

SUGAR AND SPICE

by Bill Smiley



September affair

Every year about this time, I have an affair, whether my wife likes it or not. I fall in love and let the chips fall where they may. I have my September Affair.

In movies and novels, that title means that a man, or woman, falls in love in the fall of his or her life. It has a sweet, nostalgic note, with a touch of sadness in it.

But I've had a September Affair since I was a sprout. Every year, I fall in love with the month of September. And it is sweet and nostalgic and a little sad. And achingly beautiful.

As a tyke, it meant coming home from two months of wild, free running about at the cottage, one of a big family. We were sun-burned and bramble-scratched and just a couple of jumps ahead of the gopher or the ground-hog, socially.

What a thrill to be home! Flip a light-switch, flush a toilet, in the big, old house with the high ceilings and cool rooms, after eight weeks of grubbing it.

And then, the magic of modern living re-discovered, it was out into the streets to find the "kids" and race around in the glorious September evenings, playing Run, Sheep Run, and Redlight and Hide and Seek. Mothers called, but nobody came. It was the first fascination with the September Affair. Our mothers seemed to sense it and let us have a last fling before life became serious and autumn dimmed the lamps.

As a teenager, working five hundred miles from home in September, I had my Affair. There was a churning yearning to get back to school, friends, football and the interrupted romance with the brown-eyed girl. It almost hurt physically.

As a youth, there was the headiness and tension of going off to College, a big word, in September. A strange and frightening place. A small-town boy in a big puddle. New people. New manners. New everything. A September Affair.

And at college, first year, there was the wrenching affair with a South American wench. Sylvia. We met by chance and it was wrenching because she

had to go back to Rio in four weeks, and I was really gone, and I knew I'd never see her again, and we wandered in the soft, September dusk, hands clasped, and my heart turned over in its grave.

Then came the war years and there were a few memorable Septembers. One on the Niagara Peninsula, with the grapes and peaches lush, and the thrill of knowing I had passed elementary flying school and could put the white "flash" of a pilot in my cap.

One in England, hot and hazy and languorous after a cold, wet summer. And the weekend leave in London, twenty years old and a pretty girl on your arm and death lurking in the wings, and caring not. Too fast it went.

One in Normandy and jump to Lille, and jump to Antwerp and life every day on a tenuous, white-hot wire, and the beautiful weather and the terrible daily disappearance of Paddy and Mac and Taffy and Dingle Bell and Nick and Freddy.

And that long, hot September of 1945. Home. Alive. Unreal. Really unreal: the family, the places, the peace, the boredom, and then the silly young people back at the university. But the September Affair with the trees and the cool blue sky and the long dark hair and yet another pair of brown eyes, browner than ever.

And the next September. Marriage to the brown-eyes and a wonderful week at the old cottage in Quebec, with this strange woman. Canoeing and swimming and me teaching her how to cook. And she's just as strange today, twenty-two years later. And just as brown-eyed.

And a lot of Septembers since, golden and blue, with the last breath of summer in the green trees and the first kiss of fall in the cool nights, and the magic that makes me fall for the ripe charms of that ripe lady of the year, September, oozing with plenitude, gorged with the frutis of summer, yet wakening with a sigh to the brisk business ahead.

I have a bad crush on the lady.

THE SPORTS BEAT

By Glen May



My fearless forecast

The greatest aerial attack since the Blitz of Britain will take place at Toronto's Canadian National Exhibition field on Grey Cup day, when the Ottawa Rough Riders and Calgary Stampeders do battle for the battered mug which is emblematic of supremacy in Canadian football.

Only an unforeseen catastrophe can prevent a meeting between these two giants of the CFL.

Earlier we wrote that four clubs: Ottawa, Calgary, Hamilton Tiger-Cats and Saskatchewan Roughriders were the premier teams in Canada. The reasons for this were listed.

Forget that column!

Calgary and Ottawa have shown such awesome power with "the bomb" that either of them could threaten world peace. These two teams are lethal weapons, and even in this nuclear age, nobody can push enough buttons to stop their course of total destruction.

Wally Gabler, the much-maligned quarterback with the much-maligned Toronto Argonauts, stated that no team would win a division with an impressive won-and-lost record. He predicted a division champion would be declared with a record of about eight wins in the east and around nine in the west.

In the east they play 14 games and out west it's 16 times for regular season play.

If either Calgary or Ottawa loses more than two games their winning opponents should be given saliva tests.

Russ Jackson (Ottawa) and Peter Liske (Calgary), if they continue their aerial circus, may establish passing records which will never be threatened in CFL history. They both are so pass conscious that a first down on an opponent's two-yard line doesn't constitute a running play over tackle.

Instead, either of them is

more likely to drop back and throw a 30-yard pitch into the end zone.

Ottawa has one slight advantage over the Stampeders in that Jackson can marshal some semblance of a ground attack with his company of fine runners such as Bo Scott, Ronnie Stewart and Lovell Coleman.

Peter Liske's foot soldiers consist of one man — Ted Woods — and an eight-yard gain for him is exceptional. If Liske falters through the air the Cowboys from the plains are dead.

Both Calgary and Ottawa have rock-ribbed defences which are capable of containing their foe in the air or on the land. Even on an off day when their defences allow 25 or 30 points, it probably won't be enough.

The awesome power of the two offences is geared toward 40 and 50 point efforts. And this is the rule rather than the exception.

Both of these teams could hold their own in the American Football League right today. Perhaps they wouldn't win a championship, but you can bet they'd make it most uncomfortable for the top two teams. Most of their first stringers could catch a berth with teams like San Diego, Oakland, Houston, New York or Buffalo.

At this time we won't prognosticate on who will win the Grey Cup.

However, we think it would only be fair to predict a score. Weighing the facts carefully and judging both teams on the first one-third of the season, we would have to assume the following score to be reasonably accurate: 42-31.

If anyone doubts the validity of this fearless forecast they know the address.

P.S. Also, if you care to make any wager, please don't hesitate to do so.

DRIVE CAREFULLY