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A look at the Bears for '67

By STEVE RYBAK

A new head coach, a new system, 19 returnees, and more than just a few holes to fill—the start of a new football era for the Bears?

Three weeks and one exhibition game later the pieces start to fall into place. But you still need a program to follow this team. Darwin Semotiuk, Bob Bennett, Fred James, Bert Murray and Peter Tyler have vanished. Ed Molstad is now an offensive tackle and Gil Mather is now playing defence.

Four rookies are in the starting line-up, three of them on defence. The quarterbacking problem hasn't been solved and injuries are cropping up.

Even so Head Coach Clare Drake is optimistic. "By the end of the season this should be one of the best teams U of A has produced."

"We're trying for a balance; we are shifting personnel—some boys will be playing offence at a slight sacrifice on defence. If things don't work out we may resort to using personnel two ways", said Coach Drake.

One of the biggest changes is in the offensive line. The ends are second year man Ron McLachlin and rookie Mel Smith, the tackles are Ed Molstad and sophomore Steve Panek, and the center is junior Pete Gilbert.

Drake has lost both of his starting guards. Hart Schneider is out for the season with a kidney injury and all-star Dave Wray has been out with a bout of mononucleosis.

Coach Drake had mixed feelings about the performance of the offensive line in a recent 11-1 win over the McMaster Marauders.

"The pass blocking was quite good", he said. "At no time was the quarterback thrown for a loss without a chance to deliver the ball." Bear quarterbacks were thrown for losses only twice during the game.

Another big change is the defensive line. Only Gene Lobay has seen previous defensive line action; he and rookie Alex Stosky are the tackles. Lyle Culham and

rookie Bob Clarke anchor the ends of the line.

"The pass rush against McMaster was very bad", said Coach Drake, "but then we were only rushing four men."

The front four were very stingy, yielding only 51 yards along the ground on eight plays.

The defensive backfield is solid. McMaster quarterbacks completed only 9 of 25 attempts and had three intercepted. Rookie Dave Kates made two of the interceptions, returning one for 27 yards. The only other "new" face in the backfield is Val Schneider, who sat out last season.

"I hope the pass defence is excellent this year", said Coach Drake. "We were hurt in the short zones but had good deep coverage."

Drake has the offence operating out of three basic formations to "cause trouble for the defence". Two of them are primarily passing formations with receivers spread over the field or in a twin flanker

formation. The running game operates out of a "slot-back" type formation.

Except for the presence of Hart Cantelon, the offensive backfield is a veteran one. Cantelon and Ludwig Daubner are running out of the halfback slot while John Violini takes care of the wingback duties and Les Sorenson the fullback.

Drake has inherited a problem from last year. He still hasn't got a starting quarterback. He has three to choose from—sophomore Dan McCaffery, junior Terry Lampert and Edmonton Huskie graduate Bob Wanzel.

McCaffery has been moved into the defensive backfield for the U of S game to allow Wanzel and Lampert to fight it out for the starting position. McCaffery will remain as the number one backup though, and should see some action as a quarterback.

"There is not much to choose between Wanzel and Lampert", said Drake. "Everything may be settled after the Huskies game."

... and a glance at their opposition

After the first two weeks of action, the WCIAA teams are beginning to take form.

MANITOBA: Last year's conference champions have a new head coach and a few headaches. The new coach is ex-Winnipeg Blue Bomber Henry Janzen. The headaches come from having a rookie-laden team; only 14 players are returning. The most noticeable losses are quarterback Nick Laping, four all-star linemen and two starting defensive backfielders. But so far the rookies have produced; beating the U of S Huskies 12-7 in an exhibition match and the UBC Thunderbirds 9-0 in the league opener. All indications show that the Bisons have come up with their usual strong defence and a so-so offence.

SASKATCHEWAN: So far, three games, three losses. New head coach Dan Marisi is faced with a myriad of problems—injuries, the loss of seven ball players, and a sputtering offence. The one big loss has been all-star quarterback Walt Nibogic. The offence hasn't been able to score a single point in the three losses (12-7 to Manitoba, 10-0 to Calgary, and 34-0 to McMaster). The Huskies weren't listed in the latest national ratings and indications are that they won't make it this time around. Certainly they won't duplicate their second place finish of last year.

UBC: Here's a real question mark. About the only information that has come from "God's Country" is that the Thunderbirds are up to their necks in a recruiting battle with Simon Fraser University. And they have some gaping holes to fill with the graduation of 11 starters. Gone is quarterback Dick Gibbons and defensive star Chip Barrett. The defensive line is still intact and has shown some sign of improving, but the big problem seems to be an inconsistent offence. The T'birds dropped their opener to the U of M Bisons 9-0 in a tough defensive battle.

CALGARY: Traditional doormats you say. Well not so this year. The U of C Dinnies have lost only four regulars and they seem to be carrying right on from where they left off last season. Coach Dennis Kadatz hasn't any worries about his rookie backfield producing for him. The Dinnies have big, good lines but are a bit thin in depth. Their passing game is still playing second fiddle to a powerful ground attack. The defensive squad is almost intact and has looked good in the Dinnies' two outings picking off three interceptions. After beating the U of S Huskies 10-0 in one of the league openers the Dinnies can no longer be considered the league doormats; it's someone else's turn now.

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