

Sports

Late kick keeps Bears from win column

Randal Smathers



This is to congratulate the Golden Bear football team and their fans. No, I'm not being facetious.

I know the Bears lost, again, on Saturday, and now are 0-7 for the year. I know they drew under 1,000 fans a game this year. But both groups should still be proud.

At mid-season in this space I said that Bear pride was dead, and at the time it was. The team had just dropped out of even the most improbable playoff scenario by getting thrashed at home by Calgary. Game five looked like more of the same at halftime, as the Dinos had dominated the second quarter and looked to run away with the game.

In the second half, the Bears turned around their season. They beat Calgary every which way but on the scoreboard. Last week in Saskatchewan they scared the bejesus out of the other first place team, the Huskies.

On Saturday they played probably their best game of the year. They showed consistent effort throughout, and only a last second field goal beat them: the result of a drive engineered by the top QB in western Canada, Jordan Gagner. That kind of performance is no disgrace.

One more performance that solid should get the Bears a good win against Manitoba to end their year. I hope it does, because they deserve it.

If the Bears return some of their four-year players for one more try, they should be a much improved squad next year.

The fans can't get any better. There could be more of them, but the ones that show up are great.

At the end of the UBC game, they were yelling, "Block that kick." Corny, but earnest.

The night before, I was watching the Oilers get pounded with the all-time champion bandwagon jumper, and the contrast was ugly. When the Oilers lost their second game in a row, it was all over: the team was beneath support.

This is the kind of fan support that the Vancouver Canucks are so familiar with: wild when you win, but nowhere when you lose.

Toronto Maple Leaf fans or Chicago Cubs fans cheer for their teams so solidly because their teams are such loveable losers, but they are the exceptions. Such die-hards make it easier for their favorites, but they're still preferable to my pal the team switcher.

If that was the attitude of Bear fans, there would have been more media than fans out on Saturday. The fact that 600 people showed up for an oh-and-whatever team says a lot, and all of it good.

Take a bow, folks.

by Alan Small
UBC 22 Alberta 20

Wounded bears are the wrong thing to run into in the wilderness. The UBC T-Birds faced Tom Houg, and an unpredictable, banged-up Bear defence and barely escaped with their playoff lives.

It took a 22 yard field goal by Mike Bellefontaine with 11 seconds left in the contest to get the T-Birds out of the woods on Saturday.

Twice in the fourth quarter did Bear interceptions delay what was to be the inevitable. Both Bear cornerback Trent Brown and linebacker Mark Singer picked off UBC's Jordan Gagner on the Bear goal line.

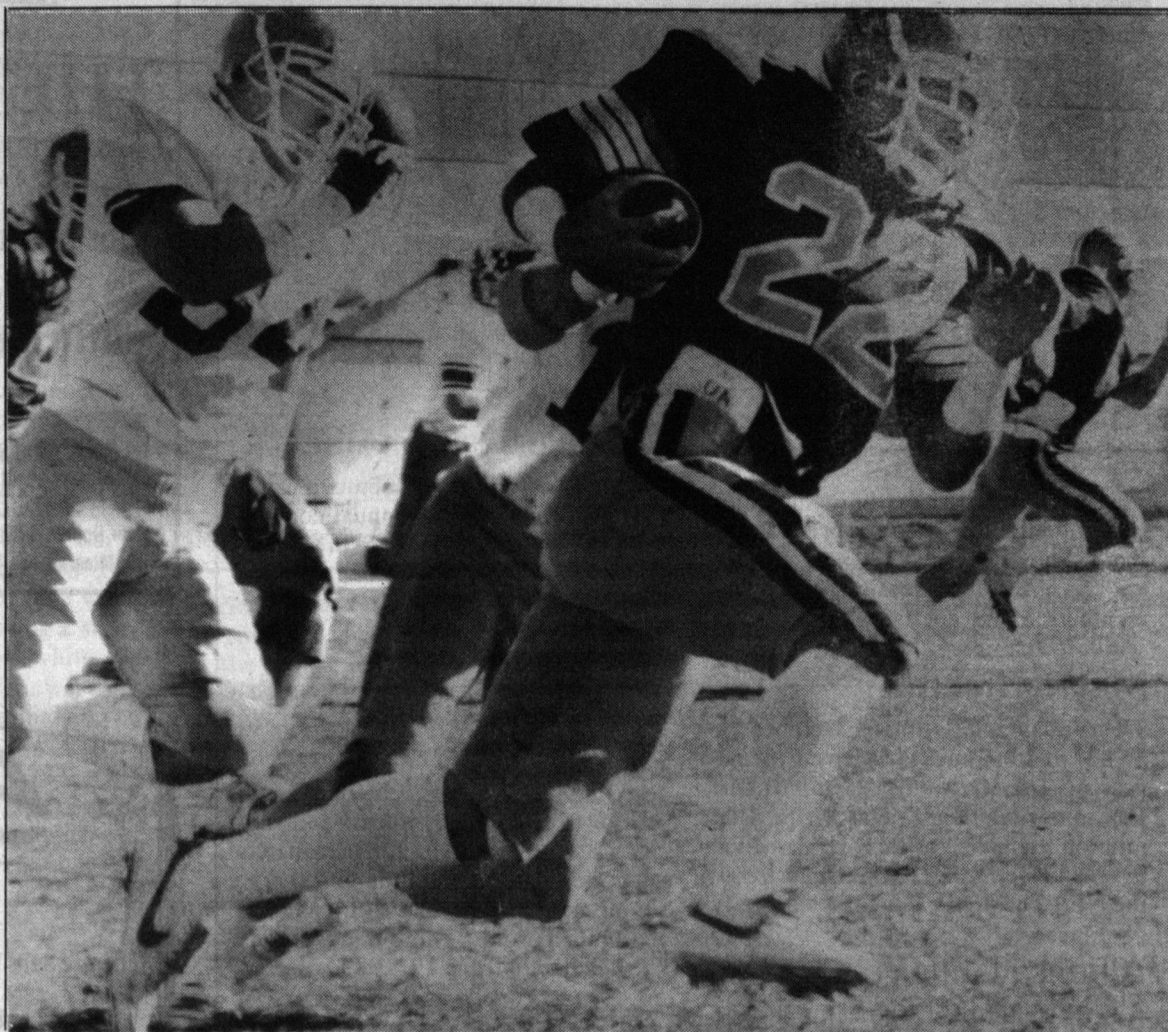
It was third time lucky for the T-Birds however, as they moved from their 19 to the Bear 15 in 14 plays, the most important of which was a 22 yard pass from Gagner to receiver Todd Wickman on second-and-20. Gagner and running back Jim Stewart were all the T-Birds needed to hustle into Bellefontaine's field goal range.

