

# Luck not on field hockey Pandas' side

by Todd Saelhof

Lady luck eluded the University of Alberta field hockey team as results of the wildcard selections

were released on Monday. The Pandas, who collected a meager two points in final Canada West showdowns last weekend in Vic-

toria, were among three contenders for the final wild card spot.

Unfortunately for the Pandas, the rival Dinosaurs from the University of Calgary were chosen as the final wild card representative, ending Alberta's hopes to find post season action in next weekend's National Championships. The decision somewhat angered Panda coach Dru Marshall who believed Saint Mary's University, the Atlantic conference leader until the last weekend, had the upperhand in wildcard balloting.

"I'm really disappointed. That's just unbelievable on the basis of (Calgary's) performance in the last tournament," Marshall said.

The Dinos managed to gather only two points on ties with the U of A and the Bisons from the University of Manitoba, a contest in which Marshall believed Calgary was clearly outplayed. The two points obtained were seemingly not enough to boost the Dinosaurs from the eighth ranked position to one of the top six across Canada.

The only saving grace for the Dinos was the Panda's 1-0 loss to Manitoba which left Calgary and Alberta deadlocked for third in Canada West standings. Calgary's one goal edge in goal differential allowed them paper possession of third place and a statistically more realistic chance at seizing the last wild card slot.

On the field, however, Alberta managed domination over Manitoba, drew a 1-1-1 record versus Calgary, and tied Canada's number one ranked team, the University of Victoria Vikettes. Another contest with frontrunning UVic saw Alberta drop a heartbreaker in the final minute of action. Alberta's first matchup with the early favorite University of British Columbia Thunderbirds also ended in a scoreless draw.

The fact of the stats came back to haunt the Pandas in the end. Trouble with goal production left the Pandas one goal short of advantage for wild card contention. Marshall also feels the lack of experience on the Panda squad was instrumental in the failed bid for national prestige.

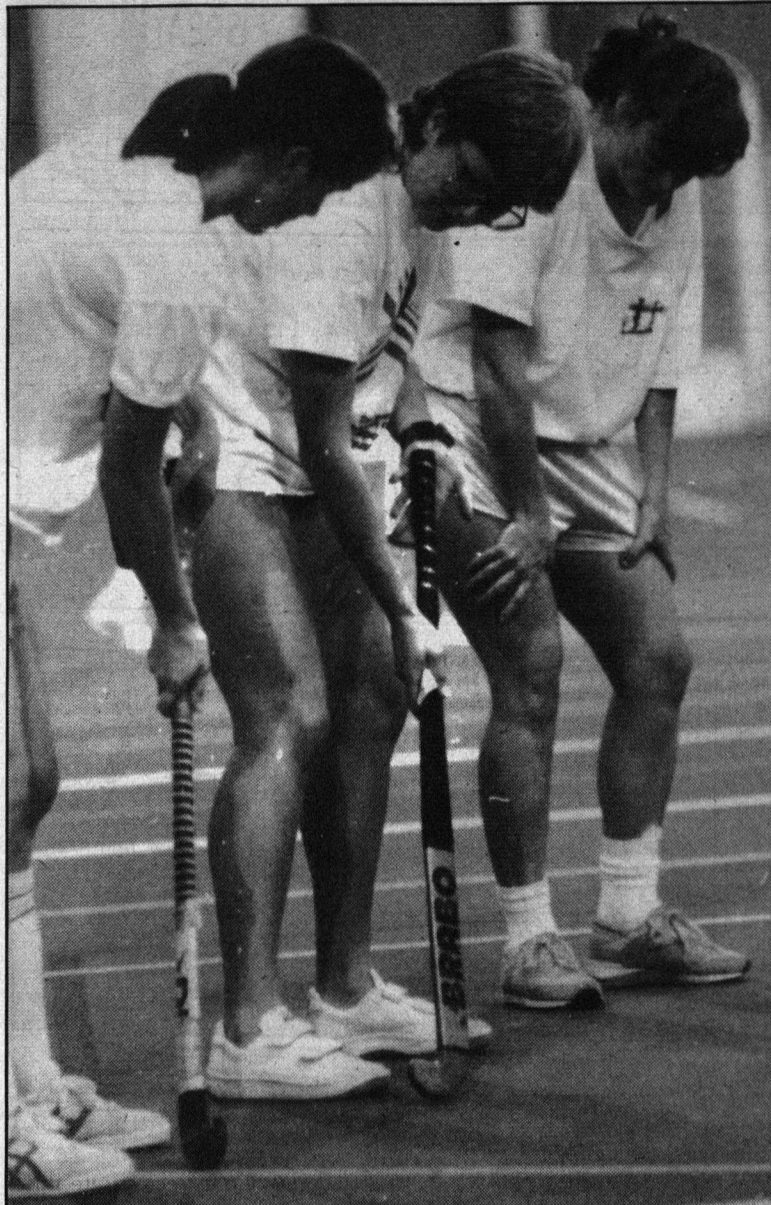
"They would have looked to the rosters to decide wild card spots. We only have four players with provincial experience. Tara (Croxford) is the only one with national experience," Marshall said.

Heart, however, did aid in preservation of Panda pride this season. The young Pandas followed veteran Bev Wolfert in asserting an aggressive style of play that Marshall im-

plemented in leading Alberta to an impressive, but heartbreaking season; a season which came to end mostly as a result of one game.

"I think that it was a really good season. What it shows is that our loss to Manitoba was costly. More costly than we thought it to begin with," Marshall said.

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**PENALTY CORNER:** Despite the heartbreak of missing out on the nationals, Wolfert and Croxford's good fortune continued. Both were selected to the two all-Canadian squads. Croxford's selection to the first team and Wolfert's spot on the second squad came one week after both Pandas were chosen as Canada West all-stars.



Jeff Cowley

Panda field hockey coach Dru Marshall discusses technique with her players. The Pandas lost out in a bid for a wild card spot to Calgary.

## Tennis team ready to serve it up

by Ajay Bhardwaj

The University of Alberta Tennis Centre students' tennis team held tryouts last week and selected eight of the best 24 student/players on campus.

The players were selected over a two day trial basis by Tennis Centre manager Rob Bell. All eight members of the team are ranked in the top 90 in Alberta. There was a high attrition rate for members of last year's team, as only four of them made it. Gone are Frank Walls, Sean Saunders, Chuck Blackburn, and Alan Becken (who graduated

this year).

The tryouts were as competitive as Bell had predicted. Indeed, Dave Gates, a mainstay and leader with the team, was hard pressed to make the team. Derri Thomas, who was ranked in the top five in Alberta last year, leads the way. He was also a member of Edmonton's Dyde Cup team which competed against Calgary on October 22. The Dyde Cup is an Edmonton/Calgary annual tournament, revived this year after a ten year hiatus.

Thrown in Jon Chmilar, who was one of the top five under 18 players

last year, and you have a pretty good one-two punch. Chmilar was also a member of the Dyde Cup team. John Cheng, Kuen Cheung, Brent Hite, Tony Morris, and Ross Swanson round out the team. Practice began for the squad on Tuesday at the Tennis Centre.

The University of Calgary has also put together a tennis team which consists of top players in the province. Bell will lead his squad against Calgary on November 27 in Edmonton. Bell is also hoping to set up a competitive tie with the University of Saskatchewan.

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