Lang's save preserves Bear win

by Will Gibson

The Golden Bear soccer team scored a major victory in their quest for a playoff as they defeated the Victoria Vikings 1-0 at the Faculte St. Jean Friday afternoon.

The margin of victory was provided by the newly returned Norm Odinga as he intercepted a pass intended for the Viking keeper and drove it into the back of the net in the 52nd minute of the game. "That is what Norman does so well," Coach Len Vickery said after the game. "His being back (from the Canadian national team) is a big plus."

The first half provided a lot of action in both ends but no scoring. Bear midfielder Salvi Cammarata worked himself into good position but could not get a shot off. Victoria's Steve Cecchi had an excellent scoring opportunity as he had Bears' keeper Duwayne Lang out of position, but defender John Simon slid across and blocked his shot.

After Odinga's early second half goal, the Bears appeared to go into a defensive shell, as Bear forwards did not receive support on their rushes. Vickery later said that one extra man was being kept back. Despite these tactics, Dallas Moen, whom Vickery described as "very dangerous" made a beautiful move around Lang and had an open net. However, Victor D'Andrea blocked his shot and cleared the ball out of danger.

With six minutes left in the game, apparent disaster struck the Bears when Victoria was awarded a penalty kick. However, Lang came up big, stopping Brian Pente's kick to his left. "Duwayne has really improved his practice habits and we started him," Vickery stated. "I thought he (Penk) was just trying to make good contact on the ball as the field was slippery, but Duwayne made a good save."

"Usually you guess and hope you go to the right side," Lang said, "but I sort of knew which

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Bear midfielder Salvi Cammarata (10) grimaces as he goes up for a header, against UBC

way he was going. He gave a look to my left and I guessed it right."

The Bears then shut down the defending CIAU champs the rest of the way for a big win.

Corner Kicks: D'Andrea had to go out in the 88th minute of the game with a leg cramp. "Victor made a strong run forward and had a 70 yard run back and just cramped up," said a relieved Vickery, who likes the relatively injury-free year the Bears are enjoying. Vickery sounded fairly confident after the game about the Bears' playoff chances and the progress made since he took over. "When I arrived here three years ago, we had ten first year players and those players are the nucleus of this year's club, which is very well-paced." The second game of the weekend, against UBC, was played to a scoreless tie. The Bears now have two wins and two ties in four games.



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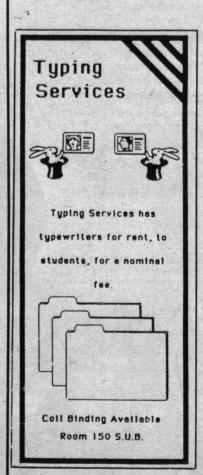
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