



By Jim Coleman

DESPITE the current cold spell, I have no difficulty in running a temperature this morning as I contemplate the fact that the big-hearted, public-spirited proprietors of the Toronto Argonauts, the Montreal Alouettes, the Hamilton Tiger-Cats and the Ottawa Roughriders are gathering here today to plan the

burial of the Canadian Rugby Union. If one can believe the reports which have been printed recently in the local bladders, the clubs of the Big Four are prepared to act as pall-bearers, with the solemn-faced assistance of the five professional teams in Western Canada. The final rites are scheduled for Winnipeg on January 17, 18, and 19, and will coincide with the annual meeting of a nice, compact little group known as the Canadian Football Council.

Fortunately, the plans for the burial aren't unanimous. The proposal to junk the Canadian Rugby Union appears to be supported most stoutly in Toronto and Montreal. However, Ottawa's James P. McCaffery isn't a man who is likely to join the gold rush in pursuit of a shoddy dollar and Hamilton's Jake Gaudaur doesn't display any overpowering affection for his brethren in Toronto and Montreal.

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At the outset, permit me to state that I hold no particular brief for the Canadian Rugby Union. But, if the schemers are successful in disposing of the CRU, they are likely to propose, eventually, a Two-Game Grey Cup Series and, thus, they will destroy the one sports spectacle which is uniquely Canadian.

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By a coincidence, it was at another meeting in Winnipeg that the last attempt was made to foist a Two-Game Grey Cup Series on the long-suffering public.

On that occasion a cosy deal had been arranged by Arthur Chipman (who represented the Western Canada Conference) and Eric Cradock who had done an expert job of lobbying in the Big Four. At the CRU annual meeting in Winnipeg, these two gentlemen had packaged a two-game morsel for the delegates and they had every assurance that it would be approved at the meeting.

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Chipman and Cradock were honest enough to admit that they were interested only in gate receipts. They argued that, if one Grey Cup game yielded receipts of \$200,000, two games would yield \$400,000.

There would have been more loot for the club-owners—it was pure mathematics at its soulless best.

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It was ironic that American-born Tommy Brook, president of the Calgary Stampeders, was the savior of Canada's sports spectacle.

Brook never was a man to ignore a dollar but he decided that the Grey Cup Game was an event of national importance and its value couldn't be gauged in dollars. The night before the CRU meeting, he received verbal assurances of assistance from the Ontario Rugby Football Union delegates—Don Downey and Harold Bailey—as well as from Maury Van Vliet who was empowered to vote for the Western Intercollegiate Union.

At the meeting, Brook arose to repudiate Art Chipman. One by one, the other Western teams followed suit. Downey, Bailey and Van Vliet cast their votes to complete the rout.

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Sorry to be so serious and dull about this; it's time that some one gave the football boys a good reef in the seat of the pants.

Since 1950, they have been spending money recklessly and, now, some of the privately owned clubs find themselves in a financial mess.

In an effort to balance their budgets, they are ready to propose such hanky-panky as interlocking schedules, involving the East and the West, and you can bet that—eventually—they'll become so desperate that they'll try to sell us that cracked old chestnut, the Two-Game Grey Cup Series.

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For some reason, even those **football** clubs which are operated for private profit, feel that they are entitled to special privileges. They expect to play in city-constructed stadia and sob piteously when the rent exceeds a modest 15 per cent of their gate receipts. (Just for the record — the only two spectator-sports which have displayed enough enterprise to build their own stadia in these parts in recent years are hockey and horse racing.)

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Shed a tear for the **football** club-owners. The way things are going, they should forget about the jolly old ball and turn over the game to the accounting firm of Clarkson, Gordon & Co.