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Second Section

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**Run for it**

Uxbridge Senior Tiger running back Jamie Miller (29) is pursued by a pair of Donovan tacklers during Durham Region high school football action last Thursday at Uxbridge Secondary School. Miller broke through for a number of long gains on sweeps during

the game, but the Seniors were unable to score and lost the season opener 8-0. The Junior Tigers beat Donovan 28-14 in the nightcap, but lost top runner Anand Date with a broken leg.

— Alan Shackleton

Uxbridge Junior footballers gain costly win in first game

Uxbridge Junior Tiger halfback Anand Date celebrated his three touchdown performance against Donovan last Thursday in hospital getting a cast on his broken leg. Date led the powerful Junior squad to a 28-14 win in the season opener at Uxbridge Secondary School, but was injured in the final quarter after a hard hit in the leg from a helmet.

The injury was later diagnosed as a broken leg and Date's football season was over almost as soon as it had started.

His loss will hurt the hard running Juniors as his speed and power led them to an early 14 point lead over Donovan in the first quarter.

The Junior Tigers scored touchdowns on their first two possessions of the game.

They then cruised to the win with quarterback Ian Witucki also running in for a touchdown of his own.

The Senior Tiger's season debut wasn't quite as dramatic as they were beaten 8-0 by Donovan in a defensive battle.

Senior coach Phil Mazza had expected Donovan, an Oshawa area high school, to give his boys a rough ride and he was quite pleased with the outcome and in particular the play of the defence.

"I thought the defence played very well," he said. "They held Donovan in a number of important situations. Our offence still needs some work, but overall I thought we played quite well, better than I expected, for a first game."

Donovan scored on their first

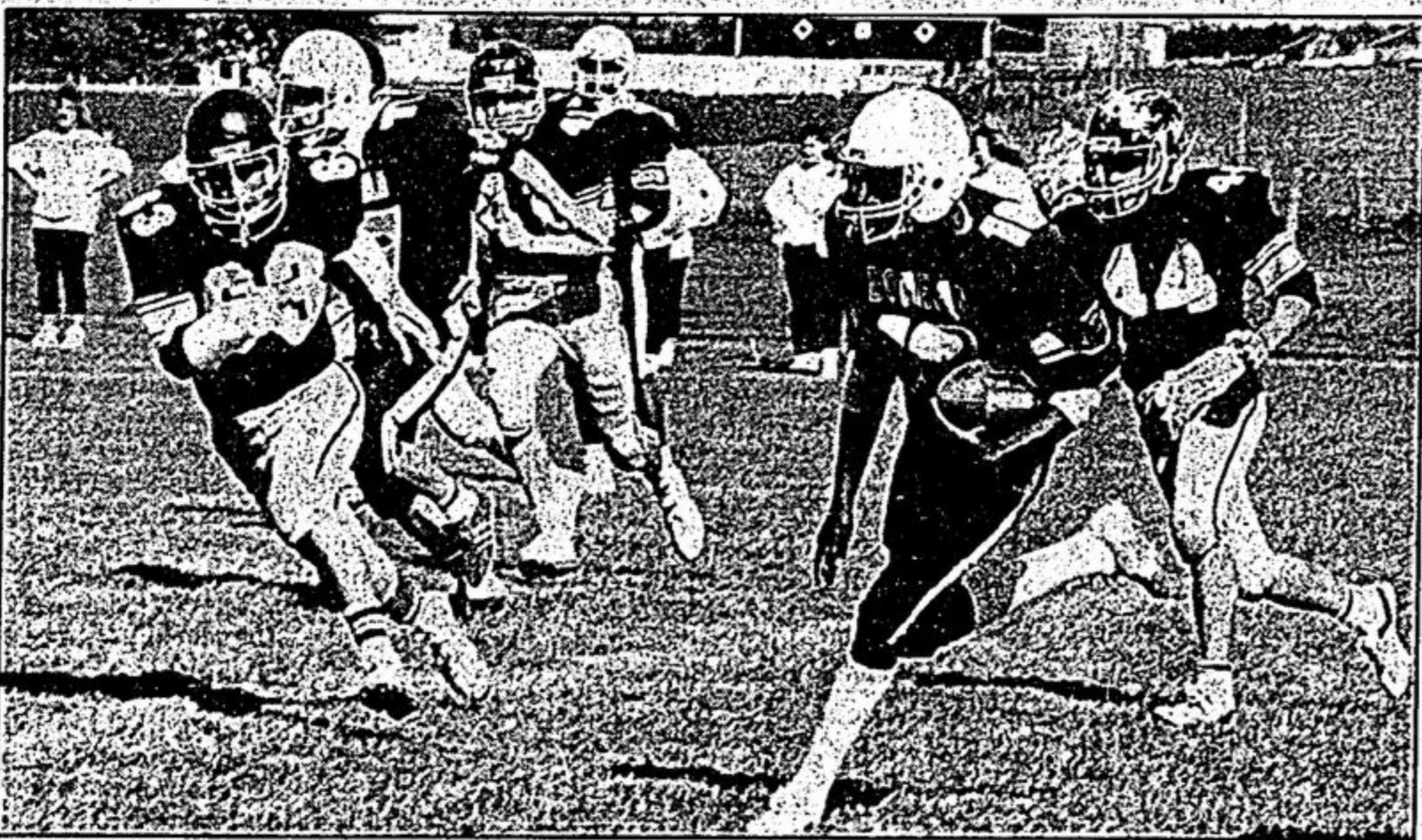
possession on some basic hard running plays which gave the Uxbridge defence problems.

