

Pandas vs 5-time champs

by Alan Small

You can't say that the Bear and Panda volleyball clubs are like Willie de Wit.

When Willie Boy was learning the game, he fought tomato cans.

The volleyball teams are learning, yet they are taking on some of the toughest teams this side of the 49th parallel.

The Pandas take on perennial top ten clubs Laval and Saskatchewan in the first two matches of the Lady Bison Invitational, at the University of Manitoba.

And if that's not enough, they go up against five time Canadian champion Winnipeg.

"There's not one team that's not within the top twelve teams in the country at this tournament," Panda head coach Suzi Smith said.

The Bears don't have it much easier, as they play in the Husky Invitational against the universities of Manitoba and Calgary, the number one and number two teams in the country. When that's over, they play the University of California — Santa Barbara.

The Panda tournament will also be a homecoming for Smith, who

graduated out of the University of Winnipeg, and played on the powerful volleyball team, that hasn't gotten worse for wear.

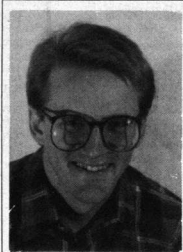
"We were kind of awestruck when we played them in Regina (earlier in the year). We thought that we didn't have a chance against them."

"This time we'll be more mentally prepared. If we serve tough, they'll make mistakes too."

That was a game that the Pandas lost in three straight. But then one can't forget that Winnipeg has won the nationals for the last five years in a row, and that their whole starting lineup is on the Canadian junior women's volleyball team.

Laval and Saskatchewan won't be pushovers either. Laval was the best team in the Quebec conference and were third in the CIAU last season. Saskatchewan is still a good volleyball club, even though they only managed a split against the Pandas when they played here in November.

"The tournament will be a really good experience for us," Smith said. "We're hoping to peak at the end of the month for the Canada West tournament."



Randal Smathers

Denver snow scares Oilers

The NFL is over their troubled regular season, and into the playoffs without carrying any baggage from the strike. Houston, Indianapolis and New Orleans were all surprise playoff entrants, but the regulars deserved their shots. I would have been sorry to see the strike controversy carry into the second season by virtue of some 3-0 strike team carrying sub-par regulars into the playoffs (not to mention the Chargers by name).

The AFC is the easy division to pick this year. Two indoor teams have to go to the cold in the next round. Take Denver and Cleveland, and give whatever outrageous point spreads you have to. Look for Cleveland's balanced attack to overwhelm the small Denver D in the AFC final though.

The NFC is a tough call, with four quality squads, all with lots of post-season experience. Coming off their big win, the Vikings should challenge San Fran. Take the points, but don't expect a win. Chicago won't cover the spread, but McMahon's return and Dika's mind games will propel the Bears past the Redskins.

Much to everyone's amazement, the Chitown team will return to Candlestick and avenge their December drubbing.

This puts Chicago and Cleveland into the Super Bowl — and it will be Super this year. The winner? You don't think anybody from The Mistake By The Lake can win anything do you? Bears by three.

Before you go and bet the farm on the above, it's only fair to tell you that my record in the regular season against the spread was only .438, which is why I'm still not driving a nice shiny Ferrari to school.

Shawn O'Sullivan is fighting for his career Friday on TSN. A loss to Luis Santana will be his second in two tries against a quality foe, and it's Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ra for Shawn. I hate to say it, but look for him to be stopped on cuts in about the eighth.

How long can Grant Fuhr go for the Oilers? One source suggests the orange and blue are squeezing him for ice time in fear of a contract hassle, as in Mtog and Coffey.

Speaking of Coffey, how the hell is that guy ranked second in Wales All-Star balloting? Easy, because he is being voted for in the Campbells by people with better imaginations than heads for the facts.

One early note on baseball: why would anyone pay big bucks for a mediocre fielding first baseman with a lousy average and only good power? Ask Jack Clark, but not until after he signs with somebody.

It'll be good to get back to University sports this week.

