

SPORTS

Hex on Bears ...

U of Calgary having banner year

The only thing more depressing than a loss to a Golden Bear fan is a loss to Calgary. And for Bear hockey fans, there were enough losses this year to cause any visitor walking around campus to suspect that neurosis was reaching epidemic proportions.

The Bears dropped a 3-1 decision to Calgary Sunday night and as a result will not be able to defend their CIAU crown in Toronto this weekend. For the Bears the loss must be a bitter one, the team was in first place most of the year until injuries late in the season prevented them from clinching top spot. The Bears lost four consecutive games late in the season and finished 2nd to Calgary. The Dinos then won the CWUAA pennant and the Hardy Cup with 2 more wins over Alta. in Calgary. The last time U of A has beaten Calgary this year was on Nov. 28 at Varsity arena, and the last time the Bears came out on top against the Dinos in Calgary was way back in Jan. 17, 1975. Calgary lost only three of the eleven games the two teams have played this year, including league and playoff games. Calgary has won eight consecutive games over the Bears.

A testimony to the strong competition in the CWUAA is when playoff time rolls around. What has happened in league play can be thrown out the window when post-season play begins. For example last year on the way to the National crown, UBC, a team that finished 15 points behind Alta., gave the Golden Bears their toughest test in all their playoff series. The fight to represent the CWUAA was a tougher battle than the series for the National title. The same held true this year. Bears were in first place for most of the season, until Cal got hot near playoff time and carried their momentum into the playoff series against Alberta.

For the U of C it has to be one of the best years for any University in sports. The football dinosaurs finished on top of the heap in the WIFL and with a few breaks could have beaten the Ottawa Gee Gee's in the College Bowl. Their basketball squad dominated the CWUAA with a league record of 19-1 and travelled to the national finals in Halifax, and like the football team were unsuccessful, being defeated in their opening game against Laurentian.

The hockey team has to be praying that bad luck doesn't come in three's. Nevertheless, just the fact that a university with less than half the enrolment of our own can go to the National finals in three major sports is a tribute to the athletic program.

If Calgary should fail to bring home the bacon in the hockey tournament in Toronto, it can take consolation that it can happen to pro teams as well.

The people of Baltimore must have felt that they were living wrong in 1969 when the city of New York had something of a hex on their pro teams. It all started in Super Bowl III when the highly favoured Colts were upset by Broadway Joe and the Jets. In the fall the upstart New York Mets, formerly a symbol of ineptitude in baseball upset the Orioles in the World Series. Finally the basketball New York Knicks knocked off the Bullets on their way to the NBA crown.

The Golden Bears hockey squad can't be overlooked as they again provided Edmonton fans with the most exciting hockey in the city, which isn't too difficult a task when the Oilers are in town.

Coach Leon Abbott did a commendable job inheriting a team whose defense was riddled, and faced with the tough decision of keeping three goaltenders happy in a 24 game schedule. No one is certain whether Abbott or Drake will be coaching the team next year. Gone will be goaltenders Dale Henwood and Craig Gunther along with forward Oliver Steward. Rick Peterson and Bruce Crawford are on their way to Europe May 17 to turn pro with a West German team.

Bears will have just as tough a chore next year in pleasing their fans, and even before this year has ended, Bears have already been made favorites by the fans to "go all the way." Ahh, the hardships of success.

Darrell Semenuk



This year's playoff hopes turned to last year's memories.

Dinos kill our title hopes

by Keith Steinbach

It was a shame. It was a shame that Jack Cumming's finest performance of the year had to be a loss. It was a shame that in the last game of the Bears' season the referee had to be the star of the game.

The play of the Alberta squad was not a shame, however, as they lost in the final game of the CWUAA-GPAC

tournament. The Golden Bears performed well to get past Manitoba 6-3 and into the finals only to lose 3-1 to Calgary.

The Bears finally managed a win in Foothills arena in Calgary. The team they beat was the Manitoba Bisons, though. Manitoba looked ragged at the start of the game but improved as the night wore on. But Alberta was just too tough for

them as Rick Peterson opened the Bear attack at 49 seconds and they never looked back. Jim Carr made the 1st period score 2-0 Bears, with a screen shot that beat Bison goalie Terry Edwards.