However, after the initial score the Tiger defenders calmed down and played a very solid game.

The highlight was in the fourth quarter when they prevented a Donovan first down close to the goal line and forced them to kick a field goal which went wide and only scored a single point.

Uxbridge came close to tying it up late in the first half, as they took the ball to the Donovan four yard line before the clock ran out.

Tomorrow afternoon the Tigers take on Henry in Oshawa and next week travel to Pickering High School. Their next home game is slated for Thursday, Oct. 15 at 1:30 p.m. against Dunbarton of Pickering.



Get him! A pair of Uxbridge Senior Tiger defenders chase the Donovan ball carrier during high school football play last Thursday in Uxbridge. Dan Smith (63) and Frank Vanvegal (44) close in for the tackle. — Alan Shackleton

BMX bike racers ride to provincial title

By ALAN SHACKLETON
Sports Editor
Brother and sister Justin and Jennifer Norwood celebrated their first season in the sport of BMX bicycle racing by winning the Grand Provincial Championship in their age divisions.

Justin, 8, and Jennifer, 11, became interested in BMX racing last year and this was only their first full season of competition.

However, they had a good year, doing well in a number of races to qualify for the Grand Provincials held recently in Kingston.

Jennifer took top spot in the 11-year-old Girls Division, beating out a number of more experienced riders, while Justin won the honors in the 8-year-old Novice Boys class.

The Bloomington Road and Fifth Concession residents first became interested in BMX racing after attending a race in Newmarket last year with parents Gord and Cindy.

Justin thought it looked like fun when he saw the races and he'd like to try it, father Gord remembered. "We signed him up with the Newmarket BMX club and Jennifer decided to join too."

They became members of the Newmarket Super Boss BMX Racing Club, which allowed them to compete in the provincial qualifier races across Ontario and the right to practice on the Newmarket track.

To qualify for the Grand Provincials in Kingston, they had to participate in at least five races and collect a minimum number of points.

While both Jennifer and Justin competed on special BMX bikes in the Grand Provincials, they started their season racing normal street bikes.

Jennifer now rides an all-aluminum light weight bike called a PK Ripper which was designed in California, while Justin circles the track on his Mini Force three.

"The Mini has very thin tires which is an advantage for the younger racers, while the Ripper is light," explained Gord.

Top of the line BMX bikes can carry a hefty price tag, but for the most part it's a relatively inexpensive sport, he added.

BMX racing is similar in theory to motocross racing but there aren't as many steep jumps and the tracks are not as long.

Since there are no engines, just leg power, in BMX racing the speeds, the sound level, the danger of injury and the cost of participating is considerably lower.

"You can become competitive in BMX racing quite quickly and for a reasonable cost," Gord said.

Also in Ontario, BMX racing is strictly an amateur sport with competitors going after trophies, not prize money.

However, in the United States, where the sport is extremely popular, there is a professional circuit where some older riders are racing for money.

Justin and Jennifer raced once last summer in the States, in an amateur race in

Akron, Ohio, and they were overwhelmed by the huge field.

"There must have been at least 1,500 riders there," Gord said. "It was really something."

Justin did very well in Akron, riding to a fifth place finish against very experienced opponents. "They take it seriously down there and it's a very aggressive style of racing," Gord added.

This December, Jennifer and Justin hope to compete in an indoor race in Columbus, Ohio.

While Justin and Jennifer enjoy the competition and athletic benefits of BMX racing, they also like to collect the hardware and have an impressive array of huge trophies.

