Pandas best not enough for UVic

by Alan Small Vikettes 72 Pandas 58 Vikettes 73 Pandas 43

If you look up moral victory in the dictionary, what you'd see is the two basketball games between the Pandas and the Victoria Vikettes last weekend.

"We had just one bad half when we couldn't put the ball into the basket," Panda head coach Diane Hilko said. "We're semi-happy. We played much better as a team this weekend."

The first game was the best Panda showing before the home



crowd this season. The Vikettes used their size advantage early, going up 33-20 with three minutes left in the first, but the Pandas closed the gap to eight points by the buzzer.

By the five minute mark of the second half, the Pandas came within only one point on the heavily favored Vikettes, 52-51. The bronze medallists in the country last year went on a 20-7

run in the final five minutes and won by 14 points going away.

The game marked the return of Teresa Diachuk, who missed the 1988 portion of the season with a knee injury, and Patti Smith, who went out in the first conference game after nearly getting two teeth knocked out. Diachuk scored 10 points in her season debut, while Joanna Ross led all Panda scorers with 13. Victoria was led by Shannon Conway, who scored 17 and Joanne Nutini, who scored 14

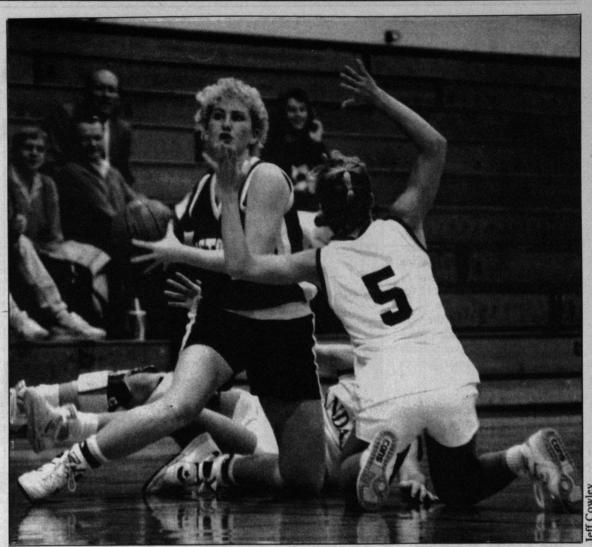
The Pandas hurt themselves on free throws in the first game, shooting only 48 percent from the line, while Victoria scored on 76 percent of their free throws.

The first half of the second game was the Pandas worst of the weekend, as they were outscored 34-13 in the opening 20 minutes.

"If you discredit the first half, we played well," Hilko said, "it was our offence that killed us."

The Pandas were stricken by the same illness that has plagued them during their past two seasons: a five minute scoring drought.

They found the oasis during the second half — they scored 30 points in the final frame — but it wasn't enough as the Vikettes outscored the Pandas by nine in



Patti Smith (5) guards this kneeling Vikette in women's hoop action. Pandas travel to face Saskatchewan this weekend.

the second half.

Smith and Diachuk led the Pandas with ten and nine points respectively, while Kelly Boucher scored 17 and Kim Poland notched 12 for the victorious Vikettes. Boucher was given the Canada West female player of the week honors for her 25 point weekend.

The Pandas travel to Saskatoon next weekend for a basement battle with the Saskatchewan Huskiettes. Like the Pandas, the U of S is winless in six starts.

"Our goal is to make the playoffs," Hilko said, "this weekend is critical for us. We can't rest on our laurels and think that since we played well one week that we'll play well the next."

FOUL SHOTS: Former Panda Kathy Keats, who last played with the U of A during the 86-87 season, now plays for the Vikettes. In her last season with Alberta, Keat was a Canada West second team all-star.





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WINTER TERM, 1989

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