

# Former Alberta man about campus views U.S. football

Glenn Sinclair, a former University of Alberta student, Coordinator of Student Activities, Director of Orientation, and Public Address announcer at Golden Bear home football games, has forsaken the sights and sounds here for the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. He is enrolled in a Ph.D. program in Education there, and will more than likely get himself involved in many other activities. Here, he gives his impressions of American college football, as seen through the eyes of a foreigner.

Last week, Ohio University (unbeaten last year) came from behind to tie the University of Minnesota Gophers 35-35. It was the kyd's first taste of American college football, and the kyd was impressed. To begin with, a meagre 45,000 people came out to the game (classes didn't start 'till Monday so a lot of students aren't back yet). Secondly, the game has a good deal of class.

First off, one is impressed by the pageantry that accompanies these Saturday afternoon rituals. Today, besides the enormous University Marching Band, there were 49 high school bands which made for a fair amount of noise (actually it is called music down here and music it is too!). There are about two dozen cheerleaders, half guys and, of course, the other half girls. They (most of the 45,000 except for the odd Canuck like myself) sing the Star Spangled Banner about ten minutes before kick-off for a very good reason. It takes about ten minutes to get through the rest of the pre-kick-off activity including the introduction of the teams, the officials (about 100 it seems!!!!) and other nefarious characters. Then the game gets ready to start.

Today's announcer is a "Prof Ryan dream"; probably about 55 years old but with a voice very reminiscent of Henry Viney of CFCN, Calgary (and about as exciting). He informs us that one of the teams will receive and the other will kick. From that point on I decide that he obviously is too sober to be an effective announcer—in fact, so do the cheerleaders who plug a microphone into the P.A. system, and whenever he starts to talk begin a chant or cheer over top of him.

The game itself is quite a bit different in more than just rules from the Canadian game. For example, there is no single point or else Minnesota would have won 37-35 because twice the punter put the ball through the end zone. The time-outs that a team is allowed can really slow down

I rarely get bugged enough about a situation to sit down and write about it.

Usually, I just find some desolate spot and sit down and bitch to myself.

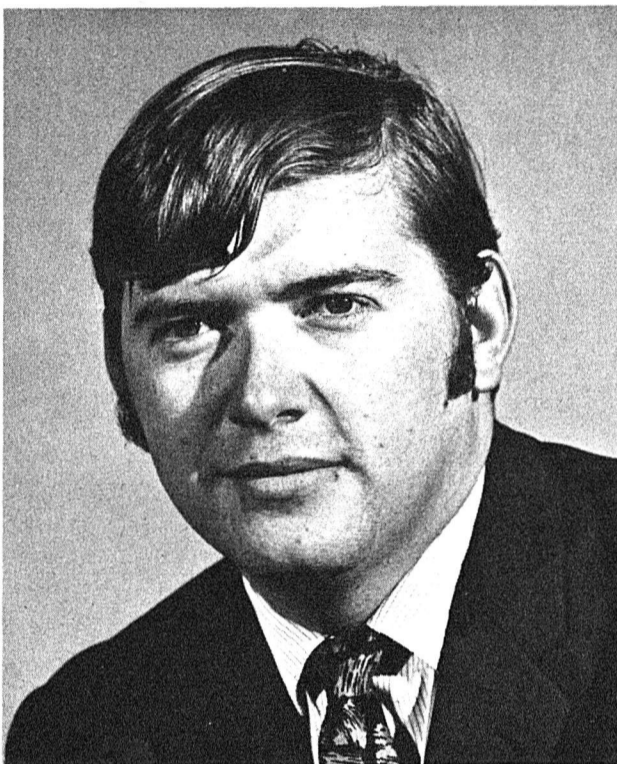
But there is the occasional issue which gets me sufficiently riled up that I just have to let loose. And the upcoming college hockey season is one of them.

It's not that I want college hockey to be wiped from the face of the earth. Far from it. I wouldn't have anything to tide me through the God-awful winters we have to put up with.

But I do have a beef about the schedule that has been drawn up for the combatants this season.

It seems that the powers that be have decided to admit two new teams to the conference this year, making a total of eight. Great. I'm all for expansion, especially when it doesn't cost the new teams who are entering the staggering sum that the NHL is charging these days for new entries.

But have a look at the new teams involved, Brandon University and the University of Victoria. The latter is a liberal arts and science school with an enrolment of about 1,000. The former is five years old, and has some 4,000 students to its credit. How these teams can possibly compete with big schools such as our own and the others that are in the league (Calgary, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and Winnipeg) is a mystery to me.



the end of each half; in the first half it took ten minutes to play the last two minutes and four seconds and Ohio was able to tie the score and Minnesota was able to move down and attempt a missed field goal in that period of time. Also with the fourth down much more variety in offensive tactics is displayed. The Ohio team has a Negro quarterback who loves to pass, yet has a couple of very fast running backs—with the extra down he was able to try each type of play during every series of downs which makes much more work for the defense. Moreover, with the narrower field (50 yards to our 65), there is less use made of the sweep type of play but much more use of sideline pass patterns.

