

UBC THUNDERBIRD FOOTBALL



1987 HARDY CUP CHAMPIONS

1987 Hardy Cup and Western Bowl Champions: CIAU Coach-of-the-Year, Frank SMITH guided the Thunderbirds to a 1st place finish with a perfect 8-0 conference record. The 'Birds defeated the Alberta Golden Bears in the Hardy Cup final 26-8 on the strength of a 483-yard offensive performance, in the Western bowl they faced the OUA Champion Wilfrid Laurier Golden Hawks and needed a last minute pick-six by Mark NYKOLAICHUK (DB) to win 33-31. The 'Birds led the WIFL in interceptions-19, QB sacks-17, FGs-21, TD passes-13, ranked number one in scoring offence with 232-points, and allowed a league lowest 101-points against.

The record setting 'Birds were led by all-Canadians Jordan GAGNER (QB) the Frank GnuP award winner as the Most Outstanding Player in the conference, Craig KELLER (REC), Matt FITZPATRICK (DL), and WIFL Defensive-Presidents Trophy winner Jordan LEITH (DB). The 'Birds recorded UBC's first and only shutout victory over SFU in the annual Shrum Bowl, holding the future 1st overall pick and CFL Outstanding Rookie Orville LEE to 38-rushing yards before a capacity crowd at Swanguard stadium. The Thunderbirds would advance to play the O-QIFC champion McGill Redmen in the 23rd Vanier Cup at Varsity Stadium in Toronto, ON. in minus-12C temperatures to decide the CIAU championship. Vanier Cup Facts: UBC tied the records for most kickoff returns-7, and most passes completed-20 in a game, set new records | Jordan GAGNER most passes attempted-44, team records for total offensive plays-86, and most passes in a game-45.



HC | Frank SMITH



QB | Jordan GAGNER

Season Highlights: M. BELLEFONTAINE most pts scored in a game-24 vs. Sask, Sept. 26th, C. KELLER most receptions in a game-11 vs. Chico St, Oct. 17th, and M. BELLEFONTAINE vs. Alb, Nov. 7th, M. PEARCE most all-purpose yards in a season-1,485 and most yards rushing in a game-114 vs Cal, Aug. 29th. Jordan GAGNER led the WIFL in six categories including most individual yards in a season-3,438 setting a new school record for most pass completions in a game-52 vs Chico St. Oct.17th. The defence had the fewest yards against-126 vs SSK, Sept. 26th, fewest passing yards against-88 vs Alberta, Sept. 5th, most turnovers caused in a season-29. C. KELLER highest punt return average in a season-12.5, M. BELLEFONTAINE most field goals in a game-5 vs. SSK, Sept. 26th, M. NOWOTNY longest kickoff in a game-75 vs. SSK, Sept. 26th. Terry AINGE most fumble returns in a season-3, Jordan LEITH most interceptions in a season-5, Matthew FITZPATRICK most QB-sacks in a season-4, Ron HURYIN most QB sacks in a game-3 vs SFU Sept. 12th, B. MCDONALD pick-six and fumble recovery clinched the victory vs MB Sept. 19th. Mike BELLEFONTAINE led the WIFL in scoring-85 pts and the highest FG % 85.3, C. KELLER led the conference in receiving touchdowns-7.

Team Highlights: Jordan GAGNER becomes the first UBC player to win the CIAU Hec Crighton award, undefeated 6-0 home field record, led WIFL with most interception TDs in a season-3, three games with over 400+ yards of total offense, the most points scored in a half-41 vs SSK Sept.26 and defensively tied for the lead with scoreless QTRS-11. Frank SMITH completed his 14th season and moved into 2nd in WIFL career wins-70 and 2nd in winning % .642

11 WIFL conference all-Stars: Tony KRISTOPAITIS (OL), John KADLA (OL), Todd WICKMAN (WR), Craig KELLER (IR), Jordan GAGNER (QB), Ron HURYIN (DL), Matt FITZPATRICK (DL), George PETROVAS (LB), Jordan LEITH (DB), Terry AINGE (DB), Bruce MCDONALD (DB).

Many of the 1987 roster were members of the 1986 Vanier Cup championship squad, placing eighteen on the Thunderbird 1980s all-Decade team. Accumulating a 22-game CIAU winning streak over two seasons playing in sixteen conference games, six playoff games and lost only ONCE....