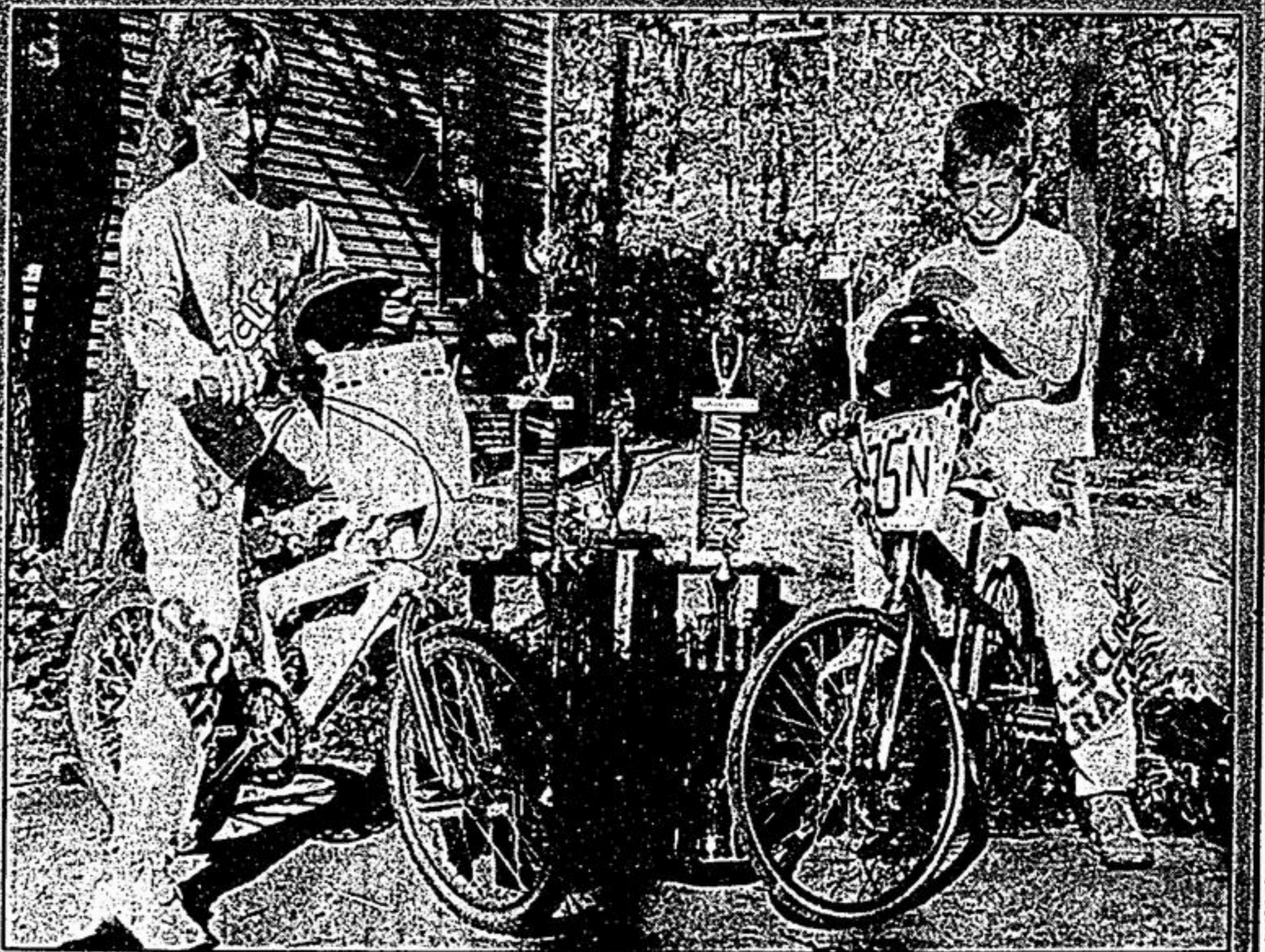
Justin was interested in the sport from the first time he saw it. "I wanted to try it and see if I'd like it. I also wanted to win some big trophies, that's my favorite part," he explained.

Jennifer is also sold on BMX racing. "It's a great sport," she said. "You have a lot of fun and can win lots of nice trophies. You just can't beat it."

However, like every other sport there is a risk of injury, though it's minimal in BMX racing. The riders wear helmets and other protective equipment in case of falls.

"Falling is the hardest thing about the sport, but it doesn't hurt very much," Jennifer said.

