Basketball Bears story ends

by Brad Clark

Yeomen 84 Bears 71

VICTORIA— The Golden Bear Basketball team entered the CIAU Western Regional Playoff as classic "Cinderella-story" material. But Friday night "Cinderella lost her slipper," as Bears' Coach Don Horwood so aptly put it. Dreams of the final four tournament in Halifax faded fast as the York Yeomen trounced the Bears, 84-71.

The Bears came out flat and tense. York took full advantage of the Bears mental state rattling off nine straight points. Mike Kornak, tournament MVP at last weekend's Canada West championship, was so tightly covered that he did not score until 15 minutes into the first half. The Bears did manage to close the nine point spread to four, with some hard work and patient offense. But then the Yeomen, who had won 19 straight coming into the tournament, surged out in front again compliments of sloppy passing, poor shot selection and lousy offensive rebounding by the Bears. Led by Tim Kider's 15 point effort, York went to the lockers in front 40-32.

Things did not improve for the Bears in the second 20 minutes. York continued to dominate and the Bears were never closer than 13 points.

Both the players and coaches agreed that the bright lights of the national tournament proved a little uncomfortable for the Bears.

"We felt the pressure, and our shooting percentage (42 per cent) showed it," said Mike Suderman who had 15 points on the night.

"We haven't been this far before. It needs to be an annual event for us, so maybe this (getting to the national tournament) is the first step," said Horwood.

Scoring for the Bears, Mike Kornak had 17 and Mark Baker picked up 10 points. Tim Kider of the Yeomen finished the night with 21, while teammate Ron Hepburn, who played for the U of A two years ago, had 18.

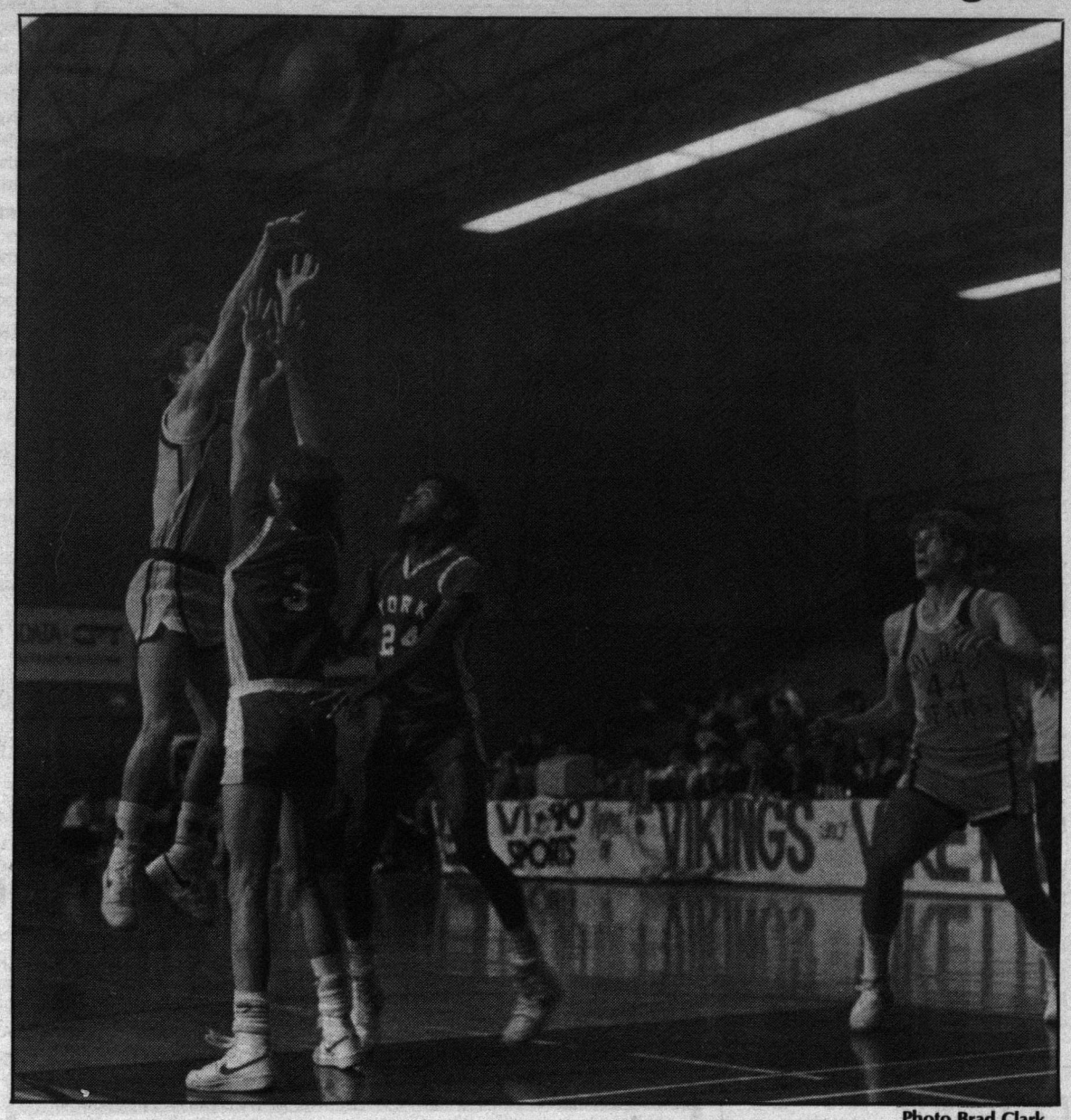

Photo Brad Clark

In Friday's other contest Victoria moved another step closer to their sixth straight national title with 78-67 triumph over the Western Ontario Mustangs. The Mustangs, small but quick and aggressive, put up a pretty good fight before Victoria's size and experience finally won out.

