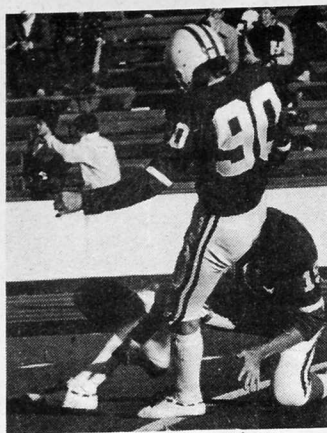


# Gridders wind up season



Flemming Jensen

by GARY LESSER  
Chronicle Staff

At long last, after over three grinding months of bumping, smashing, hitting, throwing, running, aching, braking, healing, and more and more of the same, the football season has finally come to a screeching halt.

It was a season that began in sweltering August heat with two-a-day practices and question marks at many positions. And when the Utes, seemingly unprepared by head Coach Bill Meek, were smashed by Texas Tech and Iowa State before classes began, insiders were preparing for a dull season with most of the marks in the loss column.

## Bounced right back

But the Utes bounced right back, and while losing to Arizona State, proved they could be on the field with anybody once they were ready. It turns out that there is no shame in Utah's first three losses; all were to foes later to receive post-season bowl bids.

Things really started to fall by the time the Utes came home for their first games in newly astroturfed Robert L. Rice stadium, as they crushed several opponents in front of crowds that were the liveliest in years.

It actually appeared as though Utah would be headed for its first bowl game in eight years when they stood 4-1 in Western Athletic Conference play, needing only victories over rival BYU and Colorado State to assure them of a spot in the Fiesta Bowl.

## Funny thing happened

In the meanwhile, however, Utah travelled to Logan to face Touchdown Tony Adams and his Aggie Tech team. A funny thing happened on the way to the Fiesta



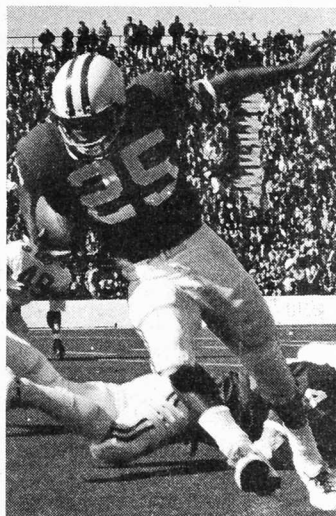
Gene Belczyk

Bowl: Don Van Galder cracked his collarbone, rendering himself out of service for the game against BYU the following week.

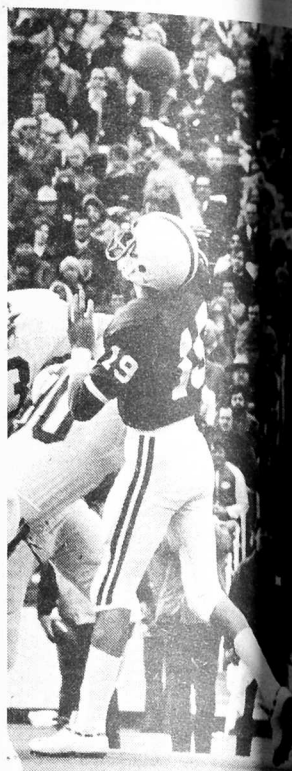
The USU game is played only for pride, the Beehive Boot and the Utah state championship, but this year it determined the season's outcome for Utah. "Brownie" Van Galder was unable to compete against BYU, and consequently, the Cougars won the game and put Utah all but out of the race for the WAC title.

## Winning season

Despite beating Colorado State by a whopping margin (62-36), the Utes could take little solace in only compiling a winning season, their first since 1970. The talk was of "bowl" this and "bowl" that, but



Steve Odom



Don Van Galder

with the schedule the University faced this year, they have plenty to be proud of.

At last count, over 20 records were broken this season, with the bulk being achieved by Van Galder, receiver Steve Odom, running back Gene Belczyk and place-kicker Flemming Jensen. It would occupy more space than is available to attempt to list all the broken or tied records, but here is a small listing, to give some idea of the kind of season Utah had in 1972:

Don Van Galder accounted for these: most TD passes, individual game (4), most yards passing in a season (1425), most TD passes, season (15), longest pass (79 yds. to Odom), and he also came very close to setting quite a few more, many of which are career marks he'll likely shatter next year.

## More records

Odom is responsible for these: most kickoff returns, single game (6), most TD passes caught, game (3), most TD passes, season (11), most TD's scored, season (13), longest punt return (95 yds.), longest pass caught (79 yds), most kickoff returns career (62) and most yards on kickoff returns, career (1582).

Flemming Jensen: most PAT's, game (8), most PAT's, season (39), and most attempts in both of the above (9 and 42). Gene Belczyk now has the career rushing mark of 1591 yards, a tribute to the Ute senior co-captain.

And last, but not least, is Steve Marshall, this week's Sports Illustrated offensive player of the week, and a member of the UPI honor backfield. Marshall in the season finale threw four TD passes to tie Van Galder's mark.