Sports

By Gary Oakes, Acting Sports Editor

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B.C. boy making history with grid trial in U.S.

By MILT MacPHAIL
Canadian Press Staff Writer

There isn't much doubt that the best brand of football anywhere is played in the highly-specialized U.S. National Football League.

The NFL has shown this by trouncing any Canadian team its clubs have ever faced in exhibition play, and making it look easy.

Getting a trial with an NFL team is no mean fact. Breaking into the lineup is tougher still, in a tough game where established players may receive anywhere from $7,000 to $20,000 a year for roughly four months' work. Only a few of the hundreds of U.S. college players make the grade each season.

Currently competing against these odds is Bill Crawford, a youngster from New Westminster, B.C. And history may be in the making.

WOULD BE FIRST

Bill, a 23-year-old guard, is trying for a spot with the New York Giants, NFL finalists for the last two years.

If he makes it, he will be the first Canadian-born, Canadian-trained player to stick in the NFL. His chances seem to be good. Former Queen's University player Ron Stewart had a tryout offer from New York Giants a few years ago, but signed instead with Ottawa in the Big Four.

Crawford is a six-foot-one, 230-pounder who was a standout with University of British Columbia.

The Giants' head coach Jim Lee Howell is impressed with Crawford's speed and agility. But the man who is really sold on Crawford is the Giants' line coach, Ed Kolman. He says Crawford can't miss.

Crawford reported to the Giants camp at Winooski, Vt., on recommendation of UBC football coach Frank Gnup, a friend of Howell, and was surprised when the Giants gave him a try-out contract. He had been drafted by British Columbia Lions of the WIFU but passed up the Lions to try for the Giants.

MONEY LURE

"They offered me more money, and American football is better," was the way Crawford summed it up.

He is not unduly hampered by the difference in playing rules. Bill played U.S.-style football in high school with New Westminster, and again when the UBC team met American college teams.

As a defensive lineman, Crawford believes the American game is easier. But the only National Football League games he has seen have been on television.

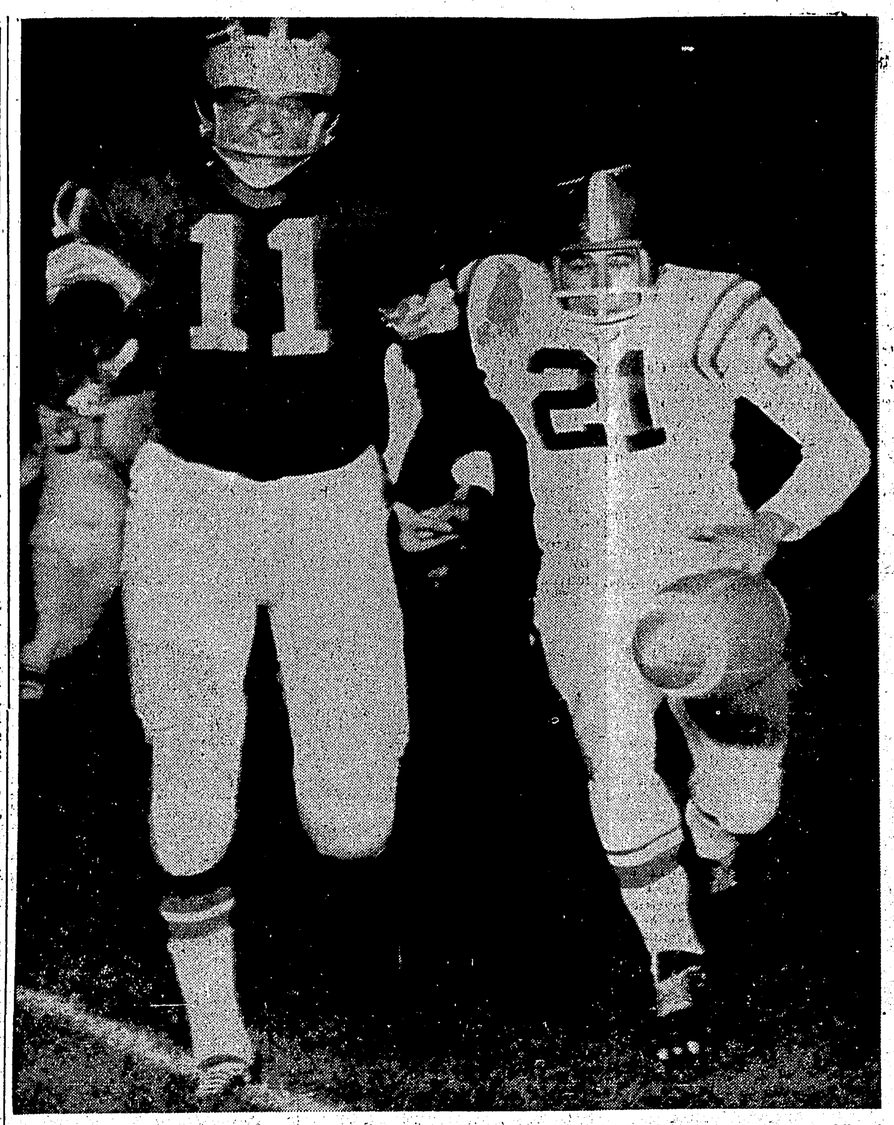
Japanese Rugby

OTTAWA (CP)—A Japanese rugby-football team will tour Canada next month meeting teams in Victoria, Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal, the Japanese embassy said Wednesday.

It will be only the second such tour by a rugby team from Japan. The last was 30 years ago.

