



SPORTS



Bears still clawing for playoffs

by Andrew Watts

If the games played so far in the Canada West hockey season were to be equated to a carnival and each team was designated as a ride then the U of A Golden Bears would be the roller coaster.

The team continued their bumpy up and down ride this season with one win and one loss against the Saskatchewan Huskies over the weekend. The split left the Bears with a slim ray of hope of overtaking the Calgary Dinosaurs and finishing second to capture the last playoff spot. The Huskies have virtually rapped up first.

"We have to hope that UBC can help us out a little bit," wished Clare Drake.

The help the Bears need from the Thunderbirds is that they be able to beat the Dinos just once. If the T'birds don't then the Bears are virtually out of the picture.

As for the weekend, the Bears lost 6-2 on Saturday,

Friday and then came back Saturday to beat the first place Huskies 4-2 in an impressive outing.

"We had a little extra poise with the puck tonight (than Friday) and we more consistent," commented coach Drake after the win Saturday.

The Bears come out Saturday playing fired up intense hockey. They forechecked the Huskies effectively enough to force their usually poised, disciplined defence to cough up the puck a great deal. When in their own end, the Bears were steady, relaxed and for the most part, in control.

"I thought we were lax a couple of times but on the whole we were fairly consistent," Drake said.

Perhaps the key to the win was the fact that the Bears were able to get off to a good start and



Bears are still hoping for the play-offs. UBC beat Calgary on Saturday.

coupled with some fine goaltending from Terry Clark they never looked back.

"Thank God we had him (Terry Clark) we needed him."

Clark did have a strong game stopping the Huskies in close a number of times. This play exhibited by Clark was something he has been showing over the past few games: consistency. The only shot Terry had a chance on Saturday was a slapshot from Terry McNaught at the 18:40 mark of the third period.

"I think I over-reacted and it hit the inside of my pad," explained Clark of the Huskies second goal.

The Bears parlayed their fast start into a goal at 3:38 point of the first period Saturday when Dan Peacocke found a loose puck at the top of the slot area in the Huskies end and slapped a shot

past Huskies starting goalie Bob Dougall. Denis Fenske tied it up for the Huskies at 15:47 as he batted in a high pass from Marc Chartier.

In the second period, with Pete Anholt in the penalty box for Sask., Ace Brimacombe took a pass from Jim Lomas at the back of the net and fired a wrist shot past Dougall at 34 second. There was no further scoring in that period and Dougall, who played very well, was pulled in favor of Owen Felske at the 10:55 mark.

In the third period the teams traded near misses but none scored until the 16:28 point when Breen Neeser stepped across the Huskies' blueline and surprised everyone with a hard, rising slapshot that beat Felske high to the glove side.

"I had the defencemen coming across as a screen, and I was

going for that side (glove side) so I tried to get it up. I'm just glad it went in." Neeser said of his goal that gave the Bears a 3-1 cushion.

Then, on the prettiest goal of the night at 18:18 Brad Schneider finished off a three way passing play with Brimacombe and Lomas flipping it high over Felske. McNaught scored his goal but that point it was too little to late.

On Friday, the Bears were, to put it bluntly, awful.

"We had few quality passes, we had little poise with the puck, we didn't hit with much enthusiasm and Denis (Potvin) didn't have a very good game," said an exasperated Clare Drake after that contest.

Drake's comment virtually sums up in one small package the story for the Bears.

The Huskies got the first goal of the game at the 48 second

mark of the first period when Potvin went behind his net to stop the puck. It hit his stick bounced out in front and Larry Gaucher put a bow tie on the gift by popping it in. The Bears did, however, tie it up at 10:26 when Jim Lomas took an Ace Brimacombe pass and put a shot between the legs of Huskies goalie Steve Amiss. But even with the tie score the Bears were never in the game. Willie Desjardins proved that with a goal from right in front of the Bears goal just 25 seconds later. Dick Kortie made it 3-1 at 15:21 of the same period when he stopped the Bears' feeble clearing attempt at the blueline and slapped the puck in the net.

At 1:43 of the second period Denis Fenske put the last nail in Potvins coffin when he broke in and dribbled a shot in that wouldn't have crushed a grape. Terry Clark replaced Potvin at the 5:30 point of the second period.

In the third period Terry Lescisin got his first goal of the season at the 4:37 mark when he found himself alone in front of the Huskies goal and slid the puck under Amiss. The Bears could do no more damage after that and after pulling Clark in the final minute they gave the puck to Willie Desjardins who calmly put it in. Denis Fenske scored with one second left to give the Huskies an even number of six goals.

BEAR FACTS

Jim Lomas moved into second place in the overall standings of all time Bears leading scorers. Ron Parent used a special brace on his shoulder he dislocated to enable him to play again. The three stars in Saturdays game as selected by this reporter were: 1. Ace Brimacombe, 2. Terry Clark, and 3. Dan Peacocke.

