

# Better to receive than give in some cases; ask Koswin

By **DON BLANCHARD**  
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Five years ago, Rick Koswin entertained visions of some day reaping the glory and financial benefits enjoyed by the professional quarterback.

Later to pick up the nickname "the cocky kid from the North End," the athletically-endowed southpaw had directed Sisler Spartans to the city high school title as a Grade 11 student.

The world was just sitting there, waiting to be conquered. And the strong-armed Koswin was eager to meet the challenge.

Time hasn't done a thing to chill Koswin's enthusiasm or whittle away at his confidence.

Only difference is when guest receiver coach Hugh Campbell assembles his eager, young prospects at St. John's Ravenscourt Sunday, one of his pupils will be this same Koswin. Perhaps a prized pupil, at that.

It's a long story that merits re-telling.

Although he quarterbacked Gary Naylor's University of Manitoba Bisons the past two seasons, essentially Koswin ceased to be a quarterback prospect three years ago when he literally "burned out" his arm. And he knew it.

It happened a month before Bisons opened camp. Rick tried to let it all out before he was properly warmed up and he felt a sharp pain in his shoulder. That strong arm which had served him and his team so well, was never again the same.

Even Koswin is prepared to agree that perhaps it was



**RICK KOSWIN . . . an eager pupil**

a blessing in disguise. He is fully aware of how difficult it is for the Canadian college quarterback to break into pro ranks, even one with exceptional ability.

At any rate, he wound up playing split end in his rookie year with the Herd and was second in receptions only to all-Canadian Gordie

Paterson, now an esteemed member of the Bombers.

"That's where I should have stayed . . . at split end," recalled Koswin somewhat ruefully. However, because of an injury to Bud Harden, the strapping youngster with the excellent speed and pro size was pressed into service as the

Bison quarterback the following two seasons.

"It didn't really help me one bit playing quarterback," said Koswin, who did more scrambling and running than anything else. In fact he averaged 7.4 yards a carry and gained more than 500 yards rushing in eight collegiate games last year.

His throwing arm still bothers him . . . and he aggravated it lifting weights during the off-season in preparation for his big test next week.

That won't bother his performance, he maintains. His lack of experience as a receiver is Koswin's major concern. "I'll just have to try to pick up some of the tricks of the trade from Campbell — and do it quickly," said Rick resolutely.

In Campbell, of course, he couldn't find a better tutor. Bombers consider Koswin to be an excellent all-around athlete. So much so, they protected Koswin in the Canadian college draft, along with teammate Ted Millian, while most of the teams in the Canadian Football League were protecting players on scholarships in United States colleges.

All-around athlete?

"Whether or not that means anything I'll find out when training camp opens," smiled Koswin, who has received a lot of encouragement from his former teammates and also Bison coaches Nick Lapins and Jamie Horn.

In addition, the fact there'll be eight Bisons or ex-Bisons at training camp will make Koswin feel more at home. Veterans like Paterson, Bob Toogood and Lee Benard haven't forgotten they were once rooks.

As for the "cocky kid from the North End," Rick would feel more confident if he'd had three years experience as a split end under his belt, to go with his size (6' 11 1/2", 205 pounds) speed and hands. Bombers, in fact, have even considered Koswin's potential as a tight end.

Whatever happens, Koswin is prepared to take it in stride. He's trying to approach camp realistically.

"If something happens, I'll go back to the Bisons where I still have two years eligibility," said Koswin. "If I don't make it this year, I'll still pick up some valuable experience. And there'll be another year."

Don't underestimate the "cocky kid from the North End."

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## Dushinski becomes a Lion

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