

Speaking on Sports

By DON MOREN

Don't believe the myth that the Golden Bears are a super college hockey team.

It's not true. The Bears are as talented at losing games as they are at winning.

Every time the Bears lose there is a great campus furor. When I arrived home from Quebec people weren't entranced with the fact that the Bears had won the gold medal at the First Canadian Winter Games.

Instead it was: "Why'd they lost to St. Francis?" "What's wrong with the Bears?" And said in such a way to suggest that losing was absolutely foreign to the Bears.

Mind you, your pessimistic reporter could understand a little public indignation at the loss to Manitoba Friday night.

The Bisons were supposed to be push-overs. Alberta clobbered them 10-2 at Quebec. The public, and perhaps the players themselves, overlooked the fact that the Bisons upset Saskatchewan 6-5 back in January.

Still the Bears were the better of the two teams despite last weekend and your reporter will now make an up-in-the-press-box analysis of these Bears, who have so irritated us with their inconsistency.

Friday's upset was much like the loss to St. Francis Xavier. The Golden Bears were outplayed in the earlier part of the game and when they tried to bounce back they were lacking a crispness.

Hurt by silly mistakes

The forwards made silly mistakes, like fanning on a shot, overskating the puck or not seeing a pass headed their way.

This is what I suppose could be called not being "up", or ready for a game. You would almost think the players hold a meeting before each game where they discuss the importance of the upcoming match and decide whether to coast or dig in.

This is of course nonsense but players have ruefully admitted playing only as well as they have to. Obviously it's been getting to the point where they haven't been playing even that well.

I've seen steadier days for the Bears earlier this season when, whether they won or lost, they never got into the hot water they've been getting into lately.

Those were days when Billings played with Harper.

Lately Billings hasn't looked quite at home on the second line with Cutler and LeBlanc.

Cutler himself doesn't look his usual self at right wing on that line and it seems he still spends most of his time patrolling the center lanes where he has spent most of the season.

The production unit of Braunberger-Cutler-LeBlanc has been broken up as of late. Braunberger has been filling in for an injured defenceman. Twa had a couple of bad plays Friday night but he's once again becoming his capable old self after that shoulder injury.

The second line as it stands now is lacking in checking strength.

Changes affect timing

It would also appear that these recent adjustments have done something to the timing and puck sense of the players involved.

Why the defencemen get careless in these games I'll never know. In Quebec Jorstad and Kingston were at their best. They rarely got trapped out of position and they kept Wolfe's doorstep relatively clean.

Jack Nicholl is a good, talented forward. Jack, who appears on the program as a defenceman, must have some option permitting him to swoop around the enemy goal at will. I'm looking forward to the day when "goal-hungry" Jack registers as a forward. Jack stickhandles well, is a good fast skater and has a wicked shot.

The third line has remained relatively intact over the weeks. Dave Zarowny would be a good hockey player if he'd only do up his helmet properly and aim for the post on breakaways.

Brian Harper would be a good one too if he'd pass the puck every four seconds.

All kidding aside, the Bears are perfectly capable of winning all these games and if they can overcome inconsistency they will be solid contenders for the number one spot in Canadian college hockey.

Bears take two from Sled-dogs; second place tie still possibility

By LAWRIE HIGNELL

The Bears finally broke the Saturday night jinx, as they won a doubleheader over the weekend against the University of Saskatchewan Huskies.

The Bears had no trouble Friday as they kept eight points up during most of the second half, and won 78-70.

Saturday, the Alberta squad looked as if they would run away with the game but only won 74-70 as the Huskies came on strong in the last three minutes.

The two wins kept Alberta hopes alive of a possible tie for second place with the Calgary Dinosaurs, who lost both games to the UBC Thunderbirds over the weekend.

In the last home game of the season, the Bears ended a Saturday losing streak which extended back to last December.

The Bears started the series Friday as if they would completely humiliate the Huskies, and jumped to an early 10-2 lead. Strong rebounding on both boards and fast breaks made the difference in the first ten minutes.

The Huskies closed the gap when the Alberta team started missing rebounds and the game was tied 19-19 with eight minutes left in the half.

BLOTT ON TARGET

Forward Ed Blott set the team back on its feet as he cashed in shots off stray rebounds, and the Bears went up eight points at the half 39-31.

In the second half, Bear guard Bruce Blummell led all the team in scoring, as he hooped twelve points, getting ten of these on drives.

With under three minutes left, by the Huskies while they stalled the stall. The stall is supposed to prevent the opposition from scoring, while the stalling team scores only the sure baskets.

The Bears were outscored 10-5 by the Huskies, while they stalled and only time kept them from losing.

Guard Don Melnychuk did a bit of fancy dribbling to waste time, and Ed Blott saved the Bears at one point when he stopped a three-on-one break after a bad pass by Warren Champion.

In the last 39 seconds, the Bears got three fouls and guard Darwin

Tom Gosse scored 14 and Bill Hook 12 for the Huskies.

