

Mustang Tales

their first two "exhibition" games, beating Royal Military College 35-2 and blanking Dundas Bombers of the ORFU 22-0.

However, things didn't look too bright early in the 1939 Senior Intercollegiate opener against Queen's in London. The Mustangs trailed 16-5, but finally got untracked and went on to win 32-17. The Mustangs went through their league schedule undefeated, including a 23-8 win over Toronto at Varsity Stadium, the first time Western had beaten the Blues in Toronto since 1931.

The toughest challenge for the Mustangs came in the final game of the season in Kingston. Again the Mustangs trailed the Tricolor 7-1 at halftime and 8-1 early in the fourth quarter. Then they marched to the Queen's one-yard line and, on third down, scored a touchdown (worth five points at that time) on an extension run with Szumlinski throwing a lateral to Thompson, who crossed the goal line. Faust converted to make it 8-7.

The Mustangs kept up the pressure and with three and a half minutes to go, Western's standout end Claude Moore blocked a kick deep in Queen's territory and Western's inside (guard) George Oliphant picked the ball out of the air and rambled across the goal line for the winning touchdown.

It gave Western its first undefeated season since entering Senior Intercollegiate ranks.

"I can still see it," Morley Thomas, a middle (tackle) with the 1939 Mustangs, related years later. "It was towards the end of a very rough game. For some reason, we spread out (on defence). It wasn't planned ... nothing was planned too much in those days. I moved closer to the centre of the line and the Queen's lineman (opposite) moved in too and Moore went booming through. The ball went straight up in the air and Oliphant caught it and ran about 15 yards for the touchdown. I think it was the first touchdown he had ever scored."

"The boys really played a wonderful game today," Storen told the Gazette after the game. "Same old game as they've shown us all year — late starting in the first half but with that extra punch and drive coming out in the last quarter."

Queen's coach Frank Tindall joined in the praise.

"Queen's played over their heads against a vastly superior team. Bill Storen knows how to use his wonderful stars."

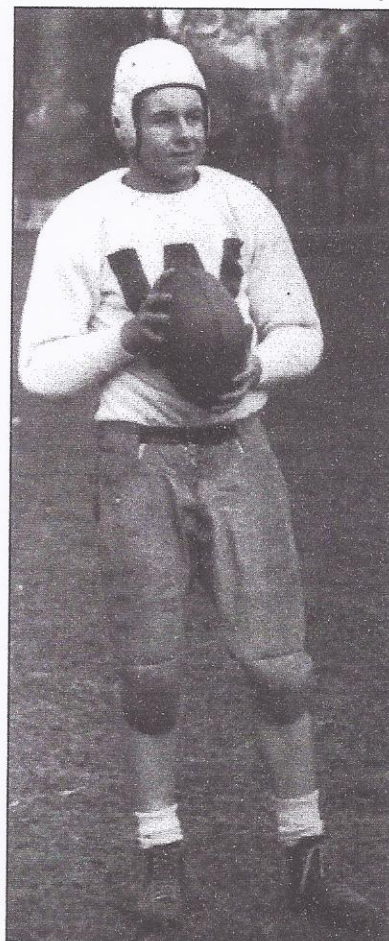
Western's line of Moore and Roy Kent at ends, Thomas and Jay Cameron at middle, Oliphant and Harold Benson at inside and Gordon Taylor at centre played the entire 60 minutes.

"We were rather tired at the end," Thomas recalled.

Johnny Metras, Western's line coach, praised the play of the Western line. "Best damn line in the whole league," he said without hesitation.

But despite Metras's comments, no Western inside, middle or snap (centre) was selected to the Canadian Press all-star team.

Metras obviously didn't like the selection. "This may sound like bragging but I remember a comment by Jack Sullivan (Canadian



Ironman Al Hurley played 60 minutes in all Mustang league games in 1939.

Canadian Press) included Krol, M. Kent, Szumlinski.

Faust, who had previously at St. University at O had had a tryout with the Tigers, led the Senior Intercollegiate in scoring and was also selected to the Canadian all-star team.

Hurley bo

The 1939 season was the first time the Gallagher Trophy was the most valuable to the Mustangs. The trophy was named after the publisher of the Toronto Globe. The player who won it was Al Hurley.

A graduate of Kennedy College, Hurley played 60 minutes in all Mustangs' league games in 1939. In 1944, he went back with the Royal Navy St. Hyacinthe team which won the championship by beating Hamilton.

At the conclusion of the 1939 season, Storen gave up teaching and returned to Detroit to join his family's engineering firm.

At the football banquet, players were given club bags for the championship season. Storen announced the Mustangs had scored 173 points in eight games, ran 331 plays, gained 1,887 yards in 1,440 passes, completing 67 with 73 incomplete passes for an average of 48 per cent.

The 1940s

With the beginning of the Second World War, the Canadian collegiate Athletic Union suspended all activities for the duration of the war.

The decision wasn't without controversy at Western. Johnny Metras, who had taken over as head coach in 1940, objected to the suspension of the league and the national championship.