

Gord Stech

It is wake up time for the Eskimos

In Tears
I was saddened over the last few weeks to learn that the Edmonton Eskimos have suddenly contracted football amnesia and can't even remember how to tie their cleats, let alone play. If people are questioning the Esk's playoff chances to inspire a team wake-up call, it's unnecessary.

Granted, the '87 Esk's crystal ball hasn't looked that clear for the last month, and boy would it have looked even more foggy than a HWY 2 on a field burning day had team Esk lost to Ottawa last Saturday.

However, Eskie-doubters, please consider that the team started like sheep last season, imitated Tyrannosaurus Rex's through the Western Final, then finished like plankton in the Grey Cup.

I submit that if the Green and Gold knew at the beginning of this season that only 2 teams were to make the playoffs, that is, the top

team in the West and East respectively, advances directly to the Grey Cup, the Esk's would be easily won the West with 3 more wins to their credit.

I know the current CFL playoff structure is traditional and also paramount for fan interest, but ANY league that lets 75% of its teams qualify for its championship deems its regular season. In Major League baseball and in the NFL, you must win regular games to ENTER the playoffs. In the CFL, NHL, and NBA you must win regular games strictly if you want home advantage, since you've practically made the playoffs from the start. If you have a decent team and feel like coasting through a season then taking your chances on the road in the playoffs, you still have a decent shot at winning it all.

Other than a relatively unfamiliar secondary, Esk personnel is very similar to last year's, except this group is hungrier, healthier, and wiser.

The only questions are: 1) Can they time the mental roller-coaster they've put themselves on to reach an apex on Nov. 29? and 2) Have the players adjusted to a new coach who, as good as he is, may not yet have established the same coach-player rapport that Parker did? Uh, make that a double yes.

A Couple Things...

The Eskimos have quietly become the most shoot-out happy team in CFL history. Their average game this season was a 34-26 win.

Could some people please can the hype for all the records that have been broken in the CFL over the last few years. With the leagues current schedule of 18 games, players now have 2 more games to accomplish seasonal records, and are not surprisingly doing this. A lot.

A (Green and) Silver Lining
As dangerous as James "Cro-

Magnon" Curry is to the health of CFL QBs, God only knows how badly the league needs more players of outspoken Curry's character.

Curry is the Saskatchewan Roughrider defensive whacko, uh, I mean tackle who scours food aisles in grocery stores in search of a breakfast cereal called "Quarter back Bits."

As CFL QBs continue to be hospitalized after games against Saskatchewan, the CFL must certainly curtail Curry's quarterback consumption. However with all the punnelling the CFL's image absorbs, a player with the ability to draw such attention and create such controversy is, in a way, a breath of fresh PR air.

Wanna Step Outside?

Alright all you CFL-bashers, if all of you don't take your fickle little hands off that pathetic CFL battering ram, I, Gord Stech, will **OUTSIDE** — p.15



The Bears Sid Cranston hopes to dent some twine this weekend against Calgary.

Photo Rob Galbraith

Battle of Alberta

by Alan Small

It's time for another Battle of Alberta.

This one will have a hint of varsity flavor to it, whatever that tastes like, as the U of A Golden Bears hockey club goes down to the Olympic city to take on the University of Calgary Dinosaurs.

The Dinosaur club they play will be essentially the same as the one that finished Canada West league play in the number one spot, with a record of 23-5.

One notable name missing from the Dino lineup this year is Paul Geddes, who led the conference in scoring last year with 69 points in 26 games, a new CIAU record.

It's not as if they miss him, as the Dinos are right up there with the Bears and the Saskatchewan Huskies in goals scored so far. Ken Vingie, who had 52 points last year, is certainly no slouch, while a new player, Terry Houlder, was player of the week a couple of weeks ago with two shorthanded goals in one game.

The Bears will have to come up with a better performance than they did last weekend against Brandon. If they don't Calgary will still be unbeaten, while the Golden Bears' equipment bags will be two losses heavier.

The rivalry is there. The Bears and the Dinos are perennial playoff clubs, and are often at each other's throats. Last year, Calgary was angry over Alberta's automatic bye into the nationals because they were the hosts. One could say that Alberta took Calgary's spot last year when Calgary lost in the Canada West final to Saskatchewan.

