

## Yeomen drop close game to Western's Mustangs

Elissa Freeman

It was a hot and hazy Saturday afternoon as 1,500 hearty Yeomen football fans saw their team drop a 27-24 heartbreaker to the 1981 OUA Champion Western Mustangs.

First half action saw both teams get off to a shaky start, but the Mustangs managed to dominate the play by keeping the Yeomen in their own end for much of the first quarter.

Turnovers played a big part in the opening minutes as rookie Steve Ruppel of the Yeomen recovered a fumble from scrimmage on the Mustang's second play only to have rookie quarterback, Paddy O'Neill, fumble the ball on the very next play. This was a costly mistake as Mustang's Chris Byrne ran up the middle for a touchdown making it 7-0 for Western.

Moments later, the Mustang's Kevin Rydeard added a 55 yard field goal, which set a new OUA record.

Mistakes continued to plague the Yeomen offense. After a spectacular 45 yard punt return by Gord Ferguson, O'Neill threw his second interception of the game as Western seemed to be receiving telegraphed messages of York's passing patterns.

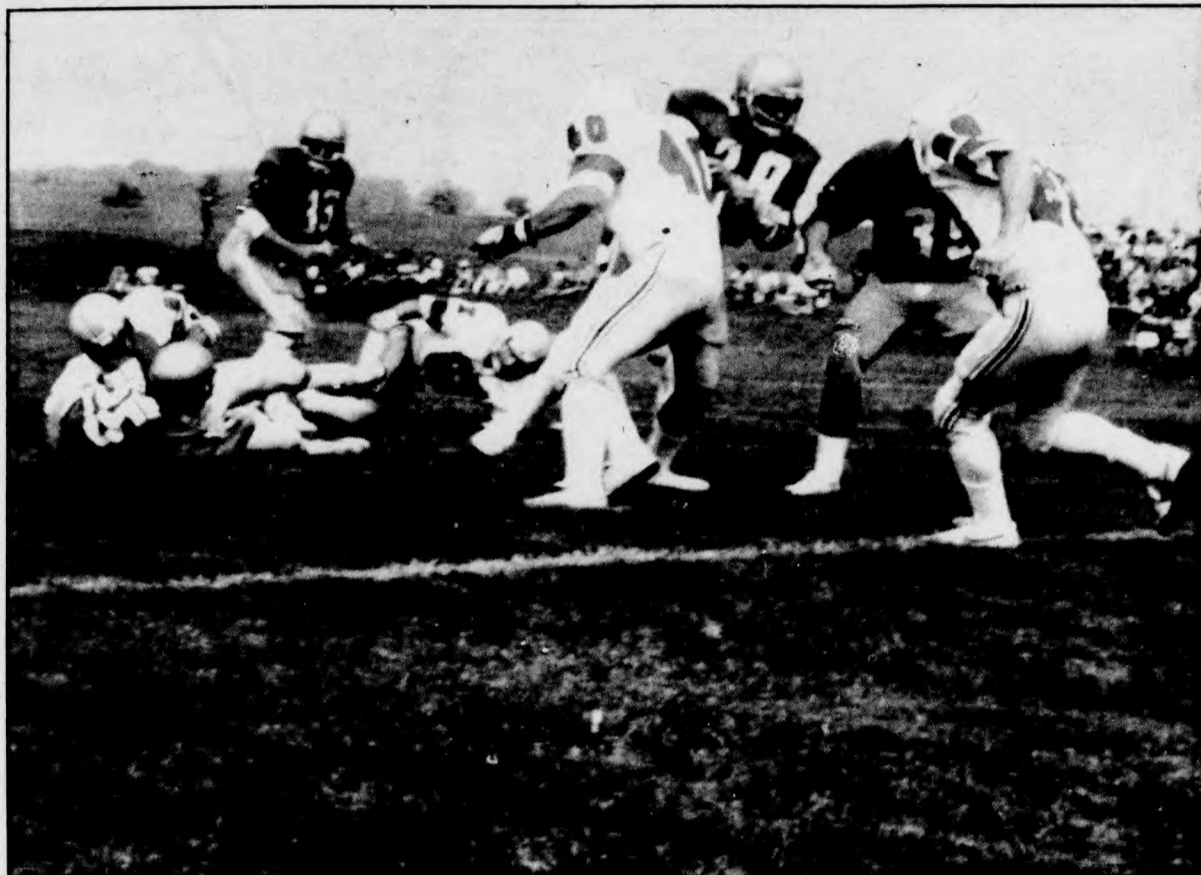
Western continued to dominate, using a full deck of plays that baffled the Yeomen. The Mustangs later took a commanding lead after Bob Vernor caught a 40 yard bomb thrown by quarterback Andy Rossit to make it 17-0.

