

Sports

Bears gear up for tough schedule

Alan Small



Just when you think the CIAU is going to do something right, they go ahead and do their job halfway again and look bad.

At the beginning of the football season, the CIAU released a fancy media guide with the helmets of all 23 CIAU football teams on the cover. The stats and team profiles were quite interesting. Things are turning around right?

Wrong.

Three months later, no CIAU top ten rankings are released (their interpretations must be taken with a few shakers of salt anyway) because they are moving offices from one part of Ottawa to another. What that meant was there were no top ten rankings released until January. While NCAA basketball and hockey rankings were run in the stats pages of newspapers across the nation in the beginning of November, no CIAU basketball or hockey rankings were printed.

Then the CIAU forces the WIFL to move up their schedule to three weeks before classes start and move training camps to the beginning of August so they can play the Vanier Cup a week before the Grey Cup. The WIFL, (Alberta, UBC, Calgary, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba) had no room to maneuver, and were forced to accept these conditions.

It now looks like that the WIFL, winners of six of the last nine Vanier Cups, must travel once every two years to the Maritimes, so that at least one central (i.e. Toronto) team will play underneath the Skydome.

Let's recap: WIFL starts in August, plays in their league until November, then in nine days must travel to the Maritimes, play, win, travel back to the west, practice two days, then travel back to Toronto to participate in Vanier Cup week, and try to make it competitive. Highly unlikely.

Strike three. The CIAU will drug test its footballers (or only a select few) for steroids or any other drug they want banned, next season. They don't have enough money to test them all. To test all football players, it would cost them about \$300,000 per year. They obviously don't have that kind of cash.

They cannot pick out probable cases because that would infringe on the players rights. What happens is Joe Kicker-Punter has as much chance as getting tested as Hans and Franz.

With all the hullabaloo over Ben Johnson, public opinion should be on the CIAU's side. However, the CIAU never let public opinion sway their judgement, whether their judgement was right or wrong.

by Randy Provencal

After pretty much coasting for the past two weeks, the Golden Bear Express is shifting into high gear. Next stop: Vancouver, where they will do battle with the UBC Thunderbirds.

The drive of five is alive. Five more series until the CWUAA playoffs begin. Ten games to fine tune so all parts are in good running order; so the machine hits overdrive at just the right time.

"Right now we're really concerned with the way the team's playing going into the last five weekends and the drive for the playoffs," Bears forward Stacey Wakabayashi said following Tuesday's practice.

Not to say the team is looking past this weekend's series with the 10-9-1 T-Birds.

"Over the five years I've played they've been very tough at home — a lot tougher than they are on

"You really get into bad habits. (From winning easily). Hopefully we're not into bad habits." — Drake

the road especially. Every year I've gone there we've really had to play at the top of our game to come out with two wins," Wakabayashi said.

Last season, the Bears only managed to split the two games they played at Thunderbird Arena, despite the fact the UBC didn't make the playoffs last year.

"They have an improved team over last year," Bears coach Clare Drake said. "We've always had good tough, hard games against them up (in Vancouver), and I think they'll be even tougher this year.

"I know Calgary was out there and had two one-goal games (wins) against them. It's a big series for us — obviously all of



Bear Marty Yewchuk sits on Brandon goalie Doug Roach. The Bears travel to Vancouver to take on UBC this weekend. They play NAIT in Face OFF '89 on Tuesday.

them are if you want to stay within shouting distance of Calgary."

The last time the Bears and T-Birds met, the T-Birds surprised everyone when they hit double digits in a come-from-behind, 10-9 overtime win. This time, the Bears could be without the services of captain Sid Cranston and defenseman Gord Thibodeau. Cranston's knee is still a bit tender from last weekend while Thibodeau has a sore shoulder, also from last weekend's series with Brandon.

"He kind of wrenched it in a tug-of-war with one of the Brandon players," coach Drake explained of Thibodeau. "They had a hold of each other's sticks and

when they pulled away he wrenched his shoulder. It's kind of a simple thing but I guess quite painful."

After finding little competition against Lethbridge and Brandon the past two weekends, the series with UBC should be a good measure of the Bears' capability to play big games, even on the road.

"Much too simple," the coach stated of the two recent sweeps, in which the Bears outscored their opposition 44-14. "You really get into bad habits (winning easy); hopefully we're not into bad habits."

BEAR NOTES: After last weekend's 11-2 and 9-5 romps over Brandon, Wakabayashi

found himself perched atop the CWUAA scoring race. His 25 goals and 29 assists leapfrogged him over U of C's Barry Bracko — who has led the conference in scoring most of the year — by two points. Wakabayashi didn't sound too concerned. "The scoring fluctuates every weekend and it's nothing that I'm really too concerned about," he said.

If Wakabayashi continues at his present pace he would break teammate Cranston's CIAU single season point record of 80 points set last season. Right now that endeavor means little to the fifth year Bear. "I think contributing at the right times in close games is more important," he offered.

Bears need sweep to stay in hunt

Honk 'Horns if you want playoffs

by Alan Small

The Bears basketball team is hoping that the friendly confines of Varsity Gym will score them a pair of wins Friday and Saturday against the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns.

The Bears are coming off of their worst loss of the season, and their worst weekend of the season. The Calgary Dinosaurs handed them a pair of rude road losses in Jack Simpson Gym in Calgary.

"It's tough to lose games like that, especially in the middle of the season," said Bear guard Sean Chursinoff after their 24 point

loss last Saturday, "we'll bounce back."

The Bears won't have to bounce back against a powerful team like Victoria, who have a nasty habit of bouncing teams back. The Bears host the Lethbridge Pronghorns, who boldly moved back into third place in Canada West last weekend with a pair of close (five and two points) wins in Saskatoon over the University of Saskatchewan. They squared their record at 6-6.

The Bears are two games back of the Pronghorns and are tied for the fourth and final playoff spot

with the UBC T-Birds with a 4-8 mark.

After Saturday's humiliating loss to the U of C, Horwood knew what this weekend's mission would be.

"We have to go home and win both games against Lethbridge," Horwood said. The Bears were looking for at least a split of the two games with the Dinos. They came up short, and will have to make up those wins before the season is over. Anything less and they'll likely be out of the playoffs.

The 'Horns are led by senior

guard Ryan Heggie, this week's Canada West player of the week. Heggie, 6'4" and 208 pounds, moved from the forward spot at the beginning of the year but has still remained their leading scorer. He plays the classic Lethbridge style: physical. Add 6'7" Darren Boas and 6'8" Paul Blaskovits, you've got a big team.

In their previous two meetings, both in Lethbridge, the two teams won one game apiece in foul-filled physical affairs that went down to the last buzzer. The Bears squeaked out a win in the second game of that series with an outstanding 28 point effort by Brian Halsey.

Lethbridge will be looking to shutting down Halsey's shooting touch, but the Bears could take advantage of that and use he 6'6" forward as a decoy.

Games start at 8:15 Friday and Saturday at Varsity Gym.