

November madness — or football time in Canada

The following article by Bruce West appears in the book *Glimpses of Canada*, published by Canadian Scene and distributed by Scholar's Choice, Stratford, Ontario. (\$2.95 paperback.)

Early in November, every year, a large part of the Canadian population undergoes a peculiar change. People grab nervously for the morning newspaper and turn eagerly to the sports pages. They talk a strange gibberish with phrases such as "screen pass", "five-four-three defence", and "quarterback sneak". They draw geometric patterns on restaurant tablecloths. They suddenly become friendly with complete strangers.

Fever symptoms

This is a Canadian phenomenon known as Grey Cup fever. It is particularly prevalent in and around Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Montreal, Winnipeg, Calgary, Regina, Edmonton and Vancouver. The symptoms are restlessness, high colour and a tendency to get into arguments. Temperature, blood pressure and nervousness reach a high point late in November, when they are suddenly replaced by headaches and a desire by the patients to be left alone.

Thousands of years from now, the archaeologists of a new civilization will find in the rubbles of our cities such mementoes as buttons and pen-nants with strange insignia on them, and flat 13-ounce bottles, and will ponder the November madness that annually gripped an otherwise sensible nation.

November is football time in Canada, and on the last weekend of the month or early in December a team from Western Canada will meet a team from the East in some huge stadium before a deliriously screaming crowd. The winner will be proclaimed champion and be given custody of a battered old mug known as the Grey Cup, named after the original donor, the aristocratic Earl Grey, who was Governor General of Canada from 1904 to 1911.

This piece of silverware, which is worth probably \$30, is somehow symbolic of the spirit which holds Canada together. Serious historians will likely scoff at this, but there are more foot-

Montreal wins Grey Cup

The Montreal Alouettes beat the Edmonton Eskimos by 20-7 in Vancouver on November 24 to win the 1974 Grey Cup.

In the Eastern Conference semi-final, Montreal had defeated the Ottawa Rough Riders, last year's Grey Cup winners, by 13-4. And in the Western Conference, Edmonton had beaten the Saskatchewan Roughriders by 30-27 in Edmonton.

ball-ticket buyers than there are serious historians. And the people of Eastern Canada and Western Canada have come to know and understand each other a lot better simply because of this annual get-together for a 60-minute football game.

Rugby origin

Football in Canada is an offshoot of the English game of rugby, but it more closely resembles the American game of football. In fact, most of our football stars are imported Americans. To the uninitiated, the game is complicated and incomprehensible, and for this reason many newcomers fail at first to see what all the excitement is about. But most people, sooner or later, fall prey to Canada's "November madness".

East-West battle

Canadian football is big business, with players earning salaries as high as corporation presidents. The Canadian Football League is divided into two wings, called "conferences". The Western Conference has five cities, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver. The Eastern Conference is made up of Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton. The annual contest for the Grey Cup is between the champion of the Western Conference pitted against the Eastern champion.

It is the biggest sporting event of the year, but it is more than that. The fact that the game brings thousands of westerners to some Ontario city or Montreal, or brings thousands of easterners to some western city, does something tangible towards breaking down old barriers of suspicion and helping the provinces to understand each other.

Visit of the Prime Minister of Iran

Prime Minister Amir-Abbas Hoveyda, of Iran, is visiting Canada from December 9 to 14, during which, in addition to meetings in Ottawa with Prime Minister Trudeau and other federal ministers, he will make several calls on provincial and civic leaders in Ontario and Quebec.

This visit, which marks the first occasion an Iranian prime minister has visited Canada officially, highlights the rapid growth in importance of Iran-Canada relations, particularly on trade and economic matters.

Prime Minister Trudeau paid a brief visit to Iran in January 1971.

New program to aid developing countries

A higher education co-operation plan to enable Canadian universities to assume a more active role in the expansion of research work in developing countries has been endorsed by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and the Canadian International Development Agency.

The plan will enable Canadian researchers to co-operate more fully in the development of indigenous research capability, particularly in the "practical" or "applied" research fields, in Third World countries. Overseas researchers will thus be directly involved in the research projects, which should be better suited to meet the needs of these countries.

CIDA has set up a provisional advisory council to co-ordinate the program, which is expected to get under way this year. The council's main functions will be to assist CIDA on projects requiring development of research capabilities and to determine how Canadian universities could provide the required assistance. The council will be composed of representatives of CIDA, the AUCC, the International Development Research Centre, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges and the Canada Council. Another source of expertise that may be available to developing countries for short-term assignments are professors taking sabbatical leave.