The game last week was exciting—with 70 points scored, a couple of fumbles and an interception, there was enough to keep us on our feet most of the time. On the first play from scrimmage for Ohio, the quarterback ran a sneak for about 60 yards (he runs very quickly). After the first Ohio touchdown the reserve quarterback for Minnesota, who is the deep man on kickoffs, returned the kick for about 85 yards (he had good

blocking and also two very fast legs that worked well together).

The Ohio team was relatively small but very quick. They had only a couple of players as big as myself and most were well under the 200 pound mark. Minnesota has some bigger boys but the average weight wouldn't be much over 210. Off-hand I would say that Dave Wray and Ed Molstad in their heyday of college ball would have little trouble making either of the two teams I saw today. In fact, even Yardstick McCaffery, Ludwig Daubner, Hart Cantelon, and Jim Dallin would doubtless make the squads down here without much trouble. I used to think (from all the stories one would hear) that Canadian ball was years behind the Yankees but I don't think so anymore. In fact I think I'll try to arrange an exhibition game between the Golden Bears and the Gophers, as it could be very interesting. Of course we would have one advantage to begin with as Americans only allow 11 men on the field—but we wouldn't need to forewarn the Minnesotans.

The half-time show was mainly musical with little marching—but what marching there was was very sharp (the University Band had about 200 members). The crowd in general was not noisy; in fact, 2nd Floor Henday would be a great addition to the crowds here. There is, I must admit, some use made of "milk-additives"; however, they are not sold on the open market (for those of you who might be concerned about such things). One other item of interest—students have to pay for each game; however, if one buys an athletic pass (\$17.00) one can get into all the intercollegiate games (well over \$100.00 worth of sports).

In general, it is great football down here; in particular, it doesn't have quite the spirit emanating from the press box that the U of A had. In general, when you are one in 45,000 you don't seem all that important to the cheering of your team on to victory, but in particular it is the revenue from these 45,000 that enables the tremendous recruiting to be done which provides a game more than equal to most Eskimo games I've seen in the past few years.

By the way, if any of you want to come down for a game—let me know at least a week in advance as some of the games will be sold out (the stadium will hold over 50,000). If you want to know when the "big" game will be, it's the game on October 18 when the National Champions—the Ohio State Buckeyes from Columbus—come to the U of M.



## Bob Anderson

### ... one man's opinion

More along these lines in a moment.

The schedule this year has been reduced from 20 games to 14. Each club will play the others once at home and once on the road. This is a farce.

College hockey is supposed to be growing up—at least this is what we are told. It has even been suggested that the collegians will in the near future supply a lot of the talent for the pro ranks. Not at this rate they won't.

There is no way that a kid can develop the skills necessary for pro hockey in a 14 game schedule. Add a few exhibition contests and it is still not enough.

The main suppliers of pro talent these days, the various junior circuits across the country, play a minimum of 80 games per season. That's right, 80 chances to develop into something of a good hockey

player. Hell, something's bound to sink in in that length of time.

But even ignoring the possibility of college hockey developing into a main feeder line for pro hockey, we have the other situation of what a 14 game schedule means.

At least eight of these 14 contests will be "nothing" contests. There are the two against both Victoria and Brandon plus the two against the University of Winnipeg Wesmen, new entrants last season, who failed to win a game in 20 starts.

That leaves just six "big games, those in which the participants actually have to get serious about playing hockey. As one Golden Bear put it, "Six games isn't even worth getting excited about."

Not only do the players get sloppy and do things they normally wouldn't do, but

the fans suffer too. Last year, for example, the junior varsity Bearcats whipped the Victoria outfit 10-1 in an exhibition contest, while the varsity Bears beat them twice, using the coach, team managers and yours truly in the lineup. The Bears also thrashed the Wesmen four times, each by a difference of some seven goals.

The fans certainly don't enjoy sitting through such slaughters, unless they are of a sadistic nature. Most of the supporters I've talked to like the close games, those decided by only the narrowest of margins.

Getting back to the schedule, the slate was reduced this season to allow for playoffs at the end of the season. In previous years, it has been the first place club that took all the marbles and represented the West in the national championships.

This year, the top four teams will meet in the playoffs, with the winner advancing to the nationals, to be held this year at Fredericton, N.B. This is fine, as a club that doesn't finish first will still have a chance to cop all the marbles. It is not so fine when you add the new clubs plus Winnipeg. It all adds up to a season of lopsided scores and correspondingly low fan interest.

It's about time that the powers that be sat down and had a long hard look at the situation. If college hockey is going to grow up, it's about time the directors did too.

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