

HANK ILESIC**Eskimos' punter still in school**

EDMONTON (CP) — Hank Ilesic went back to school at St. Joseph's High Sept. 3 — as probably the only Grade 12 student in professional football.

Ilesic, who won the national pass, kick and punt competition three years ago as a 14-year-old, is a punter for Edmonton Eskimos of the Western Football Conference — a story that even coach Hugh Campbell is having a tough time believing.

Ilesic now is so confident in his kicking abilities that at training camp he predicted it was just a matter of time before he took a job away from Dave Cutler, Edmonton's place-kicking specialist and the man who holds the CFL career record for points scored.

His team-mates call him Big Foot OR Sasquatch (he wears size 13 shoes), Dr. Spock (he has big ears) or simply Shank (when he muffs a kick).

In his second game as a full-fledged professional he saw some action during the pre-season exhibition grind, Ilesic's first punt — into the wind — travelled a humiliated 23 yards before it went out of bounds.

"That's the first time I saw the pressure get to him," said Campbell, who promptly chewed out his young punter.

Ilesic rebounded, however, finished the game with a 42-yard punting average, and Edmonton whipped Calgary Stampeders 22-8.

Ilesic had been welcomed to pro ranks six days earlier by a few Montreal Alouettes after his first regular-season punt soared 55 yards.

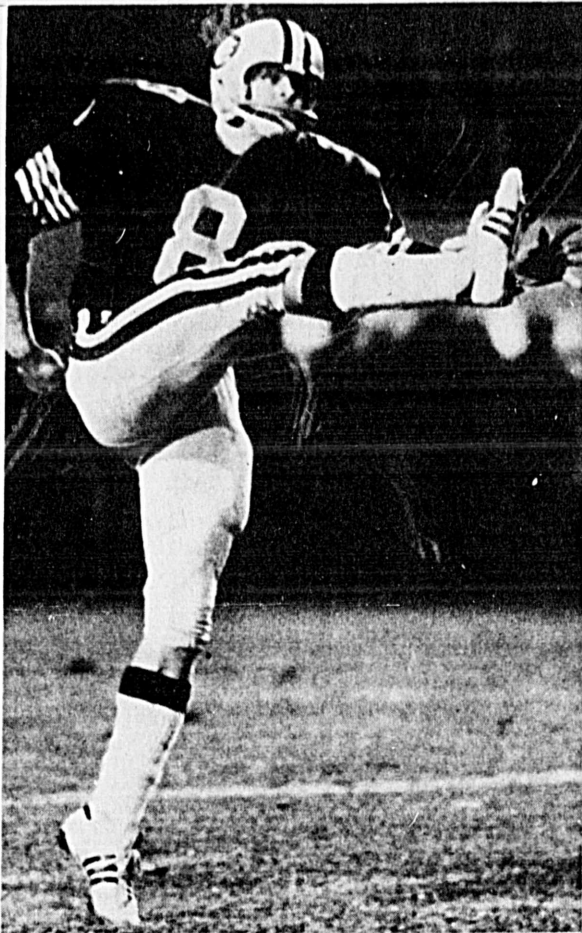
"Somebody caught me with an elbow on the back of my helmet. Half the time I couldn't see the ball leave my hands."

Campbell had been doubtful whether to use Ilesic, the club's best punter in training camp, and Gerald Kunyk, a former Stampeder, got the season-starting assignment. Kunyk has since been cut.

"When he came to camp he asked Ray Jauch and me to promise him that if he was our best punter we'd play him. We waited until the seventh league game because we wanted to be sure that he could get along in the pro environment. . . that he had the maturity to go with the position."

After his impressive outing against Montreal, Ilesic was mumbling something about quitting school — a remark that brought an immediate reaction from Jauch and Campbell.

"Both of them said,



Young Hank Ilesic follows through on a kick.

"Hank, what's this about not going back to school?" Ilesic said. "I told them that because of the way I was scrambled in that game I wasn't making any sense. I said I planned to go back to school. They just warned me to make sure."

Ilesic said his first day

back at school wasn't too bad.

"I got teased about what happened on that first kick in Calgary. I hope the kids don't change toward me too much. I don't think I've changed."

"One thing I've noticed already. I do get more respect than before."

Retirement no problem

REGINA (CP) — It has been more than a year now since George Reed heard the cheers.

For 13 years he was No. 34 with Saskatchewan Roughriders, the crashing full-back nonpareil.

But in May of last year he called it quits and sent his sweater to the Canadian Football League's Hall of Fame.

The huge gap left in the life of a retiring athlete has not been a problem for Reed at the age of 37. He always had other interests—cooking, music, tropical fish, houseplants.

The pressure of fame was one of the reasons for his quitting the game and Reed now finds that his name is far from forgotten in this city in which football is a religion.

He now does color commentary for broadcasts of CFL games. In addition to his job as a promotion manager for a brewery, he is deeply involved in the George Reed Foundation for the Handicapped.

"I got out of the game because I wasn't willing any more to put up with the mental strain and physical pain," said Reed, who was brought up with 11 brothers and sisters in Renton, Wash., where his father worked as a machine operator in a steel mill.

