

Bears becalm Nor 'Westers

by Karl Wilberg

Often statistical records are misleading. However, on Sunday at Clark Stadium, the Lakehead Nor'Westers lived up to their status as a strong defense team with little scoring power. The Bears-Nor'Westers soccer game, first in a three level CIAU play-off series, was a flat-out battle between Lakehead's mid-field and the Bears attack. The Bears won 3-1 but an inconsistent offense, and the Lakehead defense, prevented a higher score.

The Bears have used a 4-4-2 arrangement for much of the season. However, it became apparent two strikers were not enough to keep play in opposing territory. Consequently, the coaching staff, Peter Esdale and Bob Halpern, moved Lorenzo Antonello to the front line. The Bear's attack improved and Sunday was kept alive by this 4-4-3 set-up.

The first half saw the Nor'Wester's midfielders, in particular Ken Hirschfeldt, using their height advantage to win loose and air balls. Often in the first half Alberta goalkeeper Bill Akam would send kicks to center field only to have the Lakehead midfield gather the ball and start another attack.

In spite of a good midfield, the Nor'Westers could not continue the offensive. Kent Fargy

and Marc Olivieri must take credit for the Alberta defense's continued nullification of the Lakehead offense. In fact, Fargy went so far as to play goalkeeper for an out of position Bill Akam.

In spite of the veteran Lakehead defense, the Bear's attack did create scoring chances. About eight minutes into the game Marc Olivieri headed a crossing ball past keeper Steve Reitter. In addition, Rob Mosele and Rudy Bartholemew's kicks encouraged Reitter to move rapidly and stay warm.

Interestingly the Nor'Wester's defense changed from a zone at midfield to man-to-man in their end and was quick to intercept passes and players. The Bears could create chances only by using the flanks and quick plays.

Until the last 20 minutes the Nor'Westers hindered Bear efforts to push up. However, they could not respond, in spite of hard work from forward Dave Patterson, with a coherent attack.

At this time the Bears began pressuring Lakehead. Their efforts were rewarded during a rush down the Nor'Wester flank. Rob Mosele booted a Rudy Bartholemew pass into the net's low left corner. The Bears began to settle down, played aggressively and created more chances than at any other time



Phil Webb continually outmuscled Lakehead defenders. In spite of him the Bear's offense was inconsistent.

photo Jim Connell

during the match.

In particular, Phil Webb and Antonello recklessly pursued the ball. Webb strengthened the Alberta flank and Antonello fought to keep play in the Ontario end. If the Bears managed to beat the Ontario midfield a scoring chance was likely.

However, the second half showed a different situation.

Lakehead coach Ron McKechney must have boosted his team's morale during half time. In the second half Lakehead's attack had more focus and the Bears could not clear the ball. The Bears were playing lazily and were saved largely by their defense. Consequently, the Lakehead midfielder, 15 minutes into the half, scored after a 40 yard penalty kick. Midfielder John Barric pushed the ball past a net mouth swarm to close the score 2-1.

Alberta slowly responded to the threatening situation with Webb and Antonello throwing themselves around and working the Ontario defense.

In spite of their efforts, the Lakehead squad almost evened the score. Mike Roddy struck Akam's cross-bar and soon after Olivieri took over for an Akam who had been drawn out by a Lakehead forward.

In spite of small numbers fans kept up a persistent background noise. The cheering reached a level completely out of proportion with the numbers when a rush by Ase Ayobahan was finished by an Antonello goal. In spite of the 3-1 score Lakehead did not give up, however the remaining 14 minutes were too few.

After the match coach Esdale claimed the Bears could have had "five goals in the first half". In explanation for the missed opportunities Esdale cited youth and a lack of self-confidence.

In any case real credit for the victory goes to the young team. Esdale believes they "haven't peaked yet" and he may be right. The Bears can be a sharp team and if they peak their next opponents, the Toronto Blues, will play a tough team. The match will be played in semi-darkness this Thursday at 7:00 pm in Clark Stadium.

