

# Mel Smith Canada's most valuable player

by Ron Ternoway

For the first time in its history, the Hec Creighton trophy, the award for the most valuable player in Canadian College football, will leave its sanctuary in the East on a long journey West.

The trophy will wend its way to Edmonton, where it will reside on the mantelpiece of one Melvin Smith, wingback for the University of Alberta Golden Bears.

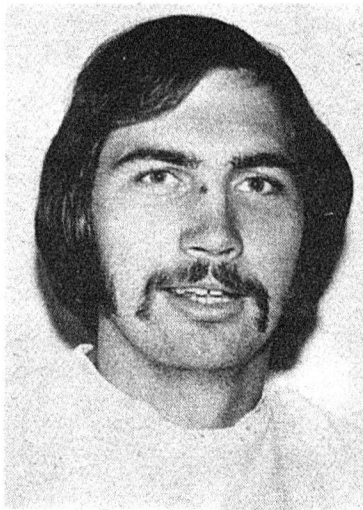
The eight-man Canadian College Bowl committee made their selection known Wednesday morning. Smith, who scored six touchdowns and caught 21 passes in eight league games, won the award over nominees from the other three athletic conferences in Canada,

including Bishop's University's Larry Smith and St. Mary's quarterback Bill Robinson.

Smith was the number one draft choice of the Edmonton Eskimos last year, but failed to make the team and returned to the Golden Bears, where he's had an excellent season. Moved to wingback from his customary flanker position this year, Smith was utilized as a runner as well as a clutch-pass receiver.

Coach Jim Donlevy was elated when he received the news. "The people Mel was up against were all excellent football players, and it must have been a very difficult job making the decision," he said.

Mel, a four-year veteran with the Bears, is one of a handful of



MEL SMITH

Bruins remaining from the 1967 national championship team. That year he played end and just "blocked all day. I never got to catch a pass," recollected Mel. But this year should be different. Bears have gone to Smith often in clutch situations,

although several teams have double-teamed him. He's got good hands, and at 6'1" and 195 lbs., is deceptively fast.

When Mel "turns on the jets" the defensive backs that can catch him are few and far between. Not to mention tired.

## Puck Bruins host Dinosaurs in WCIAA league opener

by Stu Layfield

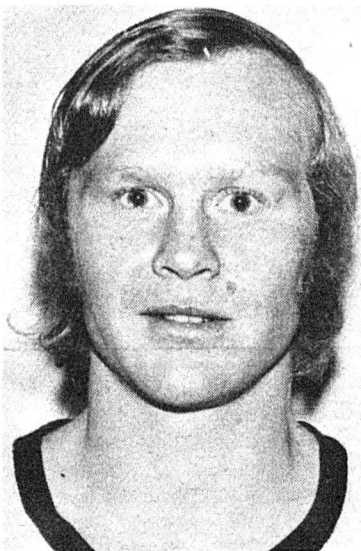
Coach Clare Drake's Golden Bears take the wraps off another season of W.C.I.A.A. hockey action this weekend when they play host to the University of Calgary Dinosaurs on Friday and Saturday nights at Varsity Arena in the league opener.

The two arch-rivals met a few weeks ago in a pair of exhibition games in which the Dinnies earned a come-from-behind 4-4 tie in Calgary and the Bears posted a 7-5 victory back in Edmonton. While both these contests were rather ragged affairs, so typical of any team's first exhibition games of the year, both clubs have shown considerable improvement since then, as evidenced by their strong, inspired showings against the touring United States National team last weekend.

The Dinnies this season are boasting of a talented and experienced aggregation which should threaten seriously for the W.C.I.A.A. championship. Their forte appears to be the outstanding goaltending of Dave Margach and a large, aggressive defence composed entirely of veterans, including last season's second team W.C.I.A.A. All-Stars Terry Brown and John Jenkins, as well as John Kinsman and Bill Higgins. The Dinosaur forwards are led by the always hustling Bob Beaulieu, notorious Richardson brothers - Frank and Steve - and, of course, the loveable Rob Wright. Yes fans, "The Weasel" returns once again to bear the brunt of verbal abuse from the garrulous Golden Bear fans!

The Bears are confident of sweeping both games against the hated Dinnies. To do so they will be relying largely on the superb netminding of Barry Richardson and the offensive fire power of such adroit forwards as Gerry Hornby, Jack Gibson, Cal Botterill, Billy Moores, and Dave Couves, to mention a few. The Bears will also be looking to the defensive leadership of Captain Steve Carlyle, the former Canadian National Team member and last season All-Canadian blueliner.

While the Bears have been proving throughout the



STEVE CARLYLE



BARRY RICHARDSON

exhibition schedule that opposing teams will experience a great deal of difficulty in keeping them from mounting impressive figures on the scoreboard, they have also been having their share of problems on the blueline. The situation is not so much a lack of talent, but rather a lack of experience and exposure to good defensive coaching. With the notable exception of Carlyle, only young Bryon Baltimore saw full time duty with the Bears last season. What the team could perhaps use most is a big rearguard who likes to throw his weight around and move the opposing forwards out from in front of the net; someone cut out of the mold of the now-graduated Dennis Zukiwsky, an unsung defensive hero for the Bears in the last couple of seasons. Coach Drake has stated that he will be looking for Baltimore to assume a more aggressive role this season and hopefully fill this need.

This week's practice sessions have been emphasizing conditioning, which has suffered somewhat from the scarcity of exhibition games the team was able to play, and the correction of some of the defensive weaknesses. Coach Drake has been drilling the forwards on their checking, often the neglected part of a forward's game, in order to take some of the load off his blueliners. He has

also been experimenting with rookie winger Dave White on defence, where he feels the former Medicine Hat Tiger's good size, blazing shot, and good puck handling ability could be most valuable. Of course it remains to be seen whether or not White can adapt competently to his new position, but results so far have been promising.

Coach Drake has expressed the belief that by Christmas he expects his defensive corps to have improved to the point where they will be at least equal in skill to that of last year's rearguards. He hopes that the return of three year veteran Dan Bouwmeester, who has only just begun skating after undergoing an off-season shoulder operation, will further bolster the defence. Bouwmeester isn't expected to return until after Christmas, however.

In the meantime as the defence continues to come along slowly but surely, the presence of Carlyle on the blueline is a key factor in Golden Bear hopes for success, as is the stellar play of Richardson between the pipes and the high scoring of the forwards. This should make for an interesting pair of games at Varsity Arena on Friday and Saturday nights, as the Bears pit their offensive strength against the veteran defensive play of the Dinosaurs. Game time for both contests is 8:00 p.m.

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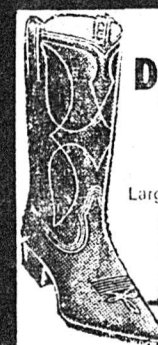
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