

Mad dogs and northerners play football in winter

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tell one team from the other and we ended up losing 48-0. The weather wasn't really a factor in the eventual outcome.

The fifth game was memorable because of Bruce and Jim. Bruce got kicked out and Jim, who was very nearsighted and didn't wear his glasses while playing, just wandered around the field the whole game. At half-time we spotted him mingling with the other team's cheerleaders. Jim might have had an eyesight problem but he wasn't stupid.

Coach told Bruce, a pretty tough character, to go out and stop No. 44, who'd been running over, around and between us the whole game.

At a stoppage in play, Bruce loped onto the field and headed for the other team's offensive huddle. He tapped No. 44 on the shoulder, then hit him on the head with his helmet. Bruce was gone, but so was No. 44. We ended up losing 42-0, but all-in-all, enjoyed ourselves.

The night before our final game against South Porcupine, it snowed heavily.

On game day it was cold and clear but there was about two feet of snow on our football field.

Coach had the bright idea to ask Allan's father, who owned a local construction company, to plow the field.

By game time the snow was gone but the field was a sheet of ice with jagged ridges dotting the surface.

When you got hit, you slid over these frozen ridges and by the half, those in action had cuts and scrapes all over the exposed skin parts and our uniforms were in tatters.

We were losing 30-0, with time running out, but somehow we got the ball over to South Porcupine's side of the field.

What happened then usually only happens in your dreams. But it happened to me and it's a sports memory I'll always cherish.

We were forced to punt on third down and I was on the coverage

team. The frozen ball bounced into the South Porcupine end zone and three of their players decided to get cute. They started lateralling the ball back and forth and it hit the ground about two feet in front of me.

I pounced on it, then curled up in a fetal position as bodies from both teams hurled themselves at me and

the ball.

This was the final play of the game - we missed the convert- and I had scored our team's only touchdown of the year. (You can look it up).

We definitely weren't winners that year on the score sheet, but to my mind, just by showing up, doing our best and playing the full

60 minutes, we epitomized what sports is all about.

As the cliché goes, "It's not whether you win or lose that counts, but how you play the game."

The funny thing is, though, I still get cold feet thinking about that season.

As I see it, anyway!



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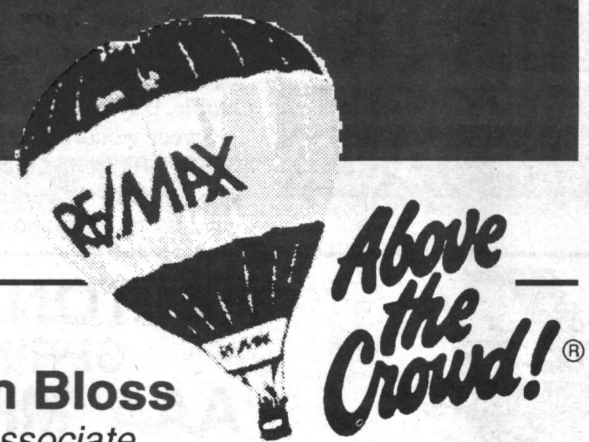
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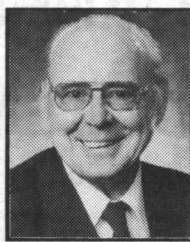
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