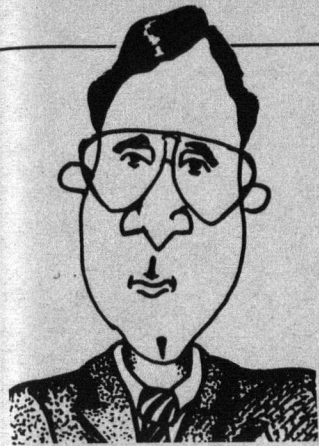


Sean Chursinoff will be at home in Calgary. p. 16

Sports

Canada West standings and Top Tens. p. 17



Dean Bennett

NHL's Top 20

We interrupt this column to take you live to "Late Night With David Letterman." Show already in progress...

Letterman: From the home office in Scottsdale, Arizona here is today's top twenty list. And the category is: Top Twenty Reasons why the National Hockey League has Credibility Problems. Here we go: (drum roll)

Number Twenty: Too many players with pronounceable names.

Number Nineteen: Lack of bench clearing brawls giving players wimp label.

Number Eighteen: Pat Quinn appointed to chair the League's ethics committee.

Number Seventeen: Bubble gum cards now come with arrest records.

Number Sixteen: First round of playoffs now a best of 13.

Number Fifteen: Fans in Edmonton and Vancouver too rowdy; sport losing family appeal.

Number Fourteen: Wayne Gretzky trailing Jean Beliveau by 10,000 votes in All-Star balloting.

Number Thirteen: Vancouver Canucks now wearing green hockey pants.

Number Twelve: Madonna now singing "God Bless America" at Spectrum.

Number Eleven: Deli-style sandwiches replacing water bottles on top of goal nets.

Number Ten: Over half the teams still don't have McDonald's sign along the boards of their rinks.

Number Nine: Stiffer fines for players fighting with spectators discourages fan participation.

Number Eight: Lack of league representation in major media centres like Saskatoon.

Number Seven: After hockey fight, Bruin tough guy Jay Miller arrested by Boston police and beaten with garden hose.

Number Six: Divisional restructuring to allow more playoff teams.

Number Five: Cup champions refuse to make promotional videos.

Number Four: No players' strike in recent memory.

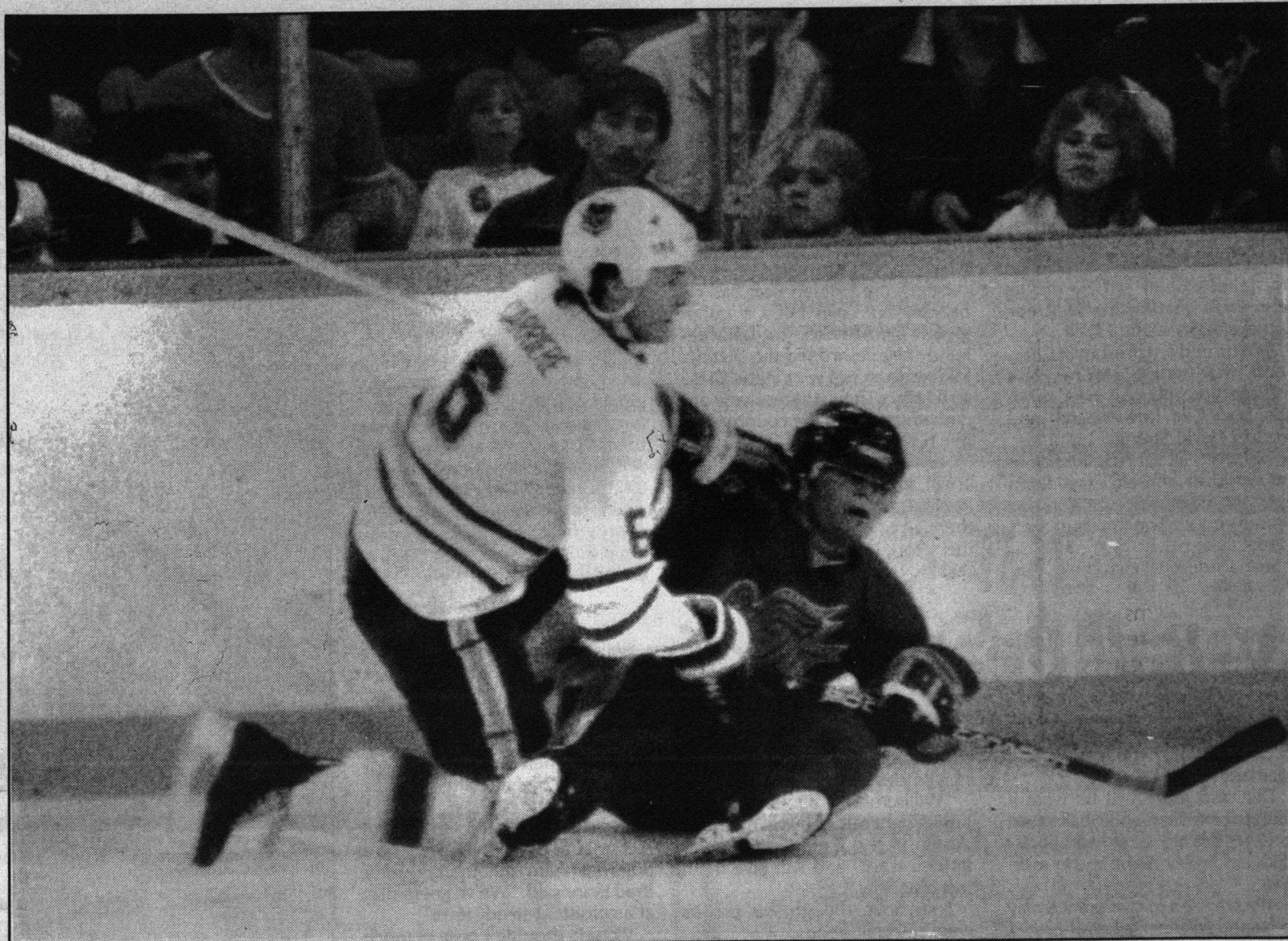
Number Three: Molson's logo now at centre ice in Montreal Forum.

