



Arnie Weinmeister
Says he's "Clear"



Bert Bell
"The war is on"

—AP Wirephotos.

Nothing New for Roughies In Football War With NFL

James McCaffrey, president of Ottawa Roughriders, may be excused for not knowing what war NFL Commissioner Bert Bell said was "on" because Arnie Weinmeister, New York Giants' tackle and captain, has signed with Vancouver Lions.

If it hasn't been war up to now, here's a summary of Ottawa's skirmishes with National Football League clubs:

1. Villanova tackle John Sanduski was signed by Ottawa. Cleveland coach Paul Brown phoned McCaffrey claiming Sanduski was Cleveland's "bonus draft" player and would Ottawa please relinquish its claim. McCaffrey said sure he would, if Brown would replace Sanduski. A replacement never did arrive, although in the Kissell proceedings, Brown admitted he was a "little abrupt" at that time and had forgotten his promise.

2. Kentucky's all-American Bob Gain was signed by Ottawa. In mid-season, a Cleveland assistant coach came to Ottawa and tried

to talk Gain into leaving for Cleveland. Gain refused to desert the Roughriders in mid-season. The next year, Cleveland signed him, although Gain was on an option clause with Ottawa.

3. All-American fullback Gene Gedman was signed by Ottawa last February. He turned up in the fall at Detroit Lions, and was told by the Lions, according to McCaffrey: "Football contracts over in Canada don't mean a thing." Gedman played for the Lions.

4. All-American tackle Marvin Matuszak was signed out of Tulsa by Ottawa. Pittsburgh Steelers called Clem Crowe to ask if he would allow Matuszak to play with them. Crowe said he couldn't give them permission. Ottawa never heard from the Steelers again, but Matuszak played at Pittsburgh.

After these experiences, McCaffrey admitted his conscience was quite clear when he signed Cleveland tackle John Kissell and Chicago Cardinal backfielder Avatus Stone.

"Funny thing," mused McCaffrey over the phone to The Globe and Mail. "I got a letter from Mara (N.Y. Giants boss) last week, enclosing a clipping from a Western Canada paper, saying we were after Weinmeister. He sent it registered mail, and said if we had any intentions on signing Weinmeister, he would take legal action.

"So I copied the letter, word for word, except that I put the name of Bernie Flowers in where Mara's letter said Arnie Weinmeister, and I sent that on to Don Kellett of Baltimore Colts, who just signed Flowers, who was on an option clause with us."

McCaffrey said the Roughriders hadn't been interested in Weinmeister, except that Arnie had approached Clem Crowe some time ago and said he was interested in Canadian offers.

"I know Clem Crowe has concentrated only on college players

so far, but he told me a couple of NFL players have contacted him about playing in Ottawa next season. Clem wasn't interested."

Other comments:

Frank Clair, Argonaut coach: "I've talked with Weinmeister three times and made him a definite offer to come with Argos. Later I heard he was going to quit the game altogether. I think he probably would have quit, except that Vancouver is so close to his home in Seattle."

Norm Perry, Sarnia, CRU president: "I'm glad to know that Bell has given us some recognition and now we probably can sit down with him and talk things over. The National Football League has ignored us up to this time. We haven't had any dealings or correspondence with Bell in my five years with the CRU. We must protect our clubs and if the U.S. commissioner wishes to sit down and talk things over, we'd be happy to do so. Of course we've known all along that Canadian players are capable of playing American pro football."

Roy Robertson, Montreal, Big Four president: "How can he say Weinmeister was stolen? His option hasn't been taken up. Until it is renewed there is no question of stealing involved. Then it will depend on the wording of the option. As for American teams signing Canadian players, if they want to go elsewhere, that's their own affair. Of course that applies to American players signed by Canadian teams too."

Bill Ross, Cooksville, Argonaut Club president: "I don't think Bell's threats will worry Canadian football club officials very much. As soon as somebody goes down there and signs one of their better players, they get hot under the collar. Argos never have tried to sign a player who was under contract to another club. They'll have to use some powerful bait to get any of them (Canadian players)."