresh from Tuesday's rankings which placed the Golden Bears as the number one team in the country, the Bears hope to improve their current conference record of

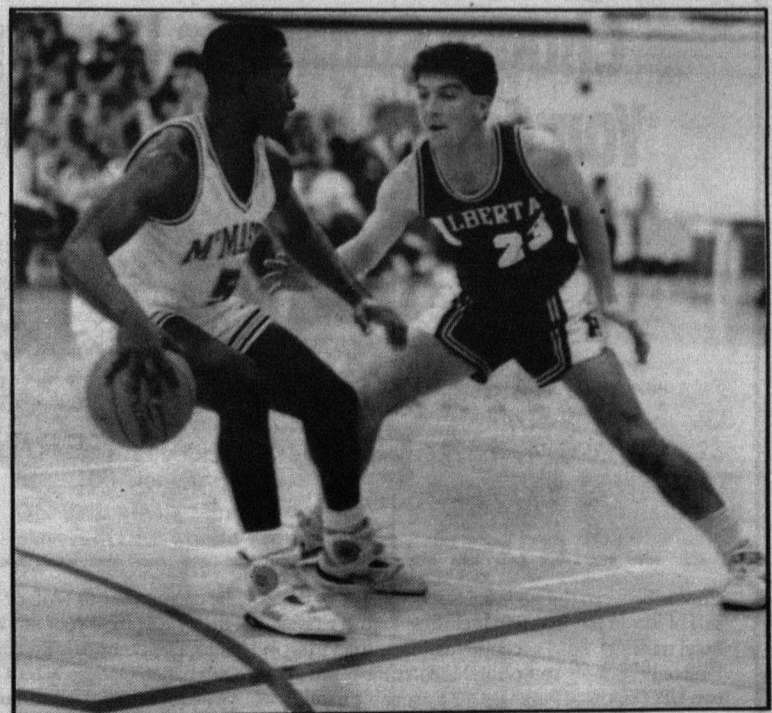
2-0, and their season record of 12-0 as they also entertain the Saskatchewan Huskies (men).

So far this year the Bears have defeated the Huskies twice by wide margins, but in games that were particularly close at the half. In the final of the GPAC tournament, the Bears beat the Huskies 104-90, and in the opening game of the GBI tournament the Bears won again, this time by a closer margin: 86-73.

Bear coach Don Horwood admits that it is easy to look past the Huskies to the Dec. 1 date when their historic rivals, the UVIC Vikings, sail into town, but also feels that "we can't afford to lose to Saskatchewan. They're capable of beating anyone in the league if anyone takes them lightly." Horwood assures everyone that being ranked number one will not affect the team "in terms of not knowing that we have to play hard to win."

The Bears will play immediately following the Pandas. Game times for the Bears are at 8:15 Friday and Saturday nights. All games are played in the main gym.

Mitch Panciuk is the colorman for FM-88 broadcasts of Panda and Golden Bear basketball.



We're #1!

Bear guard David Youngs stalks his prey in the Golden Bear Invitational tournament. The #1 Bears and the Pandas are home this weekend against Saskatchewan.