Number Two: Court records reveal the Detroit Red Wings took bribes to throw the last twenty years.

...and the Number One reason why the NHL is having credibility problems: The season is just not long enough. (Applause, graffiti all over the stage, Paul Shaffer and band strike up music, go to commercial.)

The Boards'll be shakin'

"Last year we just planned to run 'em"—Clark



It stems back to the first Face Off, and the hard hitting style should continue on Tuesday as the NAIT Ookpiks take on our Golden Bears.

by Mark Spector

Dinnnggg! Round three.

If you wanted to assign a weight class to the upcoming set-to between the Golden Bears and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, it would be middleweight.

Because like Marvin Hagler, both the U of A and NAIT can run you into the ground or fight toe to toe.

You'll seldom see the brand of hockey that was on display at the first two rounds of Face Off, the first of which was won by the Bears (5-4) and the next one taken by NAIT (7-5). It was the hardest hitting hockey that goes on display here in Oilers-town, but had more wide open skating than the Ice Capades.

The onus last year, however, was given to bodychecking — at least on the Ooks end.

"Last year we said we were going to run U of A right out of the rink," said Bears' defenseman Dean Clark, who wore the blue and gold of NAIT last season.

"We don't get schooled on Alberta, but we don't have to," says Mike Tookey, who plays defense for the Ooks. "We know one thing: when you go out there against the Bears there's going to be so much hitting..."

"In a regular game we finish about 90 checks, on the average," says Tookey of stats kept by NAIT coach Perry Pearn. "Last year against Alberta we had over 120 finished checks. That doesn't mean you run a guy through the boards, but you take your man and stay with him."

This year things should be no dif-

ferent. From a physical standpoint, that is.

Mentally, the Golden Bears will undoubtedly be better prepared. Last season Alberta went into the game on Sunday night following a pair of home ice losses on Friday and Saturday. After NAIT disposed of them 7-5, leading 1-0 after the first and 5-1 after the second, the Bears would go on to lose their next three, and six of their next eight.

This year, after riding the roller-coaster of whether or not they're going to the Universiade Games or not, Alberta's dressing room has not been buzzing about the Face Off game nearly as much. Also, Alberta is playing their best hockey of the season right now, as opposed to being at their lowest point a year ago.

"I don't think they played that well last year," said Tookey. "It was a down thing for guys like Dennis Cranston and Craig Dill — guys that have been around this team a long time," said Clark. "They were just coming off losing two games, and they had a lot of injuries."

"The intensity level just wasn't there," admits Bears' leftwinger Curt Brandolini. "They sort of stole the show on us."

And that, my friends, is the best play on words to come out of the contest. Face Off '86 will go down in history as a gory victim of Chairman of Athletics Bob Steadward's "Carnival-like atmosphere". This year NAIT is in charge of things, however.

"Last year it was like a bleepin' circus between periods," stated

Ooks fourth-year leftwinger Don Simpson. "It's 25 minutes between periods, I'd imagine that the fans were getting a little bored."

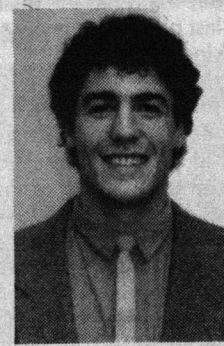
You name it, and chances are that it was happening at that game. From the pre-game juggler to the post-game little girls that were scheduled to do their dance routine between the final buzzer and the awards ceremony. It was pitiful to watch as 40 hockey players shuffled their feet while wishing like hell that they could get to the dressing room.

"It was really frustrating," admitted Brandolini. "We had to swallow our pride more than just once on that night." And swallowing pride is exactly what this game is all about, as the guys from the so-called weaker league fight to prove that they, if not the rest of their league, belong on the same ice with the Alberta Golden Bears.

"Here there's more fear of losing," says Sid Cranston, who led the Ooks two years ago, but sat out last year with an injury incurred early in his first season with the Bears. "There you're not expected to win so there's no fear. You've got nothing to lose. Hell, they shouldn't win anyways!"

We'll see on Tuesday night, when the Canadian College champs take on the Canadian University champs in front of what should be a 10,000-plus crowd at the Coliseum.

Profits go to the Ronald McDonald Foundation, and if you don't put out your five or seven bucks to see this one, you can't call yourself much of a hockey fan.



Curt Brandolini
...scored the winner in '85.



Dean Clark
...played with Ooks in '86.



Sid Cranston
...didn't play last year.