

Year sees Bears slide, slip, fall

Rebuilding program gave Golden Ones their ups and downs

By STEVE RYBAK

Is the rest of the league catching up with the Bears or are they slipping back with the pack?

The 1966 edition of the Golden Bears slipped from a berth in the national final, the Vanier Cup, to a tie for second place in the WCIAA with the U of S Huskies with a 4-3 record. The Manitoba Bisons took the league title with a 5-2 season.

Coach Gino Fracas was faced with a major rebuilding problem as training camp opened in late August. He had to build completely new offensive and defensive lines around a few veterans. His other problem was a quarterback—he had too many of them; Terry Lampert, Gary Corbett, and Dan McCaffery.

INCONSISTENT

These problems manifested themselves in a sputtering offense and a very inconsistent football team. In September the Bears faced the Waterloo Lutheran Golden Hawks in an exhibition game and came out on the short end of a 23-6 score. It set the tone for the rest of the season with a poor offensive showing, especially in the rushing game.

The Bears opened the season with a convincing win over a good U of S Huskie squad in Saskatoon. Led by defensive ends John McManus and Ed Molstad the defensive squad fought the Huskies to a standstill until halfback Ludwig Daubner broke open the game with an electrifying 78 yard touchdown jaunt as the half ended.

IN DOUBT

The game was in doubt until the third quarter as the stubborn Huskies wouldn't give up, but 197 yards in penalties against the Huskies contributed to their 21-0 loss.

The U of C Dinnies carried on in their normal role as the door-mats of the league as they rolled over and died on a Friday night in the Cowtown. Halfback John Violini led the Bears to a 44-7 triumph as the offense started to click.

The next weekend it was a little different. The Golden Bears barely managed to hold off Dinnie halfback Whitey Tuss for a narrow 17-14 win.

Ludwig Daubner's toe won the game for the Bears. The game was marred by spotty defensive work, a sputtering offense, and more than a dozen fumbles.

ALL DOWNHILL

From here on it was all downhill for the Bears, as the offense found itself watching from the sidelines while the defensive corps tried to stem the tide.

It began in Manitoba in a fantastic defensive battle.

Manitoba punter Dick Kohler scored all of the points as the Bisons squeaked by 4-2. Kohler kicked a single and a field goal and then conceded a safety touch to give the Bears their points. Both offensive teams spent the afternoon running into brick walls.

FUMBLED AWAY

The game seemed to take any zip out of the Bear offense that there was.

In the rain in Vancouver the Bears fumbled away the

game to the UBC Thunderbirds. Led by quarterback Dick Gibson, the T'birds pounced on the U of A miscues to wrap up the game in the fourth quarter. The Bear offense continued to show its ineptness; it took until the fourth quarter before they could put two first downs back to back. The Bears had played ten quarters of football and managed only a single point.

The Bears bounced back momentarily and raised fans'

hopes for another league crown by walloping the Bisons 33-9. The defense was given a rest as the offense, led by Les Sorenson's two touchdowns, rolled up a total offense of 400 yards. With the rest, the defense kept the Bisons off the scoreboard until late in the game and limited them to a total offense of 121 yards.

SET RECORD

Dick Kohler, the Bison punter, set a new distance record with an 88 yard single.

The Bears reverted to their losing ways the next Saturday afternoon as the U of S Huskies tore them to pieces on the way to a 40-7 win. The Huskies jumped to an early 17-0 lead on Walt Nibogie's passing.

On a bitterly cold day Nibogie completed 20 of 31 attempts for 285 yards through the air lanes. It seemed the major task of the afternoon was to keep the score within reasonable limits. The fantastic Bear offensive machine churned for the awesome total of 66 yards. Their net ground gain was -26 yards as all of the blocking collapsed.

FORCED PLATOONING

Coach Fracas never really solved his problems. He was forced to platoon his quarterbacks and could never find the right combination on the line. He had too many talented backs and could never find a set backfield.

Injuries were not too serious but they were a factor in a poor season for the Bears.

John Violini was the Bears' leading scorer with 24 points and finished fifth in league scoring. Terry Lampert had the second best passing average in the league completing 56 out of 133 attempts (42.1 per cent) for 977 yards.

Top rusher for the Bears was Ludwig Daubner with an average gain of 6.3 yards in 36 carries for 225 yards and fifth place in rushing totals.

STEADY RECEIVER

Gil Mather picked off 14 of 21 passes for 157 yards and fifth place in pass receiving.

Dave Rowand was the third best punter in the league kicking 38 times for 1,339 yards and a 36.8 average.

Five Golden Bears made the WCIAA all star team. Guard Dave Wray and John Violini made the offensive team, and end Ed Molstad, defensive backs Larry Dufresne and Bert Murray made the defensive squad.

Molstad was voted the club's outstanding lineman, Les Sorenson got the outstanding back award, and Wray was named the best first year man.



—Lyall photo

FUMBLE

Alberta Golden Bears took advantage of every available opportunity last October, when they steamrolled their way to a 33-9 victory over Manitoba Bisons in Western Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Association action. An alert Bear defence scooped up this fumble by Bison Mike

Shylo (30), and paved the way to their big win with it. Later in the fall, however, the Bears also lost some crown jewels of their own when they finished in a second-place tie with U of S Huskies. The thundering Bisons ended as league-leaders with a 5-2 record.