

HUNTERS CORNER

It Was A Black Monday For Those Poor Wildgeese

Historians have recorded that the blackest day Scotland ever knew had its inception on Cullinstown Moor when King James and practically all his nobility were slain in that memorable battle. If wild geese keep any records it would seem as if their blackest day, so far as this province is concerned, occurred on Monday, October 25th, 1959. It was a day of torrential rain and gale force winds. At daybreak in the morning it was pretty grim. I awoke at 5.30 and lay bed listening to the rain hammering on roof and the wind howling like a Banshee and thinking about how the Southport Farmers Refuge geese would come down. I felt it in my bones that they were in for a rough passage.

PRESSURE BUILT UP

The pressure built up until I felt I might as well be out battling the elements as fighting with myself in our warm, cosy kitchen. I took only 15 minutes to strip into my armpit length yellow waders and pull the time honoured hunting coat over some rain resistant clothing and sally forth. It was a wild morning. The street in front of Canada Packers resembled a lake. The car rumbling boards were under water but I made it through. I didn't take my shotgun for my intentions were not to hunt geese but to check first how the geese hunters would act when geese are caught with their landing gear down.

I reached Bunbury Station a few minutes before 7 o'clock. As I jotted down the number of three cars and a truck parked near Bunbury Station geese were moving in an almost steady string from Doyle's Cove on the Hillsborough River and guns were popping like firecrackers from three rigs set out in Bus Jones 40 acre stubble field. I never saw wild geese so definitely off the beam and acting so stupid. One party of hunters were set out along the west line about 150 yards from the Station. Another crowd were in the woods at the south edge and a third on the fields eastern fringe at the border of Fullerton's Marsh. I could also hear gunshots to the south of the North of the farm buildings.

There are times when even geese hunting ceases to be a sport. What caused the geese to act so stubborn and stupid is anybody's guess. The weather may have had something to do with their actions but they had been coming into this field for some time from the Refuge nearby and apparently couldn't understand the reception they were getting when it never happened before. A man standing or lying in the field apparently didn't mean a thing they were so used to men walking around the farmer's Refuge less than three quarters of a mile away. They'd be shot at over one stand of decoys and immediately fly to the next and take another pasting.

NO BOTHER

The three hunters on the west line didn't even bother to dig a pit. They just stretched out on the ground near some short bushes and a fringe of dead standing hay. When I checked them there were dead geese lying all over the place. It struck me forcibly they were more concerned with throwing lead, and they were throwing plenty of it, and killing geese than they were in taking count. I knew all three. One

holds a key position in the Queens County Fish and Game Association. I spoke to him: "Didn't you think it time you were making a count?" "I was just thinking about that was his comeback" I made the count for them. They had eleven. "Remember" I cautioned, "you have just four to go" Geese were moving in an almost steady string. I had about 300 yards to walk to the rig to the south and I had to drop to the ground so many times I reminded myself of Bombardier Wells the horizontal heavy weight British Boxer. Another rig like that and I'd have developed calcsus.

The four hunters in the next hide had 8 geese. I inquired who was doing so much shooting on the south side of Fullerton's Marsh. They said they didn't know but whoever they were were rigged out in Kenny Jenkins field. They were sure having a field day for I counted approximately 50 shots from this point in less than an hour. On the return trip I was only a few yards from the hunters with four to go when I spotted 7 geese coming. I dropped down and watched. The 7 came in like puppets on a string... barely moving against the gale. They hovered about four feet above the decoys and appeared to hang in the wind. One was in front, four in a tight knot above the decoys, and two a few feet behind. When the three guns spoke in unison the four middle birds dropped in a heap amid the decoys. The remaining three promptly alighted on the ground. One walked to where one of its companions was kicking on the stubble and gazed fidgetly at it with her head cocked sideways. The other two just stood and looked bewildered. For a matter of five or six seconds, it really seemed longer, the three hunters kept their guns trained on the geese on the ground. It was a tense few seconds. I remember thinking to myself: "If you boys fire another shot you'll go back to town piked as bare as the proverbial Mother Hubbard's cupboard." The spell was broken when one dropped his gun and ran out shouting: "We got our limit" if he had ran a little faster I believe he could have caught one of the bewildered survivors. They promptly flew in a straight line into the muzzles of the guns in the hide to the south. One dropped dead; a second fell wounded in the field while the 3rd and last kept going. I don't think it lived long for I heard guns to south start popping.

