

Randal Smathers

The Golden Bears football program is an embarrassment to the University of Alberta, U of A Athletics, and its own tradition.

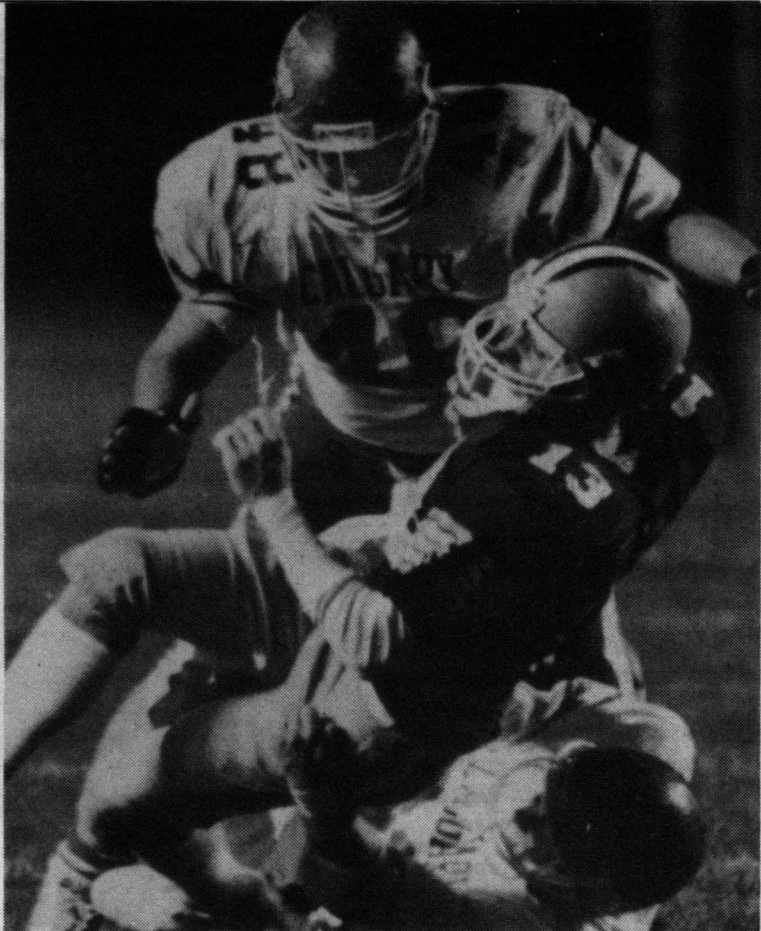
As the biggest school in the Canada West conference, with an enormous Athletics program, and a football history going back over 60 years, Alberta football should be, if not a powerhouse, then at least competitive.

For two of the last three years, that has not been the case. In '86, the Bears went 1-7, then last year they won a couple close games to finish 5-3, before slumping to a 0-4 start again this year. This kind of record is simply *not good enough*.

The repercussions go beyond this year. Local athletes, once drawn by the strength of the Bear program, are starting to look elsewhere, including the States.

The lack of fan support is also a negative influence: who wants to play in front of 2 percent of the student body? On the other hand, who wants to watch a losing team?

What, then, is the problem with Bears football? Like head coach Jim Donlevy says, if I knew what was wrong, it could be fixed.



Bear punt returner Trent Brown is mowed down by the Calgary coverage unit.

Although I don't have any final answers, a few things stand out.

Team morale: in a year of dissension, the coaching staff will have to try hard to convince the players that all the work involved in being a student athlete is worth it. *Bear Pride* is a sorry joke after Friday's Shrine Bowl debacle.

The offense: many of the offense's problems come from having a young team, but play

selection has to be less predictable. Donlevy should be calling all the plays, instead of making his quarterbacks do it.

Preparation: in all four losses this year, their opponents have been better prepared than the Bears, with better game plans, more intensity, and better execution.

Obviously the Bears are not doing their job on the field. Equally important, the coaches are not doing theirs off of it.

Rob Galbraith

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