"I could have put up with the physical pain that you endure playing the game of football, but the mental strain of the game had begun to take its toll on me."

"That's probably the real reason I got out. I wasn't able to take what you would call the BS in football any more."

Reed said the mental pres-

sure for a football player is constant.

"Pressure that you have to win, that you have to be the best at your position day in and day out. The pressure that people put on you when you lose a football game. The pressure that's put on your family. The pressure of seeing a guy sit by you for five years and all of a sudden he's told he's not good enough to play the game."

"That affects you. Especially if they become pretty close to you. You see a guy come in and you know he hasn't received a fair shot at making the football team. That bothers you. . ."

Reed does miss the exhilaration of playing the game and of being with the men he spent so much time with.

However, he makes a point of not seeing too much of his old friends because he doesn't want to spend his time reliving his football career.

Reed has other things to live for now.

"I first got interested in the handicapped back in 1969. They wanted to put on some special games here for the mentally handicapped people and they had to have a way of raising some money. They asked me to help organize a dinner and to let my name stand as a head coach of the games."

"So I got involved and I have been working for them since that time."

The George Reed Foundation for the Handicapped was

established in October, 1975, with an anonymous donation of \$15,000. At its last annual meeting this summer, the foundation had almost \$46,000 on deposit and another \$7,100 due from a hockey benefit.

Reed's goal is \$1 million in the bank, from which an annual endowment of about \$100,000 can be used to provide scholarships and various services for handicapped.

Reed, former president of the CFL Players' Association, said the association has been able to get the "fairest contract, from the standpoint of the conditions that you play under, of any sport that's operating in North America today."

CFL players were making a good living, but not necessarily huge salaries. He estimated the average salary in the league is about \$25,000 a year.

Reed has two daughters and a teen-age son at home. The son is interested in football, but he's not getting any pushing from his father. It will be his own decision whether to pursue a football career.

Lauda testing another car for Brabham

VALLELUNGA, Italy (AP) — World driving champion Niki Lauda of Austria tested a Brabham-Alfa Romeo BT45 for the first time Tuesday on this track north of Rome, but said he hoped to make his debut in the 1978 world Formula 1 championship at the wheel of the new, revolutionary BT46 model.

Lauda described as "non-sense" reports that the new car would not be ready for years.

"The new Brabham is being tested in England by John Watson," Lauda said. "If the tests over the next two weeks prove successful I may have the BT46 for the Grand Prix of Argentina in January. I have found the old model competitive, but Watson says the new one is even faster."

Lauda, however, conceded there still were problems to be solved for the BT46.

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Injured skier wasn't aware

TORONTO (CP) — Paul Carson didn't discover until the 1977 pro ski racing season was over that he had been racing almost three months with a broken pelvis.

"It wasn't just a hairline," says Carson. "The pelvis was in two pieces, broken right where the hamstring muscle attaches to the bone."

The 25-year-old racer refused to use the injury as an excuse for last season's results, especially since it was his best in four years on the pro ski circuit where he finished 11th over all.

"I couldn't walk or even sit without pain," he said this week while preparing to return to the World Pro Ski (WPS) tour. "By the last race (in April) I couldn't free ski at all. I would just get into the gate and go."

His standing might have been much better, however. After the third race of the season, at Winter Park, Colo., where he broke the bone, Carson was standing third.

His spine realigned itself to compensate for the injury, causing him back pains through the summer and, finally, a slipped disc. He's taken a full month off training to allow the back time to mend.

"The doctor says it will be stronger than ever," Carson said before leaving for Copper Mountain, Colo. Carson and the other three Canadians on the WPS tour this year are going to need strong backs to get through the schedule that includes racing every weekend after Christmas.

That doesn't worry Carson. "It's looking very good," he observed. "There's \$633,000 prize money already posted, starting with an \$80,000 race at Aspen (Colo.). There are 15 races in all, including three in Canada."

From their performances last year, Canadian skiers finally appear set to take their share of the loot.

Alain Cousineau of Brownsburg, Que., skied into sixth place while Doug Woodcock of Oshawa, Ont., finished in 10th.

This year they'll be joined by former national team ace Jim Hunter of Calgary.

"It will probably take him some time to adjust," said Carson of his new team-mate. "He'll probably have to pay his dues, just like everyone else. I thought I was pretty hot when I came off the national team, but it took me half a year before I even qualified for a race."

"There are a few surprises waiting for Jungle (Jim)."

Hunter will be spared the task of a matchup with Frenchman Henri Duvillard, who retired last season after dominating the pro circuit

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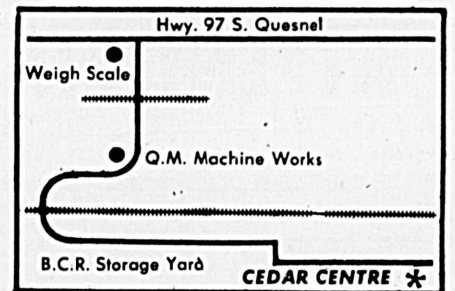
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