The Yawata rugby team will bring a party of 30 players and officials in arrangement with the British Columbia Rugby Union and the Japan Rugby Association.

New Pork (AP)—Emile Griffith, 149¼, New York, outpointed Florentino Fernandez, 149¾, Cuba, (10). Jerry Luedee, 176, New Haven, Conn., stopped Bartolo Soni, 173, Dominican Republic (10). Obdulio Nunez, 158¼, Puerto Rico, stopped Hans Werner Wohlers, 158¼, Hamburg, Germany (5).



OUT OF REACH—Quarterback Randy Duncan's pass was intended for B.C. Lions halfback Bob Jeter (11) but neither Jeter nor defending Harvel Wylie (21) of the Calgary Stampeders could get to the ball in this play Monday night. But Jeter made plenty of other plays before he suffered a bruised knee in the third quarter as the Lions rolled to a 26-19 decision over Stampeders. Running towards the play in the background is guard Bob O'Neil.
—CP photo.

Former head coach of NFL Giants takes same position with Stamps

CALGARY (CP)—After 35 years in professional football, Steve Owen may have some fixed ideas about the coaching game, but he thinks they are flexible enough to work with the Calgary Stampeders.

Owen agreed Tuesday to take over as head coach of the Western Interprovincial Football Union club that has lost three of its four games to date this season and in the process has also lost coach Otis Douglas.

Owen indicated Tuesday he may take a tougher line than Douglas, who left for his home in Hague, Va., Monday after quitting the club Friday. Douglas decided to leave shortly after the Stampeders fell 50-7 before the Winnipeg Blue Bombers in Winnipeg Thursday night.

For 23 years head coach of the New York Giants of the National Football league, the 62-year-old 270-pound Owen has lately been with the Toronto Argonauts as a scout and goodwill ambassador.

GOLDEN RULE

Owen said he believes in treating players the way he would like to be treated himself in the same position. But if he has to get tough, said Owen, "I can really get tough."

"Every player makes a mistake, but you don't want the boy to make it twice."

A former tackle himself, Owen acquired fame for glamorizing defensive play in the NFL. But he thinks the problem with the Stampeders is not so much one of defence or offence as the good-old will to win.

"The problem is one of desire and football is a game of desire," Owen said Tuesday. "I think the boys are down a little bit. We have to build them up."

MAY DO SOME PRUNING

If he has to weed out a few Stampeders to put together a winning combination, Owen says he will do so, because he would just as soon release a player as fine him for a misdemeanor.

The contract terms and other details of the arrangement between Calgary and Toronto were not disclosed, but it is known that Owen is on the payroll for the balance of the season only. Stampeder general manager Jim Finks said the Argonauts "made Steve available to us and we're grateful. We have their blessings."

Owen said he wants to work his way into the ball club and get to know it with the assistance of line coach Bernie Witucki and backfield coach Tom Keane before he makes any changes.

"You have to adjust yourself to the offensive. It's easier for you to change than for 34 players."

Remember when . .

Helen Wills Moody defaulted to Helen Jacobs in the final of the United States women's tennis championship at Forest Hills, N.Y., 27 years ago today. On the verge of collapse with an ankle injury, she conceded victory when losing the third and deciding set 3-0.

Empress crumbles Commercial to stay alive in final series

Old Empress last night stuck its foot in the closing softball championship door.

The Empress squad, behind the six-hit pitching of Al Campbell crushed Commercial 26-6 to win the third game of the best-of-five finals at Algoma Pk.

Commercial had won the first two games and appeared to have the championship in the bag.

But Empress dismissed Commercial's dreams for a clean-sweep as they blasted three Commercial chuckers for 11 hits—including three home runs.

Of course, this game, like most of the others, was won, or rather lost by walks.

Commercial's mound trio issued 21 free passes—two short of last Sunday's record 23.

Loser George Robinson was chased after only two-thirds of the first inning as he gave up seven walks and allowed nine Empress players to score.

Bob Kelsey took over then and worked until the ninth inning when he gave up six runs—including two homers.

The last pitcher for Commercial was Harold Staminus who gave up only one hit, while facing four batters.

These three chuckers failed to strike out any Empress batters during last night's game.

The guy who is sometimes the goat, Bill (Mouse) Morrison, became a sort of hero, or maybe a crowd-pleaser last night as he slammed an inside-the-park home run in the ninth.

Lead-off man Johnny Penz had singled and then came home on Johnny Olsen's similar inside the park homer.

The first five men got on base, and then up stepped Mouse. He took the third pitch from Kelsey and belted into centre field, for two RBI's. His running looks more like a bull moose with three broken legs, but he can still move.

The next, and perhaps last game will be played Sunday at a new time. Because of the shorter days the game will begin at 6 p.m.

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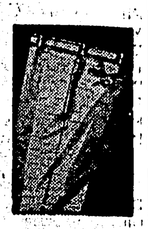
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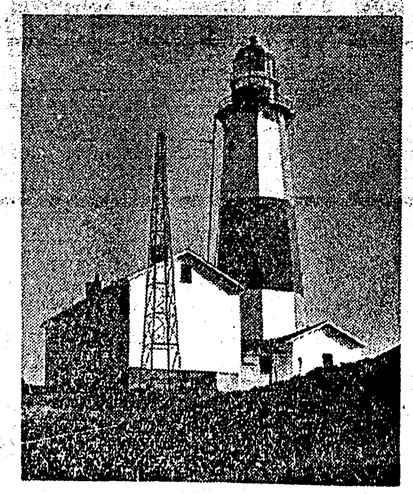
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