However, late in the second quarter the Yeomen's Doug Terry returned a Mustang punt and romped 100 yards for a touchdown which put the Yeomen on the scoreboard. The half ended with the score 17-7.

The temperature continued to rise after half-time, as did the confidence of the Yeomen. "As good as they are, there shouldn't be anyone in this room who doesn't think we can't win this game," Head Coach Dave Pickett reassured his players during the intermission. And the Yeomen charged on the field with renewed vigor to prove it.

Unfortunately, Yeomen's first drive of the second half ended with a 50 yard goal attempt which bounced off the right upright. The Yeomen came right back with quarterback Tino Iancono and Neil Delgarno connecting on a 25 yard pass and run play, pulling the Yeomen to within 3 points, 17-14.

The mighty Red and White



York Yeomen came close in their Saturday struggle to master Mustangs in their homeopener.

continued their domination by shutting down the western offense. The Mustangs were forced to punt the ball away on their first three possessions of the 2nd half. As Western kicked the ball away for the third time, Gord Ferguson, who was having a field day, returned the punt 65 yards for the major putting the Yeomen ahead 21 - 17.

But the Mustangs answered with a touchdown of their own to re-take the lead 24-21. The Yeomen threatened as they marched within striking distance for another major, only to have a would-be touchdown pass intercepted by Dave Ploughman of the Mustangs.

The Yeomen managed to recover a bobbled Mustang hand-off in enemy territory, but Western thwarted York's touchdown drive, so the Yeomen settled for a 45 yard field goal to tie the game 24-24.

That was as close as the Yeomen would get. The Yeomen defense halted a Mustang touchdown drive, but Western kicked a 20 yard field goal late in the game, which proved to be the winning play as the game ended 27-24 in favor of the Mustangs.

Credit must be given to the renewed effort the Yeomen put forth in the second half of the game. "At

the start we were running a whole new offense that no other team had seen before, so of course the guys were nervous," explained former player, Steve Shubat, who is now the offensive line coach to the Yeomen. "But that doesn't matter," he continued, "we shouldn't have lost. Next week we'll be even better."

His sentiments were echoed by Coach Dave Pickett, who was visibly upset at the end of the game. "We had geared the whole training camp towards this game with Western," he commented later, "and we knew we could win."

But one thing Pickett felt was a major accomplishment was that the team now had a "sense of confidence" which was especially evident in the second half. "After all, the Yeomen aren't a team with a long history of winning (their 1981 record was 2-5) and this is especially important for the team's morale. Against Laurier we'll definitely do better now that we have confidence."

**TIME OUTS** ...Rookie Quarterback Paddy O'Neill showed a great deal of promise early in the game, "I felt pretty nervous at the beginning of the game, but I now have more confidence in myself. The game was a good baptism for me." O'Neill started the game in place of Tino Iancono who was hampered with a

pulled groin muscle...Pickett was especially pleased with the play of the speciality teams. He highly commended Rick Dilena who turned the speciality unit from being second last in the league in 1981. "to one of the best I've seen in college football." York had compiled a total of 288 yards on punt returns alone...The Yeoman's next game is at home Sept. 18, against the Laurier Golden Hawks. Game time is 2 pm.

## Yeowomen formidable

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York Yeowomen Coach, Francis Flint, whose team is coming off last year's 10-2 season, begins this season with nine of her twelve players returning.

"We'll have quality athletes who can accept the diversity of our style of play and the high level of our technical work."