Washington swimmers too tough

The U of A Golden Bears and Pandas swim teams were soundly defeated by the very tough U of Washington swimmers over this past weekend.

The men went down 67-38 and the women sunk to the much more powerful team 87-25.

"I thought we might have

been a bit sharper," said swim team coach John Hogg.

The coach went on to point out that there were 26 best personal times posted by U of A swimmers. Fourteen Pandas recorded their bests to date and 12 men did the same for the Bears.

But as for the meet in general

the entire swim team could only manage two wins, both of those coming from the Bears. Jeff Riddle took the mens 400 metre IM in 4:39.19 and Doug Cathro won the 50m freestyle in 25.48.

"We were very weak in the application of our strategies especially in our turns."

The coach further commented that he felt that the swimmers were stroking far to slowly.

But with all the best times recorded the coach was fairly

pleased with the overall meet. The women were severely hampered by the loss of top swimmer Maureen New. Maureen left the university in January.

This coming weekend the swimmers travel down to Calgary to win in the western championships. The coach is not expecting first place finishes but he feels that the men have a shot at second if, "we get a tremendous team effort." The women are expected to place third.

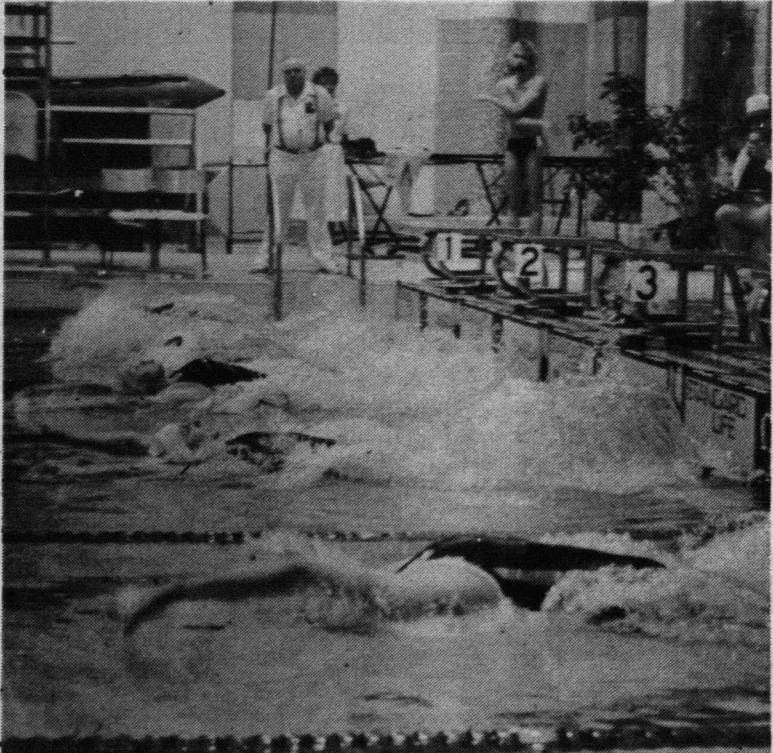


photo Ken Tsai

Washington Huskies proved stiff competition. Too stiff.

V'ballers too small

The U of A Golden Bears were down in Calgary to take part in another Canada West Volleyball tourney this past weekend.

The team, according to coach Brian Watson, played fairly well but couldn't manage to beat the two top teams, Calgary and Victoria, in their conference coming away from the tournament with a 3-2 record.

"Calgary and Victoria are such big teams that they just blocked us to death," said Watson.

In their first match against Lethbridge, the Bears absolutely

destroyed their competition in three straight games: 15-1, 15-1, 15-4.

"We played well but Lethbridge were just awful," commented Watson who continued, "it was unfortunate because we had to play Victoria in the next match and we wanted to use Lethbridge as a warm-up but we couldn't really practice anything."

In that following match against the Vikings the Bears went down three straight: 10-15, 8-15, 12-15. Again, commented the coach, the team played well

and did the things they wanted to do but it came down to a matter of size in the end with the much taller Victoria winning out.

The Bears next went up against Saskatchewan and handled them fairly easily; 15-8, 15-10, 16-14.

In the following match the Bears went down three straight to first place Calgary by scores of: 8-15, 10-15, 12-15.

"Again we did the things we wanted to do but we just don't have the size to take on a team like Calgary, their average height is around 6'5"," said Watson.

The last match of the tournament was perhaps the strangest as the Bears met the UBC Thunderbirds. In an up and down affair the Bears came out of top by winning 3-2. The scores for this match were: 13-15, 15-4, 10-15, 15-4, 18-16.

"I don't know why the scores were like that and what's more the T'birds had just beaten Calgary," Watson explained.

The Bears are now 8-12 and in fourth place in their conference yet they are ranked eight in the country. They are still in the running to qualify for the national tournament as they are in third place in seeding tourneys. They are again going down to Calgary this weekend to play in another seeding tourney and are hoping to make it into the top two to qualify for the nationals.