

Sports

V-ballers learn the hard way

by Mark Spector

There's very few of us here at the U of A who haven't experienced having failed a course by mid-November, but for some reason or another being forced to complete the course anyway.

Well that is sort of where the Bears and Pandas volleyball teams stand right now.

After a weekend in which both the Bears and Pandas were swept by the visiting Lethbridge Pronghorns and the Calgary Dinos and Dinnies respectively, the end of a long season can not come soon enough for these two young teams.

At this point in the year, the Bears are 2-10 while the Pandas' record stands at 0-13.

Bears' coach Jean-Claude Meilleur has seen his club stagnate since Christmas mainly due to injuries. "We improved enormously from September until Christmas, but then we suffered a couple of key injuries over the break."

"Because we've got virtually no bench, we just haven't gone anywhere since December."

The Golden Bears lost 3-1 both nights. The U of L downed them 13-15, 15-6, 15-10, 15-12 on Friday, while the Dinos squeaked past 15-8, 13-15, 15-10, 15-13.

The men have known since the Saskatchewan tournament two weeks ago that the playoffs were out of reach and after this weekend perhaps even their goal of reaching

the top ten in the country is impossible.

As for the Pandas, it was a tough weekend for them as well, dropping 3-0 decisions both nights.

But the girls are a very young team that is playing all their rookies each night. Of eight Panda players, only three are veterans.

"The team is finding it difficult to maintain their concentration as a whole," admits coach Marla Watson. "School and the fact that there's only two weeks left in the schedule contribute (to the lack of concentration) as well."

Both teams will continue to run their junior (under 19's) programs over the summer.

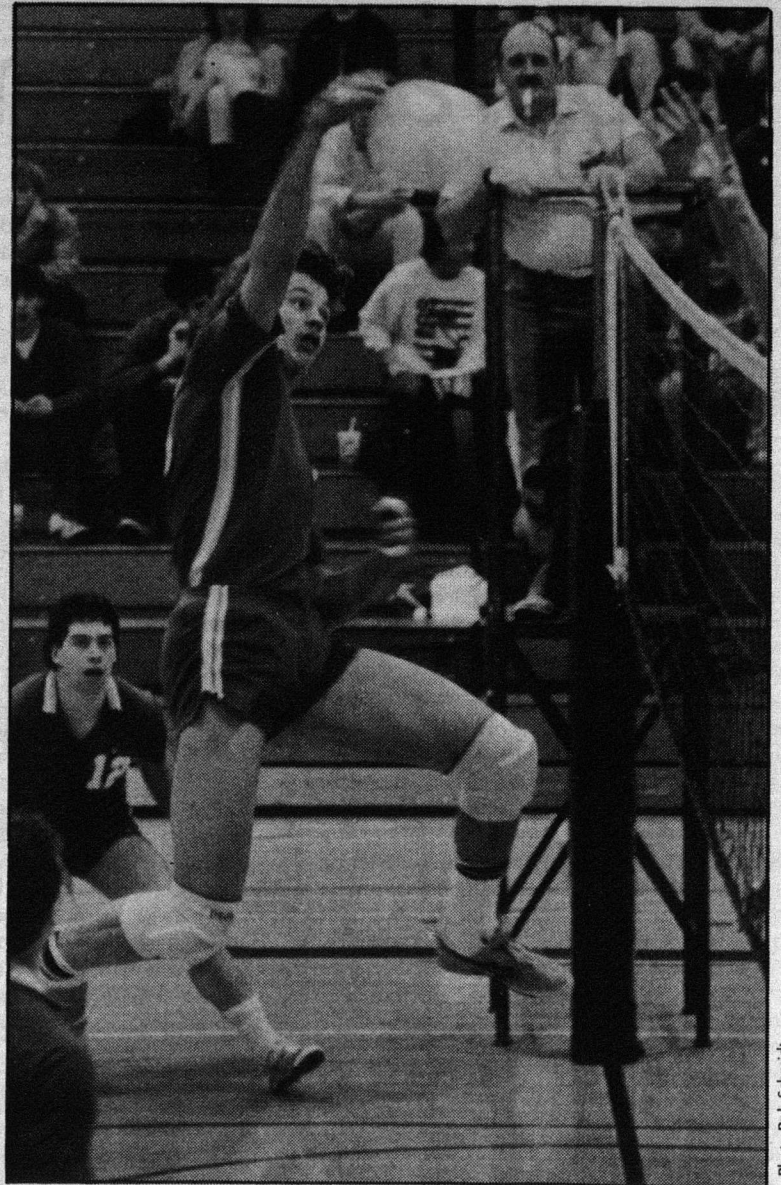


Photo: Rob Schmidt

Ouch! Bears lose fifth in a row

by Mark Spector

The University of Alberta Golden Bear hockey team took the first step towards second place this past weekend, losing a pair of overtime games in Regina by scores of 5-4 and 7-5.

Besides the fact that those are the Bears' fourth and fifth losses in a row, an unseen occurrence since Jan. 23 - February 1st, 1981, it means that when Alberta travels to Calgary to play the last two games of the regular season in two weeks, the Dinos will have a shot at wresting first place away from the Bears.

The Golden Bears have been in the top spot in the CWUAA ever since the season began and nobody, not even Calgary, figured that first place would be up for grabs come the final weekend of the year.

But last week's Dino sweep of the Bears coupled with Calgary's

split in Saskatoon this week leaves the U of C only four points behind Alberta with four games remaining.

"We played well in Regina, but we just didn't finish any of our plays," admitted coach Clare Drake of his slumping Bears.

"In the second game we dominated for