Flint, who has been the Yeowomen's coach for five years, has led the team to a record of 73 wins and 33 losses. After spending one year coaching at the University of Oregon, she came to York and found a team that "was beaten so much that the players had started taking a recreational approach to the game." Flint's drive and determination have turned the Yeowomen into a nationally ranked basketball club.

Working with Flint this year will be new Assistant Coach, Jane Geris, one-time All-Star and former coach of the Borough of York Ladies League. Outstanding player, Leslie Dal Cin, who has exhausted her five year eligibility, will be returning as an apprentice coach. Flint is extremely optimistic about her new staff. She believes that these coaches will be able to spend more time working one on one with the players. And there will be two extra pairs of eyes following the technical aspects during league play.

"All-Everything" Barb Whibbs and All-Star Kim Holden are coming back to anchor the team this season. Flint realizes that the pressure will be on these two athletes, especially Whibbs, to turn in better performances than last year. However, she is confident that the girls will set their own goals and continue to provide the strong leadership they display on the floor.

According to Flint, the Yeowomen "have a better quality pool of players to choose from than any other university." Making the York team, therefore, is very difficult and those who are chosen to fill the three sought-after vacancies, "will know they deserve to be on the team."

The question on everybody's mind, especially division rivals, Laurentian and University of Toronto, is whether the defending 1981 Ontario Champions will give a repeat performance of their exceptional play in 1982.

"Yes, I think we can, but it will be much more difficult," Flint acknowledges. She is well aware that it is much easier for an underdog team to knock off the big guns and end up on top (as the Yeowomen did last year) than to start as the number one team that all the others have to beat.

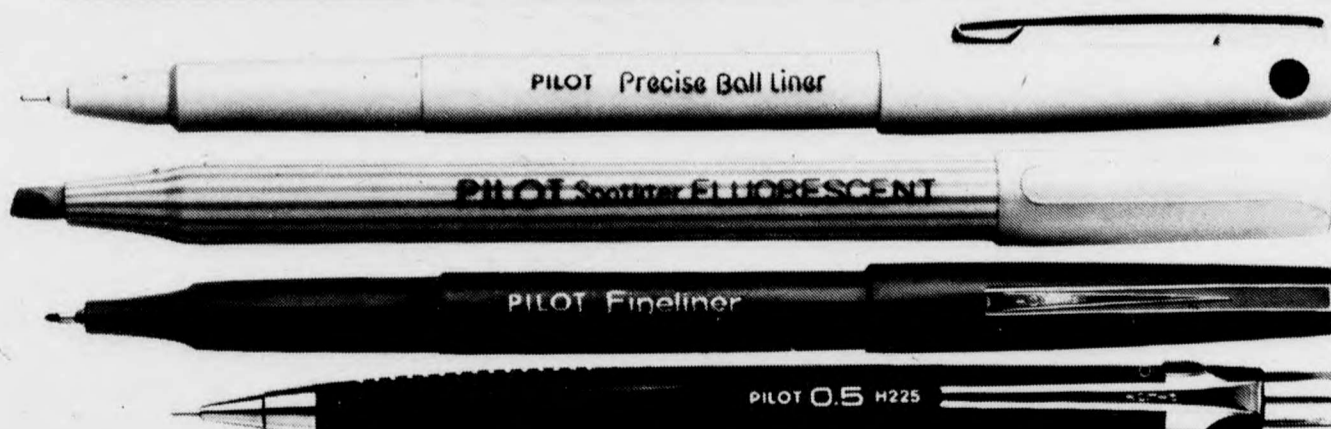
Concerning her two major rivals, Flint said, "There is no doubt in my mind that they will give us trouble. Both teams will want their titles back." The test will be whether the players can handle such pressures.

### STAFF MEETING EXCALIBUR

THURS. SEPT. 16  
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.  
THE NEWSROOM

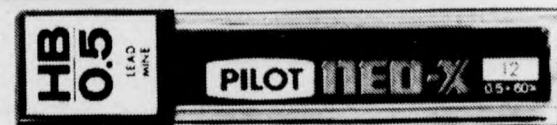
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