

## New roles for defenceman Bozek

by Randal Smathers

When the Bears hockey team travels to Brandon this weekend, the plane will be carrying a new-found offensive defenceman. After a baker's dozen of games this year, Darwin Bozek has three goals and nine assists.

That might not sound like much production, but compared with Bozek's career numbers of seven goals and 25 assists in 88 games (six and 20 in 49 games last year), they're pretty impressive.

With the loss of defencemen Parie Proft and Brent Severyn from last year's squad, Bozek's attitude is that "Someone's got to get the play started." Like all Bear defencemen, Bozek is taught to

"I don't consider myself to have the nicest hands in the league." —  
Bozek

"make the easy play" where possible.

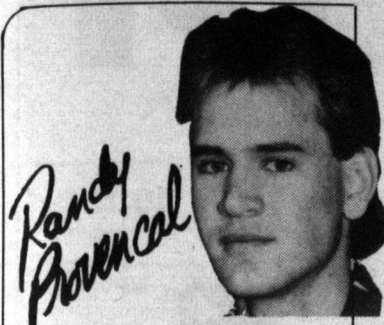
Bozek did that last year, but has added some rushing with the puck and some powerplay time to his offensive arsenal this year. "I'm driving for the net more," he said, "The coach says we have the best-skating team in the league... we work on it in practices."

With the presence of stellar offensive defencemen like Proft and Severyn last year, Bozek's steady defensive play often got overlooked by media and fans — but not Darwin's teammates: he was chosen as assistant captain this year. "That was a big surprise



The Bears dehorned Lethbridge last week. This weekend, they travel to Brandon to face the Bobcats.

Iain Williams



Can penguins really fly? Just ask Mario Lemieux, he'll tell you. Better yet, he'll show you.

The fifth year Pittsburgh Penguin is off to his fastest start ever — one of the quickest in NHL history — as he has 31 points on 15 goals and 16 assists, and that's only in eight games.

The point total he has amassed thus far puts him in an early lead for the scoring title, with a ten point edge over Wayne Gretzky.

But is Lemieux for real?

At present, his point total comes close to four points per game. He represents close to 60% of Penguin scoring. Obviously no mere mortal could possibly continue at such a torrid pace. Gretzky, probably the closest thing to God on skates, amassed 215 points in 80 games in 1985-86. When he accomplished that feat, no one believed it could be surpassed.

You gotta believe in Lemieux. After becoming only the second player in NHL history to score more than 152 points last season, Lemieux shows no signs of



slowing down. He doesn't seem to be content on resting on his laurels; he wants to improve them.

That is more than evident in his quick start this year.

Even so, many expect Lemieux to self-destruct, whether it be in the form of an injury or from fatigue, because, in all honesty, few think he can last the entire season.

Lemieux's early performance demands instant respect and recognition from the hockey world.

I'll admit I've never been a firm believer in Lemieux. When he was scouted six years ago as being 'as good as Gretzky', I scoffed at the idea. As good as Gretzky? C'mon. Who are they trying to kid?

Even after his 168 point showing last year over 77 games, giving him the scoring title, he still hadn't earned much respect. Often heard were "well, if Gretzky had played the whole year..." and "he's not the most valuable player in the league unless he gets his team into the playoffs."

Bull.

The Pittsburgh Penguins may not qualify for post season play in April. But if Lemieux shatters the record books with 250 points (yes, it is entirely possible), does the league deny him MVP status? I think not.

Mario Lemieux has indeed made me believe that penguins do fly.

## Pride, basement on line in finale

by Alan Small

A pair of basement roommates will battle for the lower bunk Saturday when the Manitoba Bisons host the Golden Bears in Winnipeg.

The Bisons have one win, the Bears don't. That Bison win was against the Bears, in a 21-17 barn burner in the third week of the season.

The Bears can pull themselves out of the basement with a five point victory over the Bisons.

"It would make some worth out of a tough year," said Bear cornerback Todd Matheson.

The Bears will also try to fulfill some personal goals in this, their final game of 1988. Tom Houg, who leads the CIAU in rushing, needs 245 yards to break 1000. Although the Bears won't build their game plan for it, they will use Houg's ability at rushing the

it's the first time since minor hockey in Stettler."

Bozek's captaincy has changed his attitude somewhat, "Before, I wouldn't speak out that much. I tried to prove myself on the ice, but now I'm talking more."

Bozek's powerplay time is also

a throwback to minor hockey days. The big (6'1", 185 lb) defenceman saw limited powerplay time in his first two years with the Golden Bears, and in his two years with Red Deer College before that. He drew assists on four of six goals the Bears scored with a man advantage this past

weekend against Lethbridge. "I just try and get the puck to our forwards and let them work with it. They're so good."

His newfound scoring touch hasn't changed Bozek's attitude about himself though: "I don't consider myself to have the nicest hands in the league."

Medcke, "and give the guys who will be here next year something to look forward to."

One of the players who won't be here is fifth year defensive back Quinn Weninger. Saturday's game will be the last one for him in the evergreen and gold.

"The goal for me this season was to go out on a good note," said the Kelowna native, "getting a win would do that. We've been close in nearly every game."

The final game will have the Bears going back to the basics.

"We're going to go out there and have fun and play football," says Donlevy. Donlevy is hoping that the Bears have more fun than any game this season. To do that, they would have to put a win on the board.

"Nobody wants to finish last," said Matheson, "that's why they'll (Manitoba) be going hard too."

## Small Notes

On the road again... All the varsity teams competing now are on the road for this weekend. The Golden Bear soccer team goes to face Victoria and UBC, the football team travels to Winnipeg with the men's basketball squad, the Bear volleyball team goes to Vancouver for the Thunderball tourney, the hockey team travels to Brandon to take on the Bobcats, and finally, the Panda field hockey team goes to Vancouver for the final Canada West tournament.

The University of Alberta

will honor the new inductees to the Sports Wall of Fame today at 12:30 at the Molson House. Oiler defenceman, and wall of fame member Dr. Randy Gregg will do the official unveiling. This is the fourth year the U of A will honor its past athletes.

The western football player of the week is Calgary's J. P. Izquierdo, who rushed for 244 yards in Calgary's 61-5 win over the Saskatchewan Huskies. That lifted the Dinosaurs into first place in the WIFL.