

Football Preview

Offence a question mark

by Ajay Bhardwaj

The burning question about the football team's offense is can it be as good as the defense? If the Bears 18-9 loss to UBC last week is any indication it may not be.

Since the offense was able to run the ball well last year, there will be a great of play action this year. "We want to establish the run," said quarterback Aaron Smith, who may be red-shirted this year since he was injured in an exhibition game.

With Smith out for the season, Jeff Steinberg becomes the starting quarterback. "He's experienced and he's a good athlete," said head coach Jim Donlevy. "He's a real team person. He's not a complete quarterback but then who is?" Rookie Rob Taylor becomes the backup. "He was poised against Saskatchewan," said Donlevy.

Kris Thorsteinson and Kent Kern will start in a young backfield (between the two of them they have three years of experience). Freshman Robin Mead and second



year man Christian Perron are the backups.

Fourth year slotback Stephen Camp leads the receiving corps. Tight end Jason Whaley and flankers Mark Tobert (a freshman) and Darryl Szafranski round out the pass catchers. "We're going to spread the ball around," said Donlevy. "there won't be any stars," he

said referring to the receivers.

The offensive line averages only 223 pounds and has a little less than three years experience on the average. "Last year they progressed week by week," said Donlevy. "They all worked hard in the off season too." Added Gino Fracas, the receivers coach, "the offensive line should get a plus-plus for their performance last week." The line allowed just one sack.

"This team has a good offense and it's going to be okay. Right now we have injuries to a few strategic positions like slotback and quarterback," said Fracas. "We had trouble executing our plan last week, but there will be a nice progression week by week."

Punting and placekicking is in the capable hands of fifth year man Steve Kasowski. Linebacker Mark Singer is capable of handling these as is freshman John Cutler. Cornerbacks Trent Brown and Todd Matheson have been charged with returning punts.

The Coach's Homecoming

by Ajay Bhardwaj

Gino Fracas is back to where it all began. And he's quite sentimental about it, too. Fracas returns as the receivers coach of the Golden Bears football team.

"I'm happy to come here," said Fracas. "I spent twelve happy years here (1955-1967) and all of my kids were born here."

The likeable and jovial Fracas began his football career at Western Ontario playing both offence and defense. He carried the ball as a running back and he stopped running backs as a linebacker for the Mustangs. Twice he won the scoring title (he was also a kicker) and he was a three time all star.

The first pick in an exclusively East division draft in 1955, Fracas decided to come west instead. "Pop Ivy (the legendary coach of the Eskimos) convinced me to come to Edmonton with (Don) Getty."

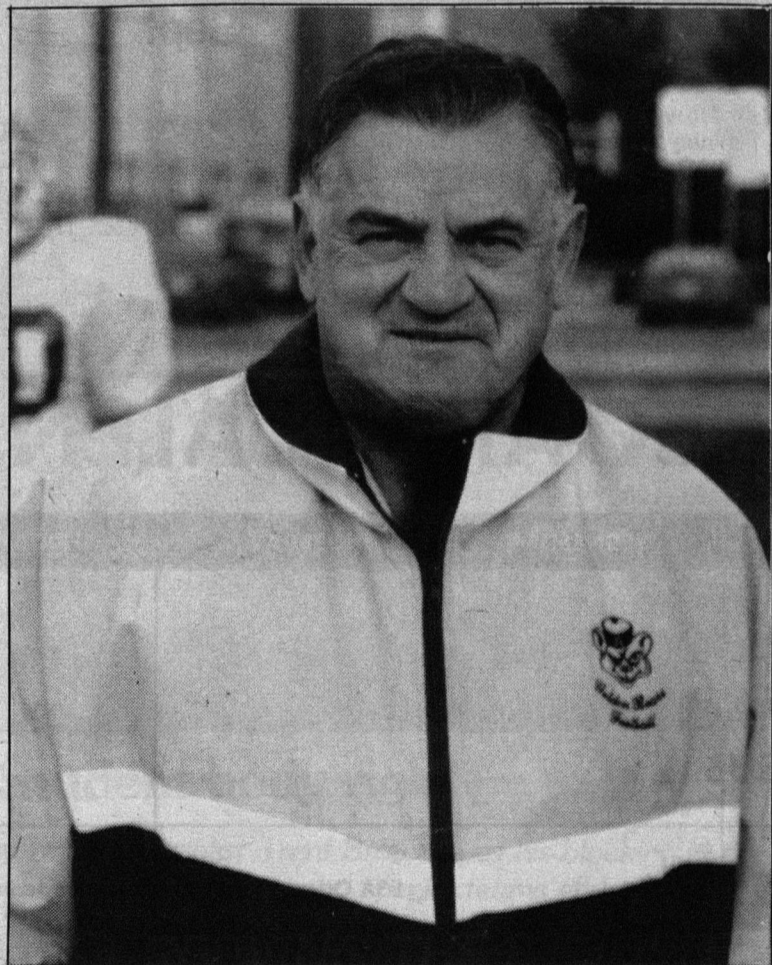
In his rookie season Fracas found himself behind Normie Kwong and John Bright on the Eskimo running back depth chart. When he broke his leg in a game against Saskatchewan he decided to play linebacker instead. He basked in the glory of Grey Cup in 1955 and 1956.

"That was a real family," said Fracas, "a real close knit group. Everyone pulled for each other."

Fracas became the defensive captain for the 1961-62 and '62-'63 seasons. "It was a real honor because I was selected captain by the players."

Fracas became the Head Coach of the Bears football in 1963 after his playing days had ended. He had joined the faculty of physical education in 1960, while still playing for the Eskimos. He enjoyed a great deal of success, winning the unofficial national championship in 1963 in a win over Queen's and losing in the first College Bowl to Toronto in 1965.

In 1967 Fracas shocked a lot of people by leaving to start the football program at the University of Windsor. "The reason I left was because of my parents," he said. "I was an only child and my wife and I



Gino Fracas: Clare Drake was a football assistant for this man

had five kids. (My parents) were aching to see my children."

After a twenty-two year hiatus, Fracas returns to Alberta as a "distinguished visitor." He will be lecturing and coaching until November and then will return to Windsor in January where he is a Professor of Human Kinetics.

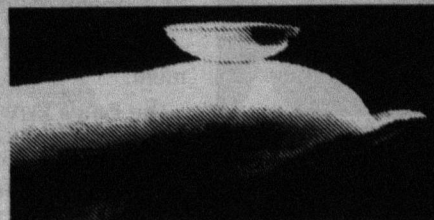
He's written a book called *Basic Football Fundamentals - A Simple Biomechanical Approach*. "It took me five years to write, it's the only book of its kind," said Fracas.

Fracas' football philosophy can be seen in today's CFL: a variety of formations, a lot of movement, and simplicity. "Nothing changes line-blocking," said Fracas. "We try to keep it simple for the offense and complex for the defense." That, however, is only Fracas' philosophy, not John Belmont's, the offensive coordinator.

For now Fracas will work within Belmont's philosophy. But he is happy to be here. "I'm happy now," he says, "the way I look at it, I started my coaching career and I'll finish it here."

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