

Belcourt and crew herd Bisons back to pasture

Bruins now face Dinnies in final

By **BOB ANDERSON**
Manitoba 4, Bears 10
Manitoba 5, Bears 7

It looks as though Sam Belcourt may have found himself a new home.

And in the process displaced Bill Clarke on the hottest since the days of Khrushchev.

Moved to centre ice to replace the injured Clarke between the Devaney brothers, "Fat Albert", as he is known to his teammates responded with three goals and a pair of assists to power the Bruins to 10-4 and 7-5 playoff triumphs over the Manitoba Bisons on the weekend.

Near-capacity crowds each night watched as the Bears took their best-of-three Western Canada Intercollegiate Hockey League semifinal in straight games, thus earning a shot at the Calgary Dinosaurs next weekend in the southern city. Dinnies handled UBC Thunderbirds as expected, 7-6 in overtime and 8-1.

"Heck, anybody could play with those guys and look good," shouted Belcourt, referring to the Devaneys who were standing nearby in the noisy dressing room. "The way they move all you have to do is just feed them the puck."

"I guess I should have been playing at centre before now," said the ex-right winger who made Bear coach Brian McDonald look like a genius with his performance. The present season just hasn't been too good to Belcourt who two years ago was the number two man in the individual scoring race.

"What do you do with that line?" McDonald was asking everyone within earshot. "Leave them together or put Clarke back on there if he's ready to go against Calgary?"

Bob and Tom Devaney also had a big weekend themselves. Each scored a goal in both games and could have had several more had it not been for bouncing pucks and sharp goaltending by Bisons' Larry Holton.

Goaltending below par

About the only area in which the Bears appeared shaky was in goal tending where Bob Wolfe,

who played Friday night, and Dale Halterman weren't at their best. However, both games were of the wide open variety with end-to-end action, and the way the Bears were putting the puck in the net it really wasn't noticeable.

Oliver Morris was the hero as far as the Golden Ones were concerned in Friday's 10-4 bombing. The Ponoka product notched the hat trick, two of them on great individual efforts, and was chosen the game's first star. Don Falkenberg played a strong two-way game and managed to come up with a pair of tallies as the Bears led 4-2 after the first period and 6-2 after 40 minutes.

Gerry Braunberger, the Devaneys, Mike Lemieux and Belcourt notched the others, while Rod Lindquist, Bill Ramsay, Dan Topolniski and Greg Meikle replied for the Manitobans who opened up a quick 2-0 lead before the game was six minutes old.

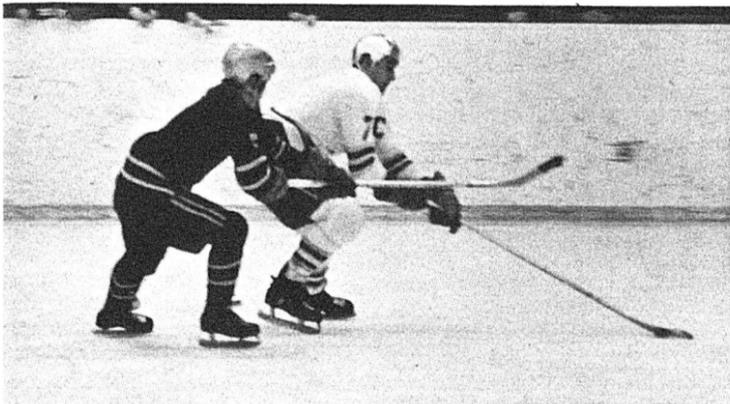
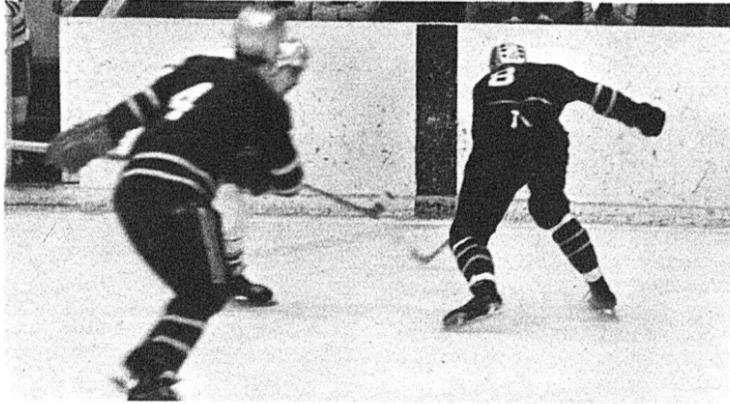
The Albertans quickly recover-

ed, however, and went ahead to stay on Morris' two goals late in the period.

