

sports

Ali professor of boxing

by Johan Louw

Two Americans contesting the most coveted prize in boxing in far-off Zaire; (where is that? - colonial Belgium Congo of the '60's, remember?); five million dollars purse money to each fighter; David Frost doing the pre-fight commentary - right, the same guy noted for his interviews with Hollywood pansies and their bored female companions (did his new growth resembling "boards" qualify him to do this above such knowledgeable opposition as Bryan Hall and Wayne Overthell?)

Fortunately, the typical Edmonton close-circuit production saved us from hearing Frost's remarks; the main event taking place at 4:00 a.m. Zaire time, to satisfy us \$15-20 extravagants; President Mobuto's ever present person in the Bkwame Nkruma and Mao Tse Tung style, sharing the spotlight, and Mohammed Ali sitting on the ropes, holding his guard high for the major part of the eight rounds simply defying Foreman's annihilation process, just to turn it all around with a left hook and a right cross.

Ali entered the ring first, sporting an African styled robe. One look at his perfect physique

told the story of months of hard training and clean living. Foreman pulled the old "keep the challenger waiting" trick, but when he eventually appeared and disrobed, we sat in awe - the strongest of them all. The only time Mohammed had time for his prized Ali-shuffle was while warming up in the ring, to the delight of a delirious pro-Ali crowd. Foreman's granite-like facial expression belied his determination to destroy the myth of Muhammed Ali - however, Ali did not notice anything, since he, together with Drew Bundini, were talking himself into a "high".

Suddenly, after all those months of waiting, the contest was reality. At the bell Ali moved swiftly across the ring to meet Foreman in his corner. A few lightning fast left-right combinations by Ali brought cheers from the crowd. However, Foreman promptly pushed Ali into the ropes and threw punches at a devastating rate at Ali. Surely Ali would not dare tie Foreman up the way he did with Frazier and surely he would "stick and move". We all read the script wrong, because Ali just leaned back into the ropes and without "bobbing and weaving", took a multitude of

punches on his arms and about the same amount on his head and lower-ribs. By gad, do they hurt and do they sap a fighter's strength? However, Ali survived the first round. What is more, without retaliating much in the next three rounds, he further absorbed Foreman's fury. Even more amazing, between rounds Ali stood up and led the crowd in their cheers. At the end of the fourth Ali even pulled a face at Foreman to the delight of the fans. After the fourth round I was sure that Ali would never be the same again - no one could take that kind of punishment and still walk and think straight afterwards.

For 2½ minutes of the fifth Ali stood in the way of a man intent on breaking him in two. It seemed as if Ali's tactics of standing still and taking everything Foreman could throw in order to tire him, suited the champion's crude style. After all, you don't need much finesse to outslug your punching bag. Then, unbelievably, Ali produced some lightning fast combinations which definitely hurt Foreman. The start of the sixth saw Ali moving and jabbing, keeping big George off balance. However, that trend was short lived. The rest of round six, as well as round seven, Ali reverted back to his by now familiar position in the ropes. Foreman's punches seemed to have lost some of their earlier power and often were off target. However, up to that stage Foreman won every round, with round six a possible exception of a sheared round. Both fighters were showing definite signs of fatigue and more obviously so, Foreman.

At the end of the seventh, Ali sat down in his corner for the first time. Number eight started out the same way they left off in round six. With Ali on the ropes one of Foreman's big left hooks missed its target, causing George to momentarily lose his balance. Ali swiftly moved away from the ropes and with super-human comeback power attacked Foreman. The end came so fast and so unexpectedly. An Ali combination ended with a perfect right to Foreman's exposed jaw. Foreman dropped slowly to the canvas, failed to beat the ten count tolled over him by referee Zac Clayton, and Ali was champ again.

A beautiful ending for the man who was robbed of his livelihood and best years as a fighter by his imperialistic government - Ali did the seemingly impossible.