"It's a safe sport, and every effort is made towards safety," he explained.



Eleven-year-old Jennifer Norwood (left) and brother Justin (right) have racked up an impressive number of wins in their first full season of BMX bicycle racing. The Whitchurch Stouffville residents won titles in the Grand Provincials held recently in Kingston. They are members of the Newmarket Super Boss BMX Racing Club. — Alan Shackleton

Cheers for high school football

With all the garbage going on at the "professional" football level, it's a pleasure to see the game played by enthusiastic high schoolers.

Last Thursday was a perfect afternoon for football as the Uxbridge Secondary School (USS) Tigers played host to Donovan of Oshawa, and I was glad I could catch some of the action.

The sun was shining, but there was the cool bite of fall in the air as the teams took the field. This was the season opener for both squads, and there's something special about that first game.

Everybody's undefeated and there's lots of optimism and high hopes. For some junior players there's the thrill of finally getting to play for real.

They've been through three painful weeks of practice, and in that time they inevitably have wondered why they're putting themselves to so much abuse.

But after the kickoff in the first game and that initial good hit or run they know, and it's a feeling that makes everything that came before it worthwhile.

Volleyball just ain't the same.

When it comes to high school sports, football is by far the best for the fans. As far as I know cheerleaders were invented for football. Oh sure, they stand around for the basketball games, but football is what it's all about.

To be honest, football is the only thing I miss about high school. The sounds of crunching shoulder pads are as much a part of fall as the nippy weather and the smell of burning leaves.

Phil Mazza, coach of the USS Senior Tigers, has been involved with the game for 23 years. "I don't know what I'd do if fall came around and I wasn't coaching football," he said.

A lot of football lovers feel the same way. That's why at this time of the year folks suddenly get an urge to throw the old pigskin around.

Unfortunately, though, the future of football in this country is not a bright one.

While I think it's a joy to watch a high school game, it doesn't

Sidelines

By ALAN SHACKLETON

Sports Editor



appear that a lot of other people do.

The crowd at the Tiger's game was very small, but there are some reasons for that. I don't think there was an early dismissal for fans to get out and watch, and even if they were interested they would have to leave when their bus arrived anyway.

That's the tough thing for a lot of the students who live far from school; they can't stay late and walk home. If they miss the bus, they're in trouble.

Still, the fans on hand Thursday afternoon were treated to a pretty good performance for a first game. The seniors put up a valiant effort but lost 8-0, while the juniors looked very strong enroute a 28-14 win.

At least USS has a football program which gives players, fans and sports writers a chance to enjoy the game. Stouffville District Secondary School canned their program in 1968 due to rising costs, and I doubt they'll ever bring it back.

That's too bad, but with the quality of the Canadian Football League (CFL), and the never ending stupidity south of the border it's not hard to see why people are losing interest in football.

Especially when you take a look at the success of the Blue Jays. They are a first-class organization on and off the field, providing

fans with outstanding entertainment (just look at last weekend and the one coming up) and a responsible front office.

Have you ever been able to say that about the Argos? And ever since Harold Ballard's owned the Leafs, pro hockey in this area has been a misery.

The folding of the Montreal Alouettes prior to the season was just another nail in the CFL's coffin.

I hate to say this, but I don't give a hoot what happens to the CFL. I'm not one of those snobs who only watches the NFL because it's better (which it isn't), but the CFL no longer holds an ounce of appeal to me.

Which is strange because I used to be a rabid Argos fan. Defensive End Jim Corrigan (number 79 out of Kent State and a Canadian by boot) was my absolute idol. However, somewhere along the line I just stopped caring.

I think it was sometime after one of the airlifts, or maybe it was when Lester Brown got traded, (or was that Cedric Minter?) or maybe it was when the Als folded and became the Concordes and then became the Als again and then folded again...

Eventually, you have to come to the conclusion that the CFL has no idea at all what it's doing. They ask players to take pay cuts half way through the season, they move guys all over the place so it's impossible to know who plays for who and the TV coverage is pathetic.

How many times have you wanted to jump through your TV set and strangle Pat Marsden as he tells you how great Canadian football is during a 57-2 game between Edmonton and Ottawa. I've wanted to do it so often I've stopped watching.

At this point someone will no doubt question my patriotism. If I don't support the CFL, I'm a bad Canadian, they'll say.

Wrong. If something stinks it stinks, and all the flag waving in the world won't make it smell any better.

Having said that, it's up to football lovers to save the game in this country before it's too late. A good place to start might be at the local high school. A little fan support goes a long way.