Bears 81 Mustangs 80

VICTORIA— If "Cinderella lost her slipper" Friday night, at least she didn't turn into a pumpkin on Saturday. After a sloppy first half, the Bears bounced back for a last minute victory over the Western Ontario Mustangs, in the CIAU Western Region consolation match.

With 20 seconds left on the clock, Gerry Couzens found Dean Peters all alone under the hoop for an easy bucket and a one point advantage. Western had a chance to move in front, but a desperation shot by Pod Armstrong with :04 seconds left missed the mark and Mike Kornak was fouled on the rebound. Kornak missed the bonus free throw, but time ran out before Western could get the ball upcourt.

In the first half the Bears ran around like housewives at $1.49 day. They were aggressive but lacked concentration, particularly at the free throw line where they went six for 13. Western's full court press gave the Bears trouble, and they coughed the ball up 24 times. "We were out of control in the first half," said Coach Horwood. The Bears escaped to the dressing room down by only 6 points after the first 20 minutes, 42-36.

The second half was a completely different ball game. Couzens found forwards Mike Suderman, Gord Klootwyk and Peters open targets inside Western's zone defense. Klootwyk came off the bench to have a great game, shooting a perfect six for six from the field and three of three from the line, for 15 points. Suderman picked up 22 points, Peters had 14 and Couzens had 13.

Despite the fact that the game really didn't mean much but pride to either team, Coach Horwood still felt it was an important victory. "It's been an up and down season for us and we wanted to end it on a really high note," he said.

In the western regional final Victoria advanced to the final four tournament in Halifax with an impressive 75-62 lambasting of York, before a noisy, rambunctious home crowd. The Vikings are going for their sixth straight CIAU title.

Suderman was the only Golden Bear named to the tournament all star team. Tim Rider of York, and Cord Clemens and Dave Sheehan of Victoria were the other all stars.

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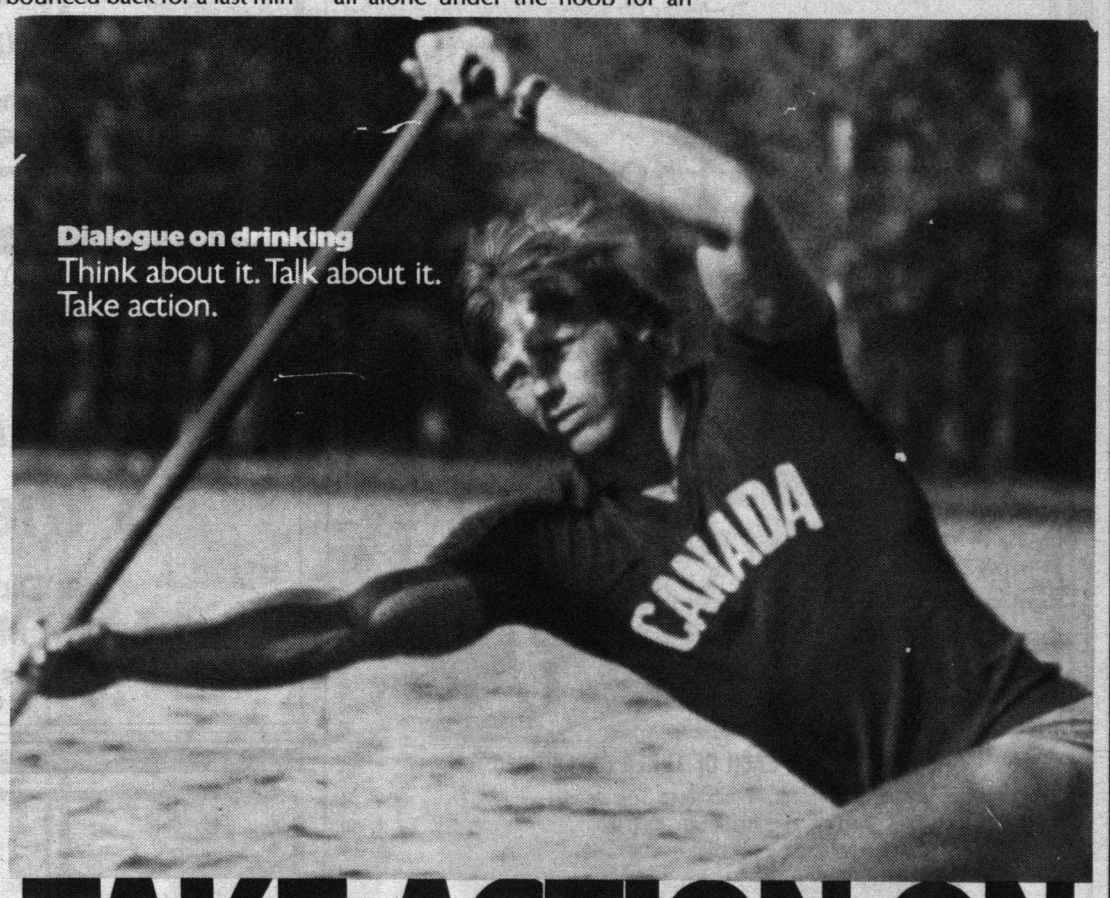

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"I like the taste of a cold beer on a hot day, but I certainly don't think you have to get the gang together with a couple of cases of beer just to celebrate the fact you've had a bit of exercise."

JOHN WOOD
OLYMPIC SILVER MEDALLIST

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