

Bulldogs post first win of year in tourney

Owen-Gage achieved its first victory of the season Monday night when it won the opening round of its holiday tournament, 64-44, over Caseville.

Score by quarters:

O-G	12	27	14	11	64
Case.	10	11	12	11	44

UBLY

The Bulldogs, now 1-5 overall, will face the winner of Tuesday's game between Michigan Lutheran Seminary and Port Hope in the title game Saturday, following the 6:30 junior varsity title game. First round losers play Friday night.

Owen-Gage, still looking for its first win, didn't get it at Uibly Tuesday, Dec. 23, as it lost the non-league contest, 66-44.

Owen-Gage put the game on ice Monday when it exploded for 27 points in the second quarter, to go into the locker room at halftime with a margin of 39-21.

The Bearcats were paced by 6-3 Terry Camp, who pumped in 32 points, including 14 of his team's 26 tallies in the last quarter. He also grabbed nine of his team's 33 rebounds.

Jim Glidden paced his squad with 27 points, with brother Dan following with 20.

The Bulldogs also had only one player in double figures, Terry Muntz with 23, his most ever. The 6-2 junior also grabbed 13 rebounds. Jim Glidden snared 12, as the team collected a total of 33.

The team shot 27 of 57 from the floor for a 47 percent average. At the charity line, the Bulldogs sank 10 of 17, 59 percent.

Class C Uibly shot 28 of 63 from the floor, 44 percent, and 10 of 13 from the charity line, 77 percent.

The Gliddens also glistened in the rebound department, with Dan grabbing 11 and Jim, 10. The team collected a total of 37.

Owen-Gage connected on 20 of 49 field goal attempts, 41 percent, and four of nine from the free throw line, 44 percent.

Mike Stahl led the Eagles with 17 points, followed by Pete Schuetz with 12.

The win gave Uibly an overall season mark of 4-2 while the Bulldogs dropped to 0-5.

Caseville connected on 18 of 45 field goal attempts, 40 percent, and six of 15 free throws, 40 percent. The team collected 22 rebounds.

Uibly won the junior varsity game, 44-20.

Caseville won the junior varsity game, 49-38.

Score by quarters:

Uibly	14	12	14	26	66
O-G	7	8	12	17	44



POSING ON THE balancing beam is this year's gymnastic team. Front row, from left: Bobbi MacKay, Kristy Deering, Tina LaRoche, Kathy Henderson, Carrie Lautner, Suzy Scollon. Second row: DeAngela Garety, LaDonna Hawley, Colleen Janssen, Coach Sue Cali, Michelle Fahrner, Jill Seuryneck, LeAnne Potrykus.

Tough schedule faces Hawk gymnastic team

Coach Sue Cali points to numbers and enthusiasm as the strength of the Cass City High School gymnastic team this year.

schools on the schedule. Only Class C team that Hawks face is Vassar.

Gone are two lettermen, Libby Hartel and Nancy Tonti. But Cali can look to seven returning lettermen to bolster the team.

Cass City is forced to seek out larger schools for competition because at schools do not field teams. The first of the last schools will be Midland which comes to Cass City Jan. 7.

They include Michelle Fahrner, Carrie Lautner, Jill Seuryneck, LeAnne Potrykus, Kristy Deering, Sherry Leffer and Tena LaRoche.

The schedule: Jan. 7 Midland, here; Jan. 12 Grand Blanc, the; Jan. 15 Vassar, there; Jan. 19 Flint Kearsley there; Jan. 26 Midland Dow, the; Feb. 9 Grand Blanc, the; Feb. 16 Midland, there; Feb. 19 Vassar, here; Feb. 21 Grand Blanc, the; Feb. 25 Flint Kearsley, the.

A weakness of the team is the inexperience of the new members.

TOO LATE
Some folks' good intentions fizzle out even before they are put into practice!



MARY LENHARD of Gagetown is a starting forward on the Grand Valley State College Women's basketball team this season. She scored 23 points in the first two games. She is a 1978 graduate of Owendale-Gagetown High School.