HOW STUPID?

This incident shows clearly just how stupid wildgeese get at times. Undoubtedly there is a cause or combination of causes. I understand the geese at McEwen's Island in the New London area acted just as stupid. The situation there is almost the same as at the Southport set-up, although not quite. The Southport Farmer allows no shooting within a quarter mile but in the case of McEwen's Island it is used as a Private Shooting Preserve. Shooting takes place about once a week and then it's given a rest to allow the geese to quieten down and forget about what happened a week previous. Once geese have a set destination in mind they'll absorb a lot of punishment to have their own way. Space is running out and Kenny's Field will have to wait another week at least.

Walt Alston Inks 1-Year Contract

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Manager Walter Alston has signed a new one-year contract to pilot the world champion Los Angeles Dodgers and he gets a raise in pay. General Manager E. J. (Buzie) Bavasi announced the signing Thursday after a talk with Alston at his home in Darrtown, Ohio.

Banks Inks Pact For '60

CHICAGO (AP)—Chicago Cubs Thursday signed their star shortstop, Ernie Banks, for 1960. It was guessed his salary was upped \$10,000 to a near club record \$60,000.

Wynn Captures Cy Young Award

BOSTON (AP)—Early Wynn of Chicago White Sox Thursday was named the winner of the Cy Young Memorial Award as the outstanding pitcher in the major leagues during the 1959 baseball season.

Favorite Flops in Big Race

NEWMARKET, England (AP) — American-owned Tooth and Nail, the favorite, flopped Thursday in the Dewhurst Stakes for two-year-olds. He finished next to last in a field of 12.

Soft-speaking, diamond-smart Alston is second only to Casey Stengel in managerial longevity in the major leagues. Stengel went to New York Yankees in 199 and Alston took over the then Brooklyn Dodgers in 1954. He is the only Dodger manager to win three pennants, in 1955-56-59.

Alston is the only man to manage the club to victory in the world series. He won from the Yankees in 1955 prior to this year's triumph.

Banks reportedly received a \$45,000 base salary with a \$3,000 bonus this year when he hit 45 home runs, drove across 143 runs and set two major league fielding records.

The club salary record is the \$65,000 contract Ralph Kiner carried to the Cubs from Pittsburgh Pirates in 1953.

Wynn, who received 13 of the 16 votes cast by members of the Baseball Writers Association of America for the trophy presented in Young's memory by baseball commissioner Ford Frick, had a 22-10 record for the year. His 22 victories were the most for any pitcher this year in the majors. Sam Jones of San Francisco Giants was runnerup with two votes, and young Bob Shaw of the White Sox received the other three.

Lions Can Expect Nothing But Trouble From Parker

VANCOUVER (CP) — The biggest bogey man here this Halloween is expected to be Jackie Parker.

TO BEARD LIONS

Eskimos Hone Defensive Razor

EDMONTON (CP) — Edmonton Eskimos Thursday ended a week of honing a defensive razor that became slightly rusty late in the Western Interprovincial Football Union season.

Deal May Bring Needed Pitcher To San Francisco

NEW YORK (AP) — There's more than a 50-50 chance that the San Francisco Giants will complete a major deal next month that will bring them another much-needed front line pitcher, Charles (Chub) Feeney, the club's vice-president said Thursday.

Can. Golf Team Loses Equipment

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (Reuters) — Lost, strayed or stolen somewhere between here and London are the golf clubs of the Canadian team which arrived Wednesday for the Commonwealth golf tournament opening next week.

Cub Coaches To Instruct

CHICAGO (AP)—Freddie Fitzsimmons and Rogers Hornsby, dismissed as Chicago Cub coaches Thursday accepted positions as instructors in the Cubs' farm system.

Edmonton's Lions can expect nothing but trouble. There are some statistics to back up that.

Robinson, a rookie head coach, indicated that a tight defence will be an important factor in the series.

He forecast only "a real tough ball game." Keys wrote off Edmonton's 38-14 defeat of B.C. in their last meeting.

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Feeney, here to attend a luncheon tendered to the major league rookie all-star team by a chewing gum firm, said he expected the three-week inter-league trading period starting Nov. 21 to be the most productive in years.

Feeney declined to identify any of the players involved, but he acknowledged the Giants' prime need was pitching.

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In the next two meetings, won by Edmonton 29-7 and 38-14, Parker scored 42 points on six field goals, three touchdowns and six converts.