But Calgary won't have that to say this year, as the University of Toronto is hosting the finals, so whoever makes it to the nationals will have to work for it. It seems doubtful in the light of cutbacks that too many wild card clubs will be invited.

Some fast paced action will be seen in Calgary this weekend. They'll be playing in the Olympic sized Father David Arena, which will accentuate the fast, fitness part of the game rather than the grind-it-out chippy style that tends to happen in college hockey.

FACE OFFS: Calgary coach **George Kingston** has also been in charge of the hockey program in the **Winter Olympics** for this February... Calgary is 8-0 while the Bears are holed up in second with a 6-1-1 mark... The Bears lead the conference in goals against, as they have only let in 31 in the first eight games of the schedule, an average of a little less than four a game.

Canada West sports notebook

by Alan Small

THE U OF A ISN'T THE ONLY PLACE to deserve the term "cut-back ranch." Wilfrid Laurier University has cut some of their varsity teams this summer. Wrestling, men's tennis, women's cross country running, and skiing were dropped. Just like at the U of A, Wilfrid Laurier student athletes claim they weren't consulted about the cuts.

UPDATE ON VICTORIA ALUMNI HOOP. Almost unbelievably, the Victoria Vikings defeated their alumni, 114-109. That doesn't bode well for the other teams in Canada West. They have national teamer

Cord Clemens returning from academic ineligibility, along with sophomore Spencer McKay to make Canada's version of the "Twin Towers." Saskatchewan will not be



an easy victory at all this season, as Don Horwood's roundballers found out last weekend. Reports from Saskatoon say their entire starting lineup is in their fifth year

of eligibility. The Calgary Dinosaurs look to be in the same shape as the Golden Bears. Only three players remain from last year's club, meaning John Vigna, their all-star guard, will be watched very carefully this season. Don't expect too much from the UBC T-Birds b-ball club, after losing both of their starting guards Paul Johansson and Kevin Hanson, to graduation. They also lost Aaron Point, another starter and look to do a lot of perimeter shooting this season. That's the way they looked against the Brisbane Bullets, Australia's top semi-pro club, on a western coast tour. UBC lost to them by 30 points.

NOTEBOOK — p.14

Swimmers break the ice this weekend

by Carolyn Aney

The west pool is going to be the happening place for the Canadian national swimming scene this Saturday. The University of Alberta in conjunction with Standard Life Assurance Co. is hosting the first annual Standard Life Colleges Cup Swim Meet.

Competing in this meet will be the top six Canadian university swim teams: U of Alberta, U of British Columbia, U of Calgary, Laval University, U of Toronto and U of Victoria. These teams will be bringing 126 athletes to the U of A

campus. Among these athletes will be 32 current and former international swimmers, 10 of whom were Olympians.

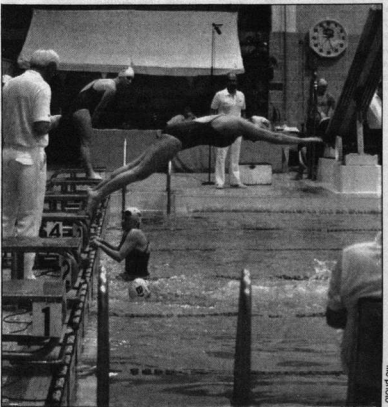
Although attempts have been made to coordinate a meet of this calibre in the past, recent funding changes on the part of the Canadian Amateur Swimming Association (C.A.S.A.), the CIAU and Sport Canada have allowed these teams to afford to attend an extra meet of this magnitude. There is \$3000 in prize money available for the teams on Saturday. \$50 for every win, \$750 for first overall, \$350 for second, \$150 for third. The money is designated for the swimming programs

at each university.

The meet will contain a full complement of events. However some of the entry requirements will require each university to develop strategies to ensure the best overall point total.

Unfortunately the University of Alberta does not have adequate facilities to host a national championship meet. An invitational meet of this nature will be the closest the U of A gets to top quality swimming on a national level.

The meet will be on in two sessions. The morning competition will begin at 10:00 a.m. and the evening portion at 6:00 p.m.



Bear & Panda swimmers will be diving for dollars at the Colleges Cup on Saturday.