I REMEMBER

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GEORGE REED

The second time I met George Reed was about 25 years after he had retired from playing with the Saskatchewan Roughriders. I am a lawyer out of Vancouver but I was doing a long trial in Regina. I was staying at the Hotel Saskatchewan. George dropped in a number of times, coming into the dining room. It was clear that he knew everyone and everyone knew him. When I saw him, of course, I instantly recognized him. I went up to him and introduced myself. We spent a short time talking about old times he didn't know we shared. What was most interesting, though, was that every time he came into the hotel he was not allowed to pay for anything. He tried each time to do so. The other patrons just wouldn't let him. This was, to me, a most remarkable sign of respect. Clearly he experienced this respect everywhere he went in Regina.

The first time I ran into George was in 1969. I was a rookie playing for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. The first time we played Regina, their first offensive play Ron Lancaster handed the ball to George. George took it eight or nine yards before three or four of us managed to grab him, pile on top of him and pull him down. Once we got up off him, George appeared to drag himself to his feet, turned and limp-jogged slowly back to the huddle. To me, he looked injured, which I thought was unfortunate but at least he was not going to be his usual self if injured. He took some time getting back to the huddle. I watched closely, Lancaster was calling the next play and George wasn't

George Reed. THE CANADIAN PRESS

even back to the huddle yet. As a smartass rookie it was clear to me that Ronnie had seen that George was injured so someone else was getting the ball. Well, of course, the play was called and Lancaster gave the ball to George, who banged off another 10 or 12 yards before we jumped on him again to bring him down. Slowly he got to his feet and limp-jogged back to the huddle. This went on all game. So this smart aleck rookie learned a lesson. It's called experience.

I believe that same year I heard of a press conference in Regina. It involved Eagle Keys, the coach of the Roughriders, who was from a small town called Turkey Neck Bend, Ky. A reporter asked Eagle, "Why doesn't George run back to the huddle like other players?" Apparently Eagle paused a moment or two and then stated in his deep southern drawl, "George don't get paid to run *back* to the huddle."

Glen Orris, KC, Vancouver