

Lament for a season—the bounceball Golden Bears

By Ron Ternoway

Ask basketball coach Barry Mitchelson what kind of a season it was and he'll say "frustrating."

Larry Nowak and Al Melnychuk

admitted there was something definitely wrong, and Bob Morris confessed that he had never played on a team with more losses than the 1969-70 version of the Golden Bears.

And the question that is still rolling around in some fuzzy heads, most notably mine, is how a club that swept through the 1968-69 season with an 18-2 record based on a one-man team could stumble, stutter

and stall the following year. Especially since it is acknowledged by the people who know that this year's Golden Bears were probably the most talent-laden squad assembled in these parts in many a year.

Well on way

For the Bruins it was a beautiful beginning, a mediocre middle and a fatal finale. They whipped off four wins in a row and seemed to be well on their way.

But then came Christmas, and with the good came the bad. They started losing—and often. First it was four to Great Falls, then a couple in British Columbia. Then another to UBC, one to Manitoba, and lowly Saskatoon and Calgary took their turns. The net result: a so-so 10-6 record and another chance against Manitoba in the playoffs.

And then came the final, ignominious defeats. What was most agonizing was the way in which the Bears bowed out—not with a bang but with a whimper.

It wasn't really their fault, though. The Manitoba referees simply decided that the Bisons were the better squad and awarded the series to them on that basis.

Coach Mitchelson once said that to be a coach one has to be the eternal optimist. And I think that it's also true for the sports reporter.

All return

And looking forward to next

season, there is no reason for pessimism. All members of this year's squad will be returning to campus, with the possible exception of veteran Al Melnychuk. Paul Pomietlarz may require a little coaxing, but in all likelihood the 6'7" centre will return.

So with a little luck, it's all the way in '71.

Hint of the Week

Along with everything else, it's time for the final hint of the week for the 1969-70 season. But first, a brief history of hint of the week.

Hint of the week was originated this year by a lazy layout type who one afternoon decided that he did not want to write any more garbage on basketball. Hence came up with a little blank space when he arranged the pages.

Not knowing what to do, he rushed madly into the office, checking for ideas. An ex-sports reporter, who had turned to writing about women's rights for a living, suggested that many of the minor sports on campus simply did not get sufficient coverage.

So began hint of the week.

The response was tremendous. In poured a letter. Then a threat. Then a bomb. Then a broken tennis racket.

Well, so much for nostalgia. Here's the final hint for the year.

Don't.



GOLDEN BEAR BASKETBALL TEAM 1969-70 — Second row (left to right): Andy Skujins (Ass't. Coach), Al Melnychuk, Dick DeKlerk, Paul Pomietlarz, Larry Nowak, Brian Johnson, Barry Mitchelson (Coach). Front row: John Schubert (Ass't. Mgr.), Bob Bain, Jack Schwartzberg, Dave Turner, Bob Morris, Bain McMillan, John Milligan (Manager).



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