

# SPORTS

## Yeomen drop to 1-4 after loss to football Blues

By MORLEY CONN

York's sputtering offence failed to deliver in a tough 18-12 loss to the U of T Varsity Blues in the sixth annual Blue Bowl last Thursday at Varsity Stadium.

The Yeomen went into last week's football game having won only three of the past 17 games between the two rivals.

Yeomen 12  
Blues 18

The scene at Varsity stadium has become too familiar over the last five years — two mediocre teams struggling to make the playoffs and not going anywhere. U of T Head Coach Bob Laycoe summed it up well: "We're two fairly young, inexperienced teams, both searching and building up our programmes."

Surprisingly, the first quarter had the makings of a high-scoring, offensive game — a treat for the restless crowd of 7,300 in attendance and viewers of the national cablecast on TSN.

On their first possession, Blues quarterback Matt McKay led the offence to four first downs on way to a six yard TD run by running back Lorne King. The early TD didn't seem to rock the solid York defence. Late in the first quarter, York defensive pressure led to an interception by Jim Kotsopoulos that left York on U of T's ten yard line. From there Matwijec handed off to tailback Greg McDonald for the major. Paul Placko's successful kick gave York the extra point. With an additional point conceded by the Blues on a missed York field goal attempt, the

Yeomen led at the end of the first quarter, 9-7.

In the second quarter, York's disciplined offensive game became sloppy. A fumbled punt return by a York receiver led to a missed field goal by U of T. York, however, conceded the point, making the score 9-8.

U of T got the ball back when Dave Blanch picked off a Matwijec pass. The Yeomen's blitzing defence was too much for the scrambling McKay and his offensive line. Linebackers John O'Brien and Mark Boothe sacked the Blues QB, keeping U of T off the scoreboard. "We called 40 black automatic, our main blitz play," explained Boothe.

A U of T punt turned pass when punter Ted Temertzoglou fumbled the ball. The throw was intercepted by the multi-purpose Greg McDonald, who ran it to the 22 yard line. With less than 25 seconds in the second quarter, York Head Coach Nobby Wirkowski elected to go for the field goal. The attempt failed, as the ball was fumbled on the snap.

The turning point of the game occurred in the third quarter on a blocked York punt. U of T took control of the ball deep in York's zone. Andrew Astrom kicked a 15 yard field goal to put the Blues ahead 11-9. On the next York kick-off return, the ball was fumbled and controlled by U of T on the Yeomen's 25 yard line. U of T coach Bob Laycoe's late second quarter substitution of QB Eugene Buccigrossi for McKay proved to pay off. Buccigrossi ignited the offense with a 35 yard TD pass to Daryl Devonish. This pass was the only yardage gain over fifteen yards given up by the York



PUT YOUR HEAD IN MY SHOULDER: Greg Macdonald eludes a U of T tackle.

defense. After the made convert by Astrom, the Blues led 18-9.

In the fourth quarter, the Yeomen defence shut out the Blues, leaving the outcome of the game to the offensive unit. With 6:52 left, Coach Wirkowski substituted QB Lorin Brady for Matwijec. Brady drove to the Blues 36 yard line. Coach Wirkowski called on Paul Placko to attempt the field goal. Placko's clutch kick made it through the uprights. "We have to come away with points," said Wirkowski. The field goal made it 18-12, a TD ties it, and the convert wins it."

It almost worked. A 30 yard "Brady bullet" to Greg McDonald at the U of T 43 yard line with less than a minute seemed promising, but York's offensive drought continued as Dave Blanch picked off his second ball to end the game.

U of T head coach Bob Laycoe put the game in perspective: "We did enough to win, but York played a good game. The difference in the ball game was that we got turnovers, a



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blocked punt, and a TD pass which gave us the chance to get a significant lead." York also had opportunities but was never able to capitalize on them. After the first quarter, the offense was unable to run or throw the ball effectively and the special teams seemed to be ineffective (three missed field goals in first half, two fumbles).

"We'll look at weaknesses and make changes with people who were non-productive," said Wirkowski, "Defensively, only that one pass killed us."

With the loss, York is now 1-4, which is well below the four wins usually needed for post season. Regardless, Coach Wirkowski remains optimistic. "If we keep playing hard, sooner or later the ball has to fall in our ballpark. We need to win our last two games if we have any hope of making the playoffs."

The Yeomen will meet one of the biggest challenges of their 1988 season this Saturday, when they take on the first place Western Mustangs during homecoming weekend at the University of Western Ontario.



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