May give it up

Birney mulls future as kicker in National Football League

Fifty thousand football fans are yelling at you. If you kick the football through the uprights the way you're supposed to, you're a hero. Miss and you're a bum.

Tom Birney has been a hero and a bum. Right now, he is an unemployed professional football player, who was a placekicker part of the past two seasons for the Green Bay Packers.

Birney, 24, is a 1974 graduate of Bishop Borgess High School, near Detroit, who played football at Michigan State University. All he did was kickoffs and punts.

He met his wife of three years, Mandy, when both were freshmen at MSU. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Trischler of Hurds Corner Road, Cass City. She is a 1974 graduate of Owen-Gage High School.

Her family then lived near Bach. The couple has a 17-month-old son, Mark.

He graduated from MSU in 1978 with a teaching degree in physical education and a determination to make it in professional football.

He was invited that year to try out with the New England Patriots as a free agent, but didn't make the team.

He kept practicing his kicking and the next year called the Green Bay Packers. They invited him to come to training camp. He again didn't make the team.

Birney went back to substitute teaching in Lansing. But partway through the season, the Packers' placekicker, Chester Marcol, was injured and the team gave Birney a call. "That was a miracle in itself," he said — not that Marcol was injured, but that the Packers called him.

There were experienced professional kickers available and Birney hadn't kicked a field goal since high school. During practice with the Packers, he had never kicked a field goal with the team in a game-type situation, only with a small group of players.

But under the pressure of real competition, he played very well. In six games, he completed seven of nine field goal attempts, and kicked seven extra points.

But in practice for the 1980 season, Packer coach Bart Starr decided to go with Marcol, a nine year veteran. It was back to the classroom for Birney.

But Marcol had his troubles early in the season, and Starr cut him in favor of the East Lansing resident.

His first game was Oct. 12 against Tampa Bay, and it was a disaster. One field goal attempt was partially blocked and he missed two others. With 1:09 left, he missed a 24-yarder. With 36 seconds left in overtime, he missed a 36-yarder. The game ended at 14-14.

"It was very hard," he said of the aftermath of that day. "To come back from that and do well, that meant a lot to me."

He was to play in seven games, (including Tampa Bay), during which he kicked 15 of 18 extra points

and six of 12 field goal attempts. He might have done even better, but had to contend with a right-handed holder who wasn't always able to hold the ball correctly for Birney, who kicks with his left foot.

Of those seven games, the Packers won three, lost three (two by a total of seven points) and tied one.

But with four games left in the season, Starr gave Birney his walking papers, in favor of veteran placekicker Jan Stenerud.

Birney was both surprised and disappointed when he was let go. "I really thought I was their field goal kicker of their future."

Starr agreed with Birney when he gave him his walking papers that part of the problem was the holder. Stenerud kicks right-footed. He also had a lot more experience, and with four games to go and a chance to make the playoffs, that was a major consideration.

The move didn't pay off, however. Green Bay lost its final four games and finished the season at 5-10-1.

BIRNEY'S PROFESSIONAL career may not be over. The 6-4, 220-pounder — big for a kicker — has already met with officials of another team, which he doesn't wish to name at this point. He has been invited to its training camp come July and may sign a contract in

January. But he may not. "I have to think about my family," he explained. "I can't run off and play football all the time."