The final drive overshadowed a great game by Houg, who ran for 229 yards and one touchdown. The major was on an individual effort by the senior, who burst through the line and broke at least three tackles on the 24 yard romp.

"They (UBC) must have gone crazy all week trying to stop Tommy Houg," said Bear head coach Jim Donlevy.

Donlevy also gave kudos to the defence which intercepted Gagner five times (nine times this season). They bent but did not break as they allowed most of Gagner's 345 yards between the 20 yard lines. Singer was making big tackles and both Lenard Sawatzky and Rick Medcke played well while they were hurt.

"There's a couple of guys playing out there in excruciating pain," said Donlevy. "We'd have to put a bullet in Lenard to prevent him



WFL player of the week Tom Houg (22) sweeps past UBC lineman Troy Van Vliet.

from playing today. Rick came off one time after we stopped them close and he was crying in pain. And he's no wimp."

"It's worth it," said Sawatzky, about playing in pain. "These guys are going to be your buddies for the rest of your life. You have to sacrifice."

Bear kicker Steve Kasowski had his best game of the year, as he punted for a 45.6 yard average and consistently pinned the T-Birds in their own end. He was two-for-three on field goals but it will be the one that got away that will haunt him.

Early in the fourth quarter, a

bad snap to holder Aaron Smith caused a blocked kick by UBC defensive back James Dawson. If Kasowski made the field goal, the T-Birds then must score a touchdown instead of a field goal to win.

"It (the ball) went to Aaron's right," said Kasowski. "Christian (Perron) had a long day and he was tired. Aaron didn't have time to put the ball down. That's what it all came down to."

Although the Bear running game was successful, quarterbacks Aaron Smith and Jeff Steinberg tossed as many interceptions as completions, and Steinberg, who

played the whole second half, didn't complete a pass in the last 30 minutes of the ball game. To his credit, however, Steinberg tossed the other Bear touchdown, a nine yard pass to Darryl Szafranski.



1st Quarter
ALTA FG Kasowski 36, 1:51
UBC FG Bellefontaine 13, 7:37
ALTA TD Szafranski 9 yd pass from Steinberg (Kasowski convert), 11:08
UBC TD Stewart 1 yd run (Bellefontaine convert), 13:19

2nd Quarter
UBC TD Vlasic 4 yd pass from Gagner (Bellefontaine convert) 1:46
ALTA FG Kasowski 32, 12:33

3rd Quarter
UBC Single Bellefontaine 62, 2:56
ALTA TD Houg 24 yd run (Kasowski convert), 7:42
UBC Single Bellefontaine 30, 12:02

4th Quarter
UBC FG Bellefontaine 22, 14:49

UBC 10 7 2 3 -22
ALTA 10 3 7 0 -20

YARDSTICKS		
	UBC	Alta.
First Downs	24	15
Rushing	196	280
Passing	345	27
Net Offence	529	306
Passing C-A	24-39	3-16
Punts-Avg.	8-39.2	10-45.6
Pen.-Yds	5-40	6-30
Fumbles-lost	2-1	1-0
Interceptions	3	5



UBC and UVic battle in the Butterdome. The Panda field hockey team finished fourth in the five team tourney.

Randal Smathers

Randal Smathers