Captain Nestor Korchinsky fouled out of the game in the second half, and Cecil Blackburn filled in for him, playing a much improved game over his early season performance.

In Saturday's game, the Bears seemed headed for another jinxed-loss, as they fell behind 31-19 with less than six minutes remaining in the first half.

A press by the Alberta squad and some easy baskets on fast breaks pulled the Bears even at the half 33-33.

In the second half, the Bears immediately took the lead and pushed the score to 67-55 with eight minutes left.

BEARS STALL

With a little over four minutes remaining, the Bears led by 15 and again went into the stall.

Two minutes later the Bears led 73-67 and two bad passes by Gerry Kozub gave the Huskies another easy basket.

The Bears managed to hold on in the last minute, as the Huskies missed on two shots, but the team was a little discouraged with the stall after the game.

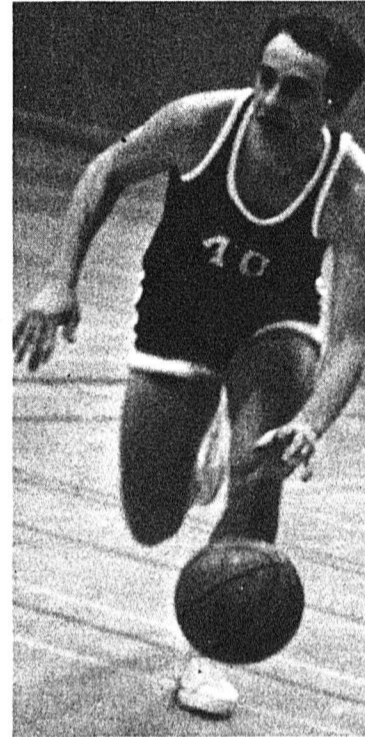
Coach Gerry Glassford commented after the game, "we just can't control the ball," and it was very obvious in the last minutes of both games.

Many times, the Bears had men in the open while they stalled, but they insisted on playing with the ball right around the ten second line, instead of passing to an open man for an easy basket.

One Bear was heard to comment after the game, "I wish we hadn't gone into the stall—we would have won by 15 or 20 and not been so tense."

Top scorer for the Bears was rookie Warren Champion hooping 25 while Darwin Semotiuk scored 20.

Bill Harris hooped 15 for the Huskies while Bill Hook added a dozen.



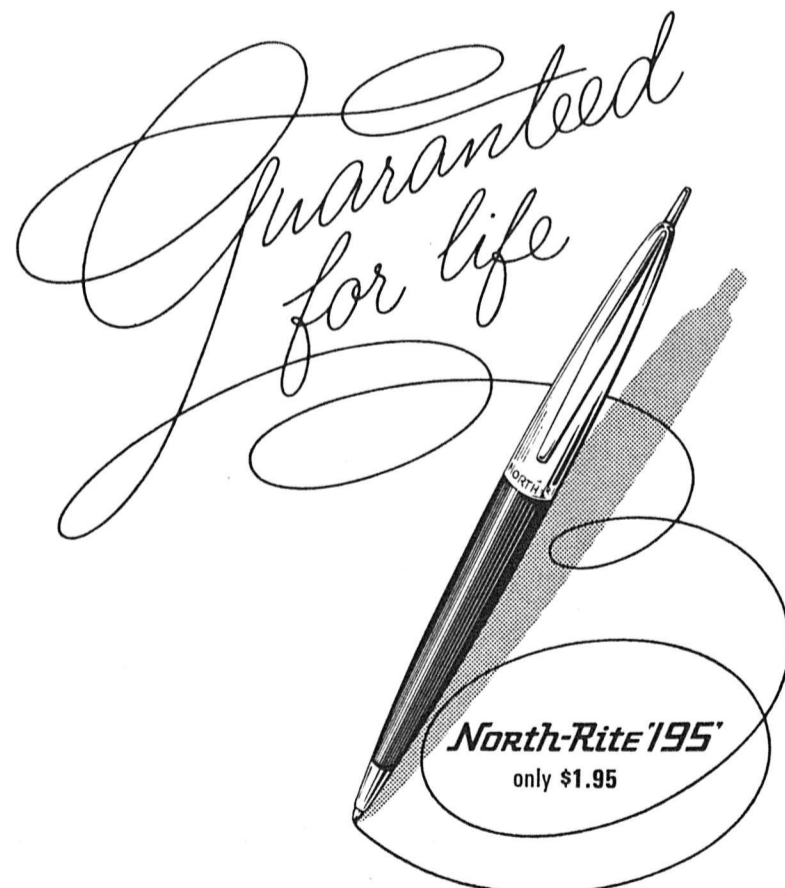
—Ken Hutchinson photo

DON MELNYCHUK
... fancy dribbler

Semotiuk commented after the game, "I thought we were going to blow it there."

Darwin Semotiuk and Warren Champion each hooped 18 points, Darwin getting many of his on fast breaks and drives.

Ed Blott hooped 14 for the Bears,



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