The second stanza witnessed better play by the U of M congregation which resulted in a goal by Cal Buchanan, the Bison's star player, at the 15:47 mark. Dale Hutchinson had dedek his way to a goal earlier in the period.

The third period was characterized by quick goals. Frank Clarke scored twice in the space of 22 seconds to put the Golden Bears out front 5-1. Then Manitoba's big line of Brydges, Bruce, and Buchanan came back with two even quicker goals. Bruce from Buchanan at 10:30 and Buchanan from Bruce at 10:46. Rick Peterson's second goal of the contest on the power play gave Alberta their final margin of victory.

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Swimmers cause splash

Tragedy into triumph

by F. Flipper

"I don't deserve these guys!" exclaimed coach Phil Gardiner, to which someone retorted, "Yes, you're much to nice for these animals." And animals they were, as the swimming Bears roared to a third place finish in the Canadian University Swimming Championships at Waterloo last week.

Alberta's seven swimmers were bested only by the 16 member Toronto squad and the second place western Ontario team of 14 men. What the Bears lacked in quantity they more than compensated for with the quality of their individual performances.

In the first event, the 400 medley relay team of Mark Polet, Butch Skulsky, Derek Cathro and John Starratt bettered the old Alberta record by five seconds. Every swimmer shaved time off their previous best performance in the silver medal effort. Ross and Stewart Nelson followed up by placing sixth and eighth in the 1650 freestyle.

Friday one of Canada's all time finest swimmers and former assistant coach of the Bears Mike Morrow, left his Toronto meteorology office to cheer the team on. His presence was felt, as the team swam like lightning.

Starratt won the consola-

tion final in the 200 freestyle. Polet swam a personal best to place fourth in the 100 back. Kevin Feehan placed a strong sixth in 100 breast. The Nelson brothers again collaborated to be Alberta's "forte" in the distance events as Ross and Stewart placed fourth and fifth in the 400 Individual Medley respectively.

It took tragedy turned into triumph, however, to reveal the true quality of the Golden Bear swimmers. Butch Skulsky swam a blistering 1:01.3 in his 100 breaststroke which would have given him a silver medal. Unfortunately, he was disqualified for making an illegal turn. Not fifteen minutes later, the determined Skulsky exploded to place second in the 100 yd. butterfly with a time that was two seconds under his personal best. He was bettered only by teammate Derek Cathro who took the gold in this event.

The versatility of the team was clearly expressed when breaststroker Feehan and backstroker Polet combined with the Nelson brothers to place a respectable sixth in the 800 yd. freestyle relay.

Derek Cathro posted three strong performances to lead the Bears on the final day of competition. An excellent 200 I.M. set the pace for the day. He then breezed to an easy win in the 200 yd. butterfly. Derek capped off the meet with Starratt,

Skulsky and Ross Nelson to finish an impressive third in the 400 freestyle relay.

John Starratt placed seventh in the 100 yd. freestyle and fifth in the 200 fly. Stewart Nelson placed ninth in the 500 freestyle, with brother Ross right behind in tenth. Butch Skulsky came third in the 200 breaststroke, while Kevin Feehan placed tenth. Mark Polet captured fourth spot in the 100 backstroke.

Every swimmer excelled with their personal best performances. Furthermore, four of the seven, Cathro, Skulsky, Polet and Ross Nelson qualified for the Canadian Olympic Trials to be held in June.

For captain Stewart Nelson this was the fifth and final season as a Golden Bear. His contribution to the team, in and out of the pool, can not be overrated. He has placed among the top finalists in every University nationals since 1972. The team spirit and unity he developed is a strong indicator of his outstanding character. The loss will not be total, however, as Stu plans to return as assistant coach next year.

Rookie Coach Dr. Phil Gardiner was pleased with the performances. "Per capita," he stated, "we had the best team there." For the amount of experience, the swimming squad had the best coach there.