Win one, lose one

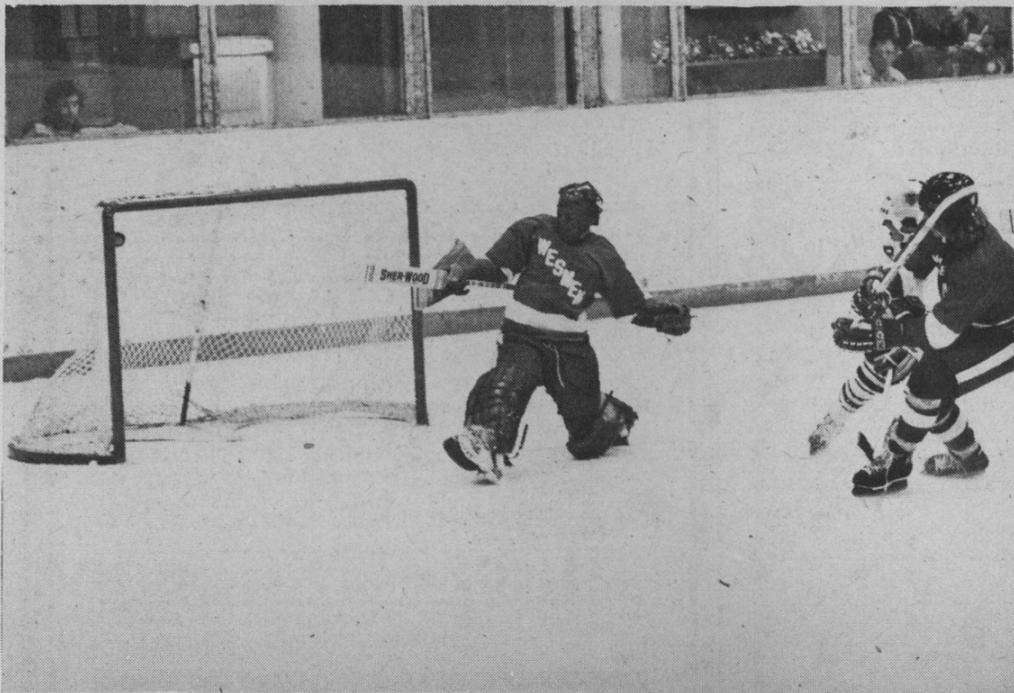


photo Brad Keith

The Bears demolished the GPAC Wesmen in the season opener. However, the West conference is proving to be tough.

by Shaune Impey

The Golden Bears hockey team suffered their first setback of the season this weekend in Vancouver. The reigning Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union (CIAU) hockey champions were upset 4-3 by a fast-skating and hard-hitting UBC Thunderbird squad in the Saturday evening contest in Vancouver. Friday night the Bears scored a 5-3 victory in overtime.

The Alberta team never really got untracked in either game as the T-Birds' tenacious forechecking combined with some good and at times lucky goaltending by UBC netminder Mark Parsons stymied the Bears' offensive efforts.

According to T-Birds'

coach Bert Halliwell, the UBC plan was "to throw it (the puck) in and go get it. We can't afford to lay back and play a tight-checking game. We need to open the game up against the Bears."

As the shots on goal would indicate (the T-Birds outshot Alberta 49-36 on Friday and 36-29 on Saturday), the plan to open up the game worked well for Halliwell.

On Friday, UBC opened the scoring in the first period with a shorthanded goal. Bears' goaltender Ted Poplawski lost a race for a loose puck at the Bears' blueline with center Bill Holowaty and watched helplessly as Holowaty fired the puck into the empty net.

The Bears started to pressure the T-Birds late in the period and came up with the

tying goal just twelve seconds from the buzzer. Danny Arndt scored from behind the net on a bank-shot off Parson's leg.

The only goal of the second period was another shorthanded marker, this time off the stick of the Bears' Joel Elliott. A wandering goaltender was again the cause as Parsons attempted to clear the puck in the corner of the rink. His pass hit the edge of the net and in the ensuing scramble back to the net Elliott rapped home a rebound off a defenceman's leg to put the Bears in front.

UBC scored twice early in the third to regain the lead. The first came on a powerplay and a good three-way passing play by the T-Birds. The second resulted from a scramble in front of the Bears' net in which

Poplawski made several close in saves.

The tying goal by the Bears came from captain Larry Riggan as he blasted a screened point-shot over the shoulder of Parsons. The goal was scored at the 10:09 mark, just twelve seconds after UBC had been called for a hooking penalty.

The overtime winner was notched by hard-working left winger Chris Hellard.

With the teams playing five aside, Hellard broke over the UBC blueline and whistled a 45 foot wrist shot along the ice into the corner of the net. Garnet Brimacombe added an insurance marker into an empty UBC net with less than a minute to play in the ten minute period.

A saddening side to the victory was the loss of right-winger Danny Arndt. He suffered a dislocated hip in the third period after taking a hard check against the boards.

Individually Ted Poplawski was the star of the game for the Bears as he made several key saves, including one from pointblank range in the overtime session to preserve the win.

In Saturday's game, the Bears were struggling all the way and were never ahead in the

contest.

UBC opened a 2-0 lead in the first period on goals by Holowaty and Matthews. Holowaty's marker came off a rebound from a scramble and Matthews scored on a deflection from the slot.

The teams traded power play goals in the second period. Jim Lomas brought the Bears within one by popping in his own rebound after a good rush down the ice. However, with Riggan sitting out a crosschecking penalty, Jay Rumley gave the T-Birds a two goal lead once again.

An unassisted effort by defenceman Dan Peacocke early in the third narrowed UBC's lead once again. Peacocke intercepted an errant T-Bird pass at center ice and broke round the UBC defence before lifting a backhand over a sprawling Parsons.

It took the T-Birds just 28 seconds to go ahead by two once again. A three-way collision between Poplawski, the Bears' defenceman Bruce Rollin, and UBC forward Rob Jones left the net unprotected and a weak point shot trickled through a maze of legs into the open cage. Lomas, on a good setup from rookie Terry Sydoryk, closed out the scoring with his second of the night.

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