Look for the hockey Bears on Friday and Saturday nights at Varsity ice pond. Drake's team, hot from their Viking Cup win, will be looking to catch the Dinos in the second half. They open against the UBC F-Birds this weekend.



Bear player in tough going in Viking Cup semi-final vs Finland.

Photo by Rob Galbraith

1001: A Sports Odyssey

by Geoff Badger

The U of A Golden Bears hockey team skated to a decisive 6-2 Gold medal victory over the visiting Czechoslovakian Jr. Selects in front of a capacity crowd at the Viking Cup final held in Camrose last night.

The victory, the 1001st in the team's history, finished the tournament on an upbeat note for the club as it gave them an undefeated record throughout the tournament as well as the tournament championship.

The Bears, minus several regular players due to a 23 year old age restriction, were too powerful for a much younger and inexperienced Czechoslovakian National 18 and under squad to handle. The teams exchanged first period goals and although the Czechs played well the Bears held most of the territorial advantage, this being a sign of things to come.

In the first five minutes of the second period the Bears exploded for three quick goals. The line of Dennis Cranston, Todd Stokowski, and Stacey Wakabayashi (who recently returned from the Gold Medal Spengler Cup team) led the onslaught with Stokowski picking up two of the three goals on assists from both his line mates. Cranston, Stokowski, and Wakabayashi terrorized the Czechs and were a constant threat to score throughout the game, hitting posts on several occasions. Parie Proft, named to the tournament's all-star team, also had a strong game with an assist

and a goal coming on a nice give and go feed from Adam Morrison.

After the Bears scored their fourth goal the Czechoslovakian coach wisely called a thirty second time out to allow his team to regroup. The Czechs scored a power play goal, the only one of the game, on a tic-tac-toe, one-time shot, passing play that was poetry in motion.

The Czechs, however, failed to build much momentum from their second goal and the Bears finished them and the scoring off in a flurry that began at 14:06 of the second period and ended 33 seconds, and two goals later with the Bears' sixth and final goal.

The Czechs appeared to come out in the third period ready to play but were shut down quickly by the aggressive play of the Bears. The final score may have been a lot closer had it not been for a solid performance by the U of A's game M.V.P. Darren "Turk" Turner. Turk turned in what you might call an all 'round performance as he not only played well between the pipes but also added an assist on the Bears' sixth goal.

Ice Chips: The tournament's M.V.P. went to U of A's Brent Severyn who had an excellent tournament while the tournament all-stars, by position, were: G - Roman Turek, Czech; D - Parie Proft, U of A; O - Sergei Zubov, U.S.S.R.; R.W. - Roman Kontsek, Czech; C - Pavel Zubek, Czech; L.W. - Dan Baker, Red Deer. The U.S.S.R. defeated AIK Sweden 7-4 in the Bronze Medal final.

Bears 6
Czechs 2



Viking Cup Final

1st Period

1. Czech - Rob (Karabin, Bukna) 2:18
2. Bears - Gordon (Helland, Bozek) 5:52
Pen - Craig, Bears 8:02, Bakula Czech. 8:02, Bench Minor Czech. 16:18 (too many men)

2nd Period

3. Bears - Stokowski (D. Cranston, Wakabayashi).
4. Bears - Stokowski (D. Cranston, Wakabayashi).
5. Bears - Proft (Helland, Draper).
6. Czech - Zubek (Zubek, Kontsek) P.P.
7. Bears - Morrison (Otto, Proft)
8. Bears - Glasgow (Wiebe, Severyn)

Pen - Couture Bears 4:51, Couture Bears 7:15, Zubek Czech 7:15, Craig Bears 17:11, Zubek Czech 17:11, Stokowski Bears 19:42, Bukna Czech 19:42

3rd Period

No scoring
Pen - Jeske Bears 8:31, Otto Bears 15:33, Kontsek Czech 15:33, Craig Bears 18:59

Shots on goal by
U of A Bears 13 11 11 - 35
Czech, Jr. Selects 11 11 * 4 - 36
Goal - Bears, Turner; Czech, Turek/Horyna