

Alan Small

**CFL is committing suicide**

Is anyone running the CFL? Are the players just letting it run in anarchy until there is nothing left?

Some would say these comments are unfair, but if you look closely, you can tell that the general managers and owners are just grasping for straws when it comes to helping a once proud and prosperous league.

Three events of the last week make me wonder.

Firstly, the Ottawa situation. The owners have given the team an extra \$350,000 to keep them afloat for the rest of the season. Sports reporters say that they will be able to meet their payroll for this season.

In the same breath, though, they said that they would cut the budget for next year's club by more than one million dollars.

Why don't they make playing for the Ottawa Rough Riders a community service for first time felons? If they cut budgets any more, they won't be able to pay any players, let alone their good ones.

The next statement was by Joe Galat general manager of the BC Lions. He proposed making some rule changes like moving the hashmarks in, moving the goalposts back, and adjusting the penalty system so that first and 20s don't result from holding penalties. They would be first and ten, just ten yards back.

The Lions have said this will bring in more fans. More offence will result, they say. Hogwash!

The small amount of offence that will be created would not bring in the 10,000 fans per team, per game that each CFL team needs to break even.

The final announcement that worries this writer is the firing of Don Matthews by the BC Lions.

Now, I am no Lions fan. They are my ninth (er, eighth) favorite club in the CFL. But, Matthews was at least a competent coach, if not a brilliant one, the way he constructed the horrible monster the BC Lions were and still are now.

To fire him for a three game losing streak would be like the Montreal Canadiens firing Sam Pollock after making a poor third round draft selection. It's just totally illogical.

But nobody's said the CFL is logical.

They deserve as much confidence and fan support as the New York Stock Exchange.

Or maybe even less.

**New hoop season brings new coach**

by Philip Preville

When long standing Alberta assistant basketball coach Steve Roth packed his bags to become head coach for the provincial program in Saskatchewan, he left some quiet but nonetheless large shoes to fill. Often referred to by head coach Don Horwood as "the man who does all the work I get credit for," Roth never appeared to lack interest on any topic.

Roth's move to Regina illustrates how names get around in basketball circles, as they do in all such contexts. The name that floated Don Horwood's way was that of one Mike Suderman. Suderman, who holds almost all Bears' career offensive records in only three years of university basketball, is a man who knows how to play his game and, more importantly, can articulate his views. Suderman, however, was called to a permanent teaching job only two weeks into practice.

Mark Dobko, Bear basketball's current assistant coach, appears to be a deserving newcomer to this elite "circle." Dobko wasn't contacted by Horwood, nor did he have any other current ties to the U of A. Contrary to what appears to be the ordinary, Dobko applied for the job.

"I sent Don some resumes," says the diminutive Dobko, who was head coach of the senior girls' team at Paul Kane high school in St. Albert last year. "It was already determined that I wouldn't be back at Paul Kane, and I knew there were vacancies here. We had a few

interviews in late August and I got the job."

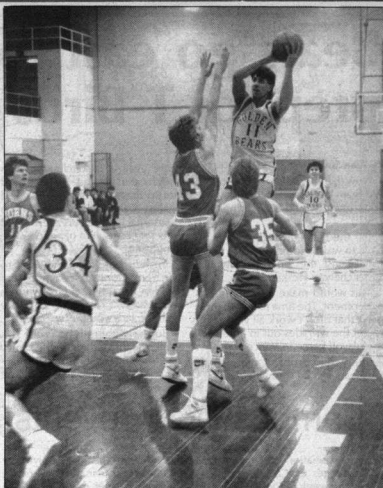
Dobko coached the senior boys team at Paul Kane through the late 70's and early 80's. In 1981 he joined coach Dave Hoy at NAIT, where he stayed until 1986. He also worked in the Alberta Basketball Association Development Program in 1984 and 1985. He also worked at many of Don Horwood's summer basketball camps.

In many ways, Dobko is not unlike his predecessor Roth. He is a generally quiet gentleman, with a pleasant disposition. Unlike Roth, however, Dobko smiles a lot. He seems to be extremely happy with his circumstance at the moment, and even says so freely.

"I'm excited about this team," he says from behind a bushy red moustache. "We have gobs of talent. We don't have any big bruisers, but we have a good blend of youth and experience, and we will be very competitive."