B.C. had beaten Edmonton in Vancouver's Empire Stadium only once before Aug. 31, that was in Sept. 24, 1956, a game which Parker did not play.

Needless to say Parker is the league's leading scorer.

Meanwhile, Lions coach Wayne Robinson who forecast that his team will go all the way to the Grey Cup this year after over coming Calgary 10-8 to enter the playoffs, is being cautious in his utterances to his players.

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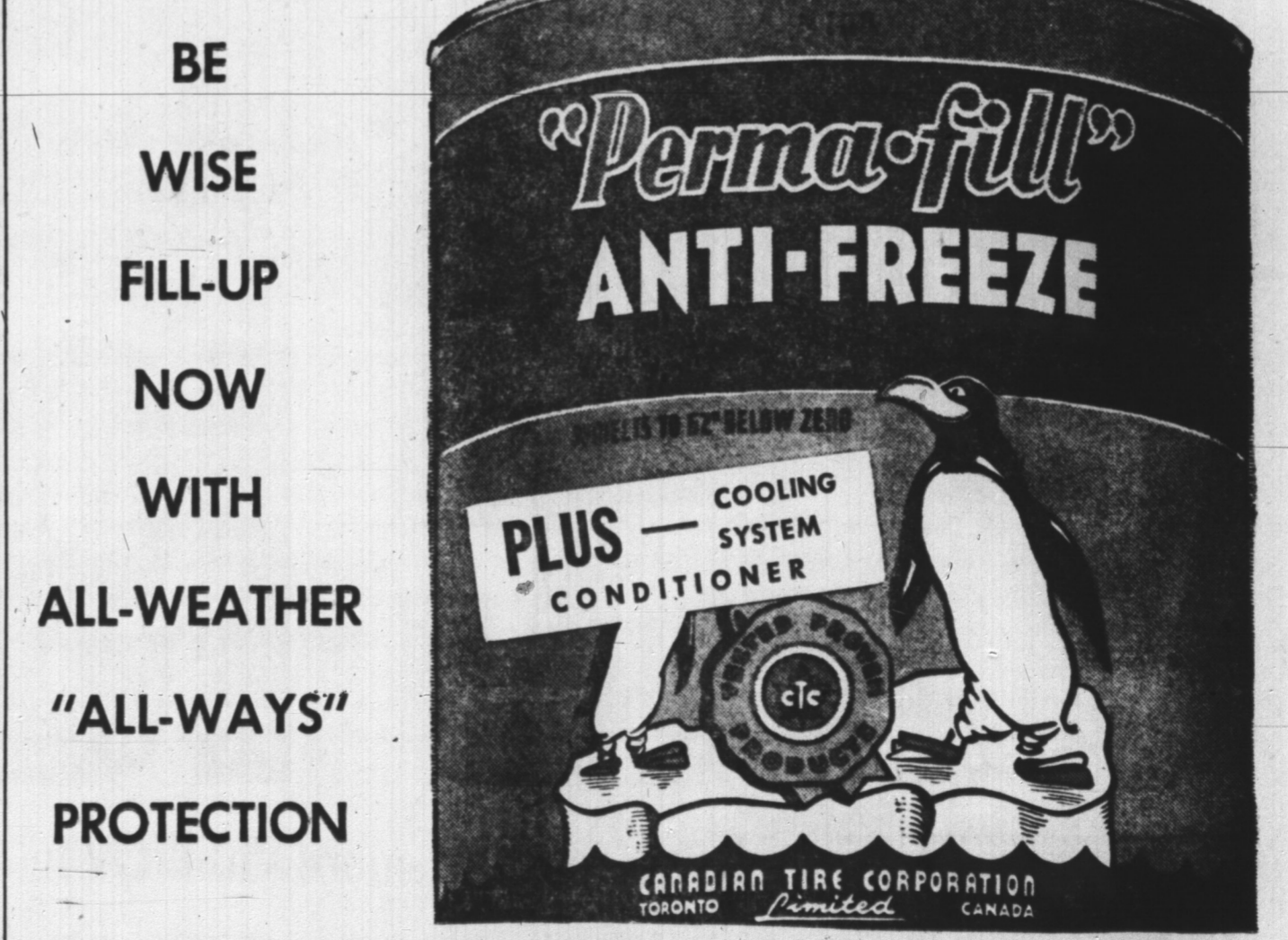
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