

The East and the West Clash on the Prairie Gridiron



At the Hamilton-Calgary football game, on Saturday, September 27th—McKelvie (Hamilton) running the ball out from near the goal line.



Dobbie (Calgary) gets the ball away in an over-scrimmage kick.

By NORMAN S. RANKIN

BEFORE the largest crowd that ever attended a football match in Western Canada, the Calgary Tigers went down to stubborn defeat before the man-eating Hamiltonians on Sept. 27th, to the tune of 19 to 2. It was a bitter contest. The brains and science of the older East were pitted against the virility and determination of the younger West, and pitted not in vain.

The score hardly indicates the play, for the game was at all times severely contested—replete with thrilling runs, interchange of kicks and sensational tackles. The West has yet to learn from the East in pigskin lore, for it was the trick work—the combination behind the line, and fake plays and counter plays—that gave the game to the Easterners. In this respect they excelled sufficiently to enable them to twice break through the prairie line, and both times touch-downs resulted, one of which was converted; in other respects, line-bucking, end runs and mass plays, they met their equals, though perhaps they had a little on the locals in exchange of kicks. At half time the score stood 8 to 1 in favour of Hamilton, who, after their three comparatively easy victories with Winnipeg, Regina and Moose Jaw, were apparently much concerned, which anxiety probably led to the disgraceful mix-up which took place in the third quarter.

It was a rough game and a scrappy one, and a dirty job for the referee, the Rev. Bob Pearson; he came in for much uncalled for abuse on the part of the visitors, who alleged interference play on Calgary's part, and challenged the referee's knowledge of the rules. While I do not say that there was not some justification for complaint regarding interference play, there was indeed absolutely no vindication for such language as was directed towards the Rev. Bob by the Easterners' captain, whom I hold directly responsible for the ensuing events. It may appear to Hamilton that this account, written by a Westerner, is biased; such is not the case; it is penned in calm judgment, deliberation and with full consideration for the merits and demerits of each team. The writer was in the press box at half time, when Hamilton's captain directed such abusive terms to the referee. In the heart of the battle, one is sometimes carried away by excitement and petulance, but I repeat there can be no excuse for men who are guiding the destinies of a team in letting their drascibility dominate them.

It was a perfect day. A little warm for the players, perhaps, but all-delightful from the spectators' point of view. Clear, with a strong, bright sun and a gentle breeze. As early as 1.30 the crowds began to swarm over the Bow Bridge to the gridiron, and by 3.15, when the whistle blew for the "kick-off," every available reserved seat, bleacher and grandstand, was black with howling humanity. The fences, telegraph poles and rising prairie banks were at a premium for the less fortunate. When at 5.30, the whistle again blew "time up," the great concourse, which for the past two hours had been keyed up to the highest pitch of turbulence, filed reluctantly and disappointedly homewards, and the greatest game in the football history of the West passed in the annals of time.

"The Man Eaters" is a great team; there is no doubt about it. Strong at all points, well trained with a determined defense and an energetic attack, they are a TEAM in every sense of the word. They tackle low, follow up briskly, catch and kick splendidly. Their four games in the West, played all within one week, with 840 miles of night and day travel thrown in between, netted them 96 points to their opponents' 10. A pretty good record, that. At the 'Peg, they scored 26 to their opponents' 6; at Regina, the same to the locals' 1; at Moose Jaw, 25 to "the locals" and Calgary, 19 to the Westerners' 2. Had the locals the trick plays employed by the visitors, and a little more luck, the score might have been a different one.



Hamilton backs getting away with an end run. Final score, Hamilton 16, Calgary 2.



The aristocracy filled the covered stand, while the bleachers held the real public.
—Photographs by W. J. Oliver.

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Col. the Hon. Sam Hughes receiving their Majesties at the Army Manoeuvres on Sherman's Hill.