

University of Alberta Golden Bears

Stories by Mark Spector and Blaine Ostapovich

The 1984 edition of the Alberta Golden Bear football team was an excellent squad. The program reached its peak with a 7-1 record, good for first place in the WIFL.

Consequently, 1985 is somewhat of a rebuilding year. The Bears lost approximately 50 per cent of that first place club, and now will attempt to fill those gaps while still

fielding a competitive football team. Under head coach Jim Donlevy, here is a look at the 1985 edition of the Alberta Golden Bears.

Quarterbacks

Key Losses — The only loss suffered at this position is that of third stringer Joel Brown. Brown is starting this season for the Edmonton Wildcats. Returning for the Bears are second year man Mark Denesiuk and fourth year veteran Darren Brezden.

New Additions — The only new quarterback in camp this year is Kevin Molcak. Molcak comes to Alberta after spending two years at Michigan State University in which he saw no playing time. For that reason he will not have to sit out (redshirting) a year before being allowed to play in Canada. Originally from Cardston Alberta, Kevin is said to have a shotgun for an arm. He will see limited action this season but should challenge in the future.

Strengths — Darren Brezden has one of the strongest arms in the

country according to coach Kennerd, and his three years of experience will stand him in good stead. Last season Brezden passed for 636 yards, completing 30 of 78 attempts. He is not a running threat. Mark Denesiuk is the Tom Wilkinson prototype QB. A "touch control" type passer, Denesiuk has more poise and emotional control than Brezden, and last year's stats mirror that. Denesiuk had a passing percentage of 53, completing 89 of 168 for 1317 yards. He is not known for his running ability either.

Weaknesses — Simple. This offense is just not scoring enough points. Alberta has scored a grand total of only 50 points in their first three contests. A 17 point average is simply not enough for a team that allows 29 points a game. Also, too many interceptions have plagued this tandem so far this year. Couple

that with too many bad reads and it is evident that more mental preparation and concentration is required.

Outlook — On paper this is one of the best one-two punches around; all that is needed now is performance. Also, coach Kennerd believes in maintaining one starting quarterback and keeping the other for when the game is put out of reach. One of the two veterans must take control and establish themselves as the starter. Brezden started the season opener in Calgary, but did not impress. Until a definite starter is established, the Alberta offence will suffer from an identity crisis. The first guy that can get the ball further than the 35 yard line consistently will get the job. Overall though, a pretty strong area of the club.

Receivers

Key Losses — The Bears leading receiver in '84, Scott Smith, is gone along with Darcy Berger.

New Additions — Brian Cable is out of the Edmonton Wildcats and he will back up at both tight-end and wingback. He is a big boy and a good blocker.

Strengths — flanker Danny Rousseau is an excellent receiver, he is also the all-time leading punt return

man for Alberta, so obviously he can run with it once he catches it. Tom Richards is a fine wingback who will also take the ball on the wing-sweep handoff. Tim Hamblin was second on the team in receiving last year, and returns to his flanker position. Darwin Schweitzer is a big tight-end that can hold on to the ball when it comes his way. Dave Bolstad will replace Smith this

year and will not look out of place.

Weaknesses — None. Another strong offensive area.

Outlook — Just another case of lots of returning veterans on the offensive side of the ball. The Bears will need a good passing attack so that defenses cannot key on their running game. If the quarterbacks can keep up their end of the bargain, the receiving corps will be just fine.

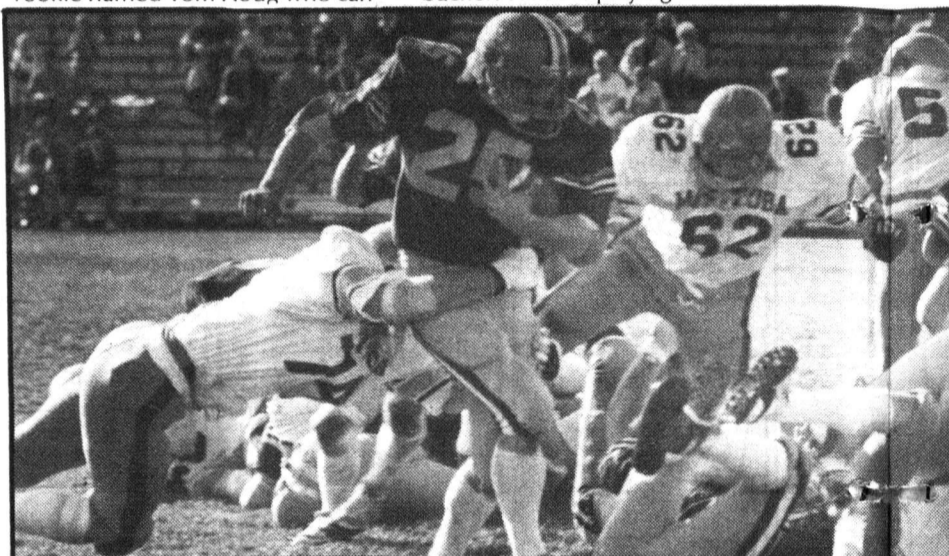
Running Backs

Key Losses — It is not really key nor is it unexpected, but Andrez Obodzinski will not play this season. He came out of Austin O'Brien last year with more hype and expectations than Funtasz and then proceeded to blow out his knee on the final day of the '84 training camp. When his knee had not improved quite enough for this year he had to make the decision between football and walking.

New Additions — A rookie named George Pinder out of Ross Shepard High. Pinder has already come across some knee problems however, and is sitting out. And another rookie named Tom Houg who can

back up at either RB position.

Strengths — Jeff Funtasz at halfback and Corrado Fillice at fullback. Easily the best pair of backs in the west, if not in the whole county. Funtasz was rookie of the year in the CIAU last season, led the Bears in scoring with 13 TDs for 78 points, in rushing with 939 yards on 168 attempts for a 5.6 yard average, and was the Bears most effective weapon by a long shot. Fillice made all of these accomplishments possible. Drafted in '84 by the Calgary Stampeders, he is the best blocking back around and likes nothing better than to put the screws to an opposing line-backer. Fillice is playing in his fifth



Jeff Funtasz — count on him to see the ball less this year. Fillice will do more than just block.

Offensive Line

Key Losses — WIFL all-star guard Terry Koch anchored this line last year which led Funtasz to CIAU Rookie of the year honors. Along with Ben Der that makes both starting guards from a year ago lost to graduation. Second year tackle Dan Aloisio has been shifted over to the defensive line.

New Additions — Murray McKay sat out last season but returns this year as the starting center. Rookie Dave McKinnon out of Salisbury High will backup at both center and guard, while second year man Andrew Stephen should see more action this season but will have to prove himself.

Strengths — In the persons of Harold Reimer (tackle) and Murray

McKay. These are two solid linemen with lots of experience. Reimer is a born-again Christian and must ingest a steady diet of "meanness" pills in order to be a successful tackle instead of just your ordinary nice guy. McKay has no problem there... he is always mean. Jay Wood, Blair Wood, and Dan Denesiuk are all third year players and round out one of the better O-lines in the WIFL.

Weaknesses — Not many. Only one rookie and he will not be forced into action prematurely, hopefully.

Outlook — All that this line needs is some game time together for them to gel as a unit. They are good now, and will be great later.

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