Dobko is a substitute teacher at the moment, and insists that he will refuse a permanent substitution if one is offered him. "Right now all I do is babysit, which is great because I'm done at three o'clock. I don't have to do any lesson preparation. My commitment right now is to this program."

The new coach also seems to get along very well with his boss. "Don Horwood is a man of commitment and dedication," says he in high praise. "He has certain expectations and standards which he expects of everyone, but he is fair in doing so. We understand each other well."



The Bears face Lethbridge down south this weekend.

**FREE THROWS:** On the court, Dobko and Horwood have their serfs hard at work on a new zone defense in preparation for their season opener Friday night in Lethbridge. Guard Sean Chursinoff, who injured his tailbone while drawing a charging foul during Saturday's exhibition game in Grande Prairie, lay on his stomach for most of practice with an icepack sticking out of his shorts. "It's healing very quickly," says Chursinoff, who is undergoing physiotherapy for the injury, "but I'll have to wait and see how much I can play." Chris Toutant injured his shoulder in practice on Monday, but was

very effective in practice on Tuesday. Both will definitely be going to Lethbridge, as rookies Brian Halsey and Mike Frisby and third-year veteran Sam Safadi will stay home this weekend. The coaches, however, declined as usual to give insight on a starting five for the weekend. The Lethbridge Pronghorns, last year's doormats, have a year of experience under their belts, and Horwood expects his team to have its troubles. "We'll be nervous, and we only have two games under our belt going in," says Horwood. "It won't be the same type of game with them that it was for us last year."

**Basketball Pandas will have tough season in 1987-88**

by Ajay Bhardwaj

In all sports, before every season, hope springs eternal. In the case of the University of Alberta Pandas basketball team, that hope is justifiable. Although four players either graduated from or left the program, coach Diane Hilko is optimistic about the year to come.

"Chris White and Joanna Ross

(both first year players) did a terrific job in Grande Prairie (at the tournament). They scored some points and pulled down some rebounds. Heather Smith took what she learned last year and worked on her game over the summer and is much improved," Hilko said. Linda Mrkonjic and point guard Michel Durand "will do well this year" and second player Patti Smith is another

player to watch. Although Hilko did say the Pandas will be team oriented this year, she does believe that certain players will emerge and become the big guns.

"Some people are in there for their scoring, others for their rebounding," said Hilko.

The Pandas will be characterized by two words this year: "Hustle and aggressiveness," said Hilko. She also

expects that the team will be more consistent this year, after a roller coaster-like season last year.

"I've been with the team for one year and they've been with me for one year, so they know what to expect, and therefore, I expect more consistency," Hilko said.

With more hometown girls and low ticket prices (\$4.00 to see a men's and women's game), the Pandas are hoping to draw a great deal of support this year. Because of recent cutbacks in the budget, the Pandas have had to use old equipment and are forced to take one less player on the road.

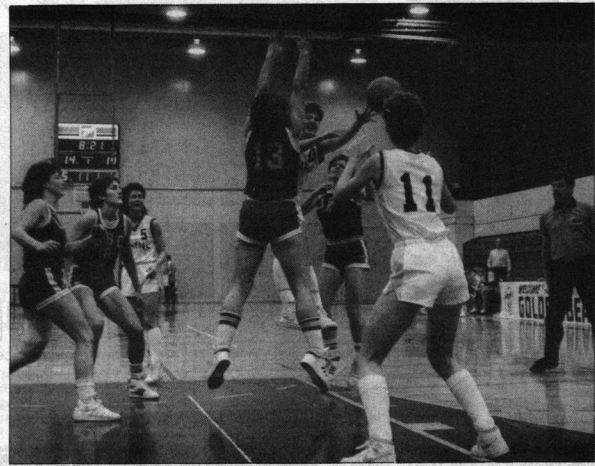
**Panda Basketball**

"We'll have to suffer this year unless our fund raising can bring money in," said Hilko, "the women don't draw the crowds to cover the budgets."

Hilko, who played her college ball at Brock, has coached high school basketball, at Ottawa University, and the Ontario juvenile girls' team. She is in her second year with the Pandas, and is hoping to build a program "that is one of the strongest in the nation."

The Pandas start the season on Friday against their alumni.

Hilko describes the alumni as "big and experienced," so they will be a good test for the Pandas. Grande Prairie also brings a select team to face the Pandas this weekend.



The Panda hoop squad face their Alumni in their home opener on Friday.