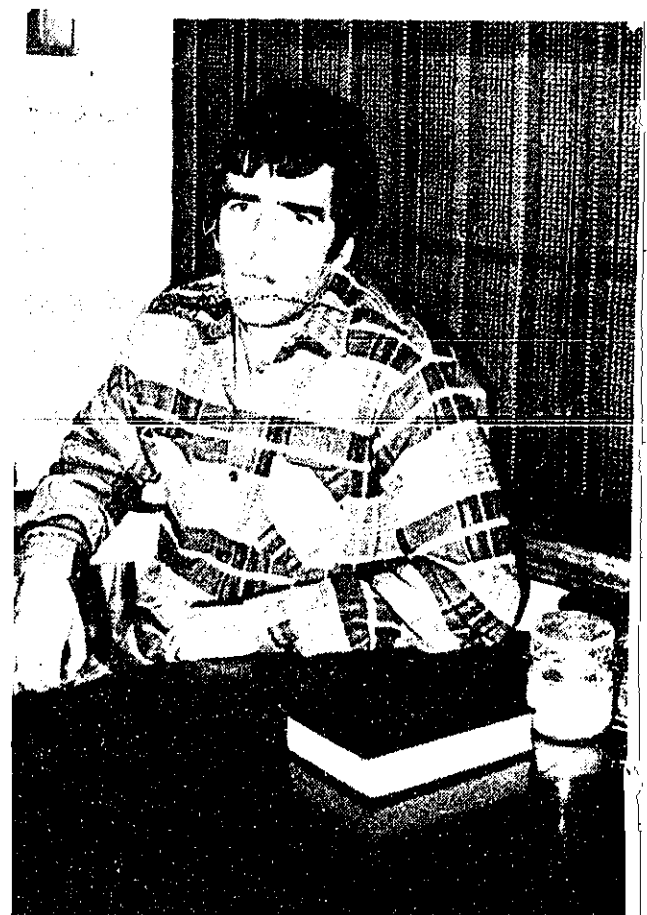
Substitute teaching fits in well with football, but if he doesn't play again, he may not go into teaching full-time.

Religion plays a very important role in his life, as indicated by the fact that when he was waiting for the Chronicle reporter to arrive at the Trischler home, where he and his family spent Christmas week, he was reading the Bible. He considers himself a "Christian athlete."

DOES GOD HAVE A role in the huddle? Does he help a team to win? Birney doesn't see it that way. Although the Lord gives the talents to the players, it is up to them as to what they do with them. "I think you're responsible for the things God has given to you."

With that in mind, it is also necessary to put the game into its proper perspective. "Although winning is nice, it's not the end of the world if you lose." He can remember things from games several years ago, but can't remember whether his team won or lost.

"The key thing in life isn't what happened," the soft-spoken Birney said in looking back at his so far up and down football career, "but how you react to what has happened."



TOM BIRNEY

Ex-Packer gives inside look at life in pros

The players tend to stick together in small groups when off the field. Defensive players may eat meals together, for instance, because they work together all the time, or players may stick together in groups according to their interests.

The Christian athletes are one group, players who like to hang around in bars are another. "Whatever you see in society, you're going to see there (on the team)."

Players are aware of betting and point spreads, and coaches may use that in their pep talks. If the other team is favored by two touchdowns, the coach may tell his players they can beat the odds. But if it's his team that is favored, he may caution them not to be overconfident.

Although it's only the comparatively few big name players who make the big bucks and drive the Mercedes-Benzes and Cadillacs, football players do make good salaries, if only for a few years.

Halftime locker room sessions are devoted more to technical matters — what happened in the first half, strategy for the second half — than to pep talks.

In college, if a player doesn't do well, he may sit on the bench for a while. There is a lot more pressure in the pro ranks. "If you don't do well in a professional game, you're back home wondering what happened."

Although field goal kickers usually have longer careers — injuries are fewer (Birney has never been

knocked down in his pro career) and the job is less physically demanding — the pressure is greater. "The results are obvious. If you make it, you're the hero." What's it like going out on the field to kick a crucial field goal with the fans screaming? "You get used to it after a while, because you've been in that situation enough times that it isn't a factor."

Martin earns letter
Ken Martin, an Alma College freshman from Cass City and a 1980 graduate of Cass City High School, is one of 80 Alma football players who earned recognition for participation in the Alma Scots' 1980 season. A tight end, Martin received a letter sweater as his first varsity award. Football awards were announced at a banquet Dec. 7 for Alma football players and their families. The Alma Scots finished 2-7 overall and 1-4 in the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Association. Martin is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Martin, 4180 Hurds Corner Road.

Happy New Year!

We send you our sincerest wishes for a New Year of lasting joy and happiness.

THE CHARMONT
Clare and Jeannie Comment and all the staff

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Silver chimes resound with our warm wishes for a year of golden dreams come true! Our gratitude to all.

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