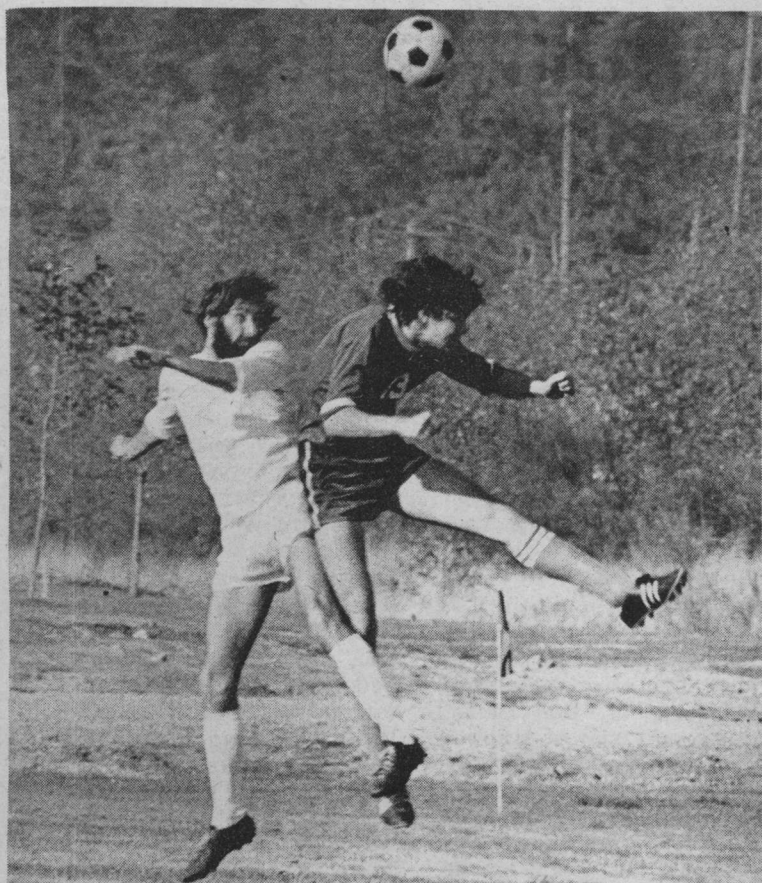


Photo: Rhys Davies

Attitude, experience valuable

by Rhys Davies

Some reflections on the soccer season.

Those soccer balls that are left have been locked away, the intercollegiate soccer season is over for the Bears...Gerry Redmond is already thinking about next year. He made one or two errors of judgement this year, which he declares won't happen again. One of these is that he chose his squad of sixteen too soon, and he thinks that he cut some people who should have stayed. He also set too much store on reputation, instead of actual performance. Another thing that Redmond will be looking at next year will be attitude - he wants people who will consider it a privilege to wear a Bears' shirt, rather than a right. In 1975, players will have to struggle a lot more to make the squad.

One thing that disturbed one or two of the players was the "slackness" with regard to attendance at practice. At times only a third of the squad would show up, and this hardly helps to build team spirit and cohesion. I'm not a believer in sacrificing everything to play for the team, but if you haven't got the time, maybe you shouldn't take the place of someone who has.

One of the things that came when it was too late was team-spirit, which was especially evident only after the Bears were out of contention in Vancouver. Next year, when players have to fight for a place, there should be better attendance at training, and those that make it should be united by a sense of common achievement.

But the biggest pitfall next year is going to be the lack of serious opposition locally. For two years now the Bears have not had a team in the outdoor league during the summer. The only thing that distinguished UBC and U. Vic from the Bears,

apart from the fact that they had healthy players, was that they play regularly in local leagues against good opposition; this cultivates sharpness and understanding in any team. U. Vic coach Brian Hughes told me that he reckoned his team would have been nothing without this sort of experience. Redmond has already been thinking about this, but one big problem would be in keeping a team together for the summer, and another would be in persuading those who already play for local teams, such as Ital Canadians or Polonia, to sacrifice those allegiances for the Bears. This should be thought about seriously, though.

Another thing that has to be done is a change in the organization of the Western tournament. Six games in three days is bloody ridiculous, by any standards. Brian Hughes used to play in the Football League in Britain, and for Wales, (Cymru am byth!), and he thought that there would be a revolt if pros in Britain had to perform that much. UBC's efforts to organize the tournament were not too auspicious, to say the least; still, they won this time. It might be here next time, and it might be put together more thoughtfully.

One final note. It should be remembered that Redmond was appointed just two weeks before term started. Hardly a lot of time to get ready, especially to arrange suitable fixtures, which he tried to do. He made some mistakes this time, and is the first person to admit to them, but he also picked the players and pulled them together for the fine win against UBC. His appointment was regarded as controversial in some quarters, but any suggestion that he should be replaced would be premature, and complete nonsense. Just watch what he does with the Bears next year.



Pride will win

by Peter Best

The football team will play its last game of the season Saturday against the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds in Vancouver.

The Golden Bears will probably have a tough time getting up for the T'birds. With a win over UBC the Bears would finish no better than second in the Western Intercollegiate Football League.

Nevertheless U of A should have enough pride left to do a proper job on the T'birds. Last time the two teams played

Alberta won 53-7. That was back in the good old days when the Bears were undefeated and running away with the WIFL title.

But since then a lot of weird things have happened to U of A and nothing seems certain any more, not even a win against UBC.

The T'Birds are a very young team and haven't won a game this season. They'll probably be very loose against the Bears, figuring they have nothing to lose, and they might

play their best game of the year.

While Alberta is playing UBC on the weekend, Saskatchewan and Manitoba will meet in a very big game in Winnipeg. If Saskatchewan wins they will still be in the running for the league championship. A Manitoba victory would mean that the University of Calgary, the current league-leaders, would clinch the number one spot. Calgary plays an exhibition game against Simon Fraser University Saturday night in Vancouver's Empire Stadium.

Standings

| Team | Won | Lost | Points |
|------------------|-----|------|--------|
| Calgary | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| Saskatchewan | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| Alberta | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| Manitoba | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| British Columbia | 0 | 6 | 0 |