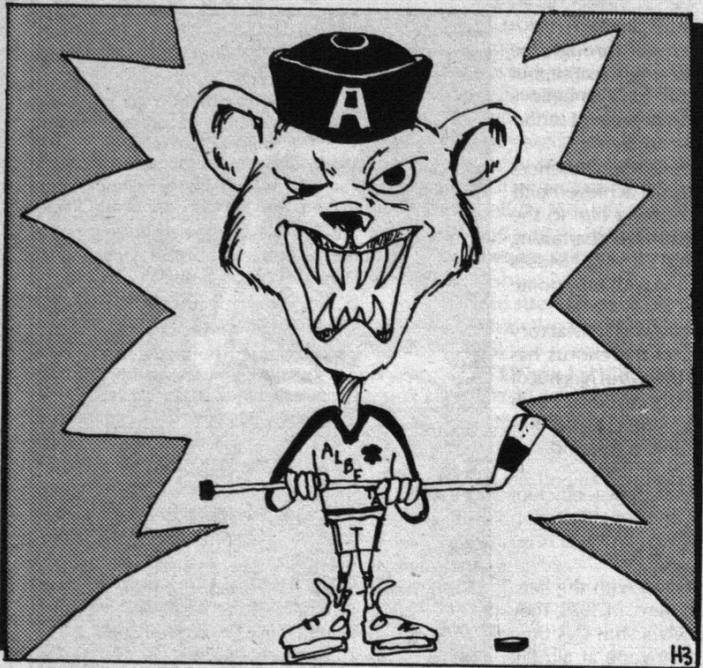


# SPORTS

## Bears win three



by Bernie Poitras

It was as if Clare Drake hadn't missed a beat.

After a one year study leave, Drake reclaimed the head coaching reins he left last year for assistant Coach Bill Moores and guided his hockey Bears to their first victories of the year.

The three wins came this weekend as the Bears hosted the Second Annual Bears-Molsons Invitational Tournament at Varsity Arena. The Bears beat division rivals U of Lethbridge, 12-2 and U of Saskatchewan, 3-1, and cross town NAIT rivals, 3-2.

Drake and his squad continued last years' winning ways by edging out Saskatchewan, to win the tournament, in the final and deciding game Sunday afternoon.

Drake said after Sunday's game he was very happy with his teams' overall performance considering

that two of the matches were tough ones - physically - and they were played at a high tempo.

And high tempo they were. Hardhitting and end-to-end rushes highlighted the final game which wasn't really decided until Bears; forward Breen - Neeser scored at 14:46 of the second period. Parie Profit (Bears defenseman) and Huskies' forward Denis Fenske traded first period goals and then forward Joey Engert put the Bears up, 2-1, twelve minutes before Neeser's clincher.

On Friday against NAIT however, things became helter skelter for the Bears as they had to order up some heroics, two to go, in the last 15 minutes to pull off the win. The Bears trailed 2-1 until the fifth minute of the third period when Dennis Cranston scored shorthanded. Al Tarasuk then scored the winner with about five minutes showing on the clock.

Sandwiched between the two not-ready-for-prime-time hockey games, the Bears had time to give a hockey clinic courtesy of the Lethbridge Pronghorns. The Bears spread 12 goals nice and even-like over three periods to down the Pronghorns 12-2.

With the regular season still three weeks away, the two intense games involving the Bears were a rare, and welcome, sight to see. With such a high tempo match occurring so early in the season you might expect one of the teams to be caught off-guard. But even though they lost,

neither NAIT nor Saskatchewan looked the worse for wear.

Bears' coach Clare Drake sees the series as a proverbial blessing in disguise. Said Drake, "Anytime you are pushed by other teams, it should make you (a) tougher (team). At least you hope it does anyway."

It sure made them tougher because the Bears simply weren't being pushed around; rather, they were doing most of the body checking.

One noticeable trait in their repertoire this weekend was their criss-cross, Oiler-like style in their forward lines. This is something that, Drake says, is emphasized in practice. "We try to put a lot of flow and motion into our game (plan) and using the type of drills that encourage that as well. We certainly encourage creativity in the players so that they don't become too rigid in their play."

If the 'flow and motion' style offense continues the way it has, the only rigid part of the Bears may be their winning.

Winning is something that Clare Drake hopes to do a lot of as 'new' coach — or rather a familiar coach, who is picking up where his assistant left off, without missing a beat. FROM THE DEN: Bears who were voted to the All-Star team were: defenseman Ron Vertz and forwards Dennis Cranston and Breen Neeser. Cranston was the Bears leading scorer with three goals and two assists.

## THE SPORTS QUIZ

- THE "WESTERN CONFERENCE" IS:
  - the five CFL teams in western Canada
  - a wild guess on a European history test
  - a California-style telephone conversation
- "FORWARD" IS:
  - a position in hockey or basketball
  - all you need to know to drive an automatic
  - any guy who speaks to your girlfriend
- AN ALL-STAR "NON-IMPORT" REFERS TO:
  - an excellent CFL player who played high school football outside the U.S.
  - a car made in Oshawa or Windsor with decent gas mileage
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