The Bisons came back surprisingly tough in Saturday's encounter and after falling behind 3-0 in the early minutes, came back to knot the count at 3-3 midway through the middle frame. Tom Devaney, on a scramble in front of Holton on a Bear power play, blinked the red light to make it 4-3 and the Bears were fortunate to get out of the period without further damage.

Manitoba gave it the last try in the final session, but just ran out of gas in the dying minutes as goals by Bob Devaney, Jack Gibson and Belcourt put the contest out of reach.

Other Bear marksmen were Dave Couves, Braunberger and Belcourt with his second of the night. Paul Allan, Graham Kinley, Bob MacKinnon, Jim Trosky and Andy Miles fired singles for Bill Robinson's Herd.



—Chuck Lyall photos

BEARS' GERRY BRAUNBERGER shows fine form in this sequence as he cuts between Bison defencemen Jim Trosky (8) and Don Lamoureux (4) (top), pulls away from Lamoureux (middle) and neatly deposits the puck behind Larry Hilton (bottom) in Friday's 10-4 uprising. Bears won Saturday 7-5 to advance to the WCIHL final in Calgary against the Dinosaurs next weekend.



—Chuck Lyall photo

GOLDEN BEAR PEP BAND LEADS THE CHEERS

... varsity arena will never be the same

It's a wonder that the walls of Varsity Arena are still standing today.

Not that the construction is of a questionable nature, but rather whether the relatively new ice house was able to survive the tribulations and general merry-making which took place inside there this weekend.

They just had to be the wildest and noisiest crowds ever assembled therein for a hockey game. I mean they've had more people for such events as Bar None, but not even they created as much mayhem as Golden Bear fans did.

The Golden Bear pep band did a great job of getting the crowd psyched up with their slowly starting beat quickly moving up to a frenzied peak.

Hell, even the boys from second floor Mac were out in force for Saturday's game. It's just too bad they couldn't have seated themselves behind the Manitoba bench. Not that the Bisons needed to be upset any more as it was.

Most hockey people will agree that a boisterous crowd is worth at least a goal



Bob Anderson

... one man's opinion

to the home club. One goal, phooey! Bruin fans did a better job than that.

Whatever it was, the pucksters responded to the treatment unbelievably well. It was hard to comprehend that this was the same team who only a week before had been handed one of the worst beatings in modern club history.

Coach Brian McDonald had the club "up" for the contests like they've never been before at any stage this season. And the results were at times undescrivable.

Manitoba Bisons are a good hockey club, make no doubt about that. But everything just went against them. They

were playing without their chief sparkplug Herb Pinder, who hasn't played for the last two weeks. And like all visiting clubs, the Bisons got the raw end of the deal from the officials, particularly Saturday night when referee Bill Bucyk got a little whistle happy in the early moments of the game.

But the biggest force against the Herd were the Bears themselves. Not one player had a bad game. Bill Clarke was undoubtedly missed, although you'd never know it by the way Sammy Belcourt stepped into the breach.

Oliver Morris, who has been the most improved Bear over the last three weeks,

continued to shine. On one particular play, he put such a move on Bison defenceman Jim Trosky that the latter had to buy a ticket to get back into the Arena.

Mike Ballash was back at his defensive post after missing the Calgary game and kept the Bisons honest with some heavy hitting.

So now it's off to Calgary this weekend for what has to rate as a tough series against the Dinosaurs. Foothills Arena has never been kind to the Bears, who haven't won there in three years.

One thing that the Bears will have going for them again this weekend is strong fan support. At last report Assistant Athletic Director Chuck Moser had these went on sale at noon today. As many buses as are necessary will be going down Friday at 3:30 p.m. at the obtained 500 tickets from Calgary and rate of \$7 per head, round-trip. Fans will be responsible for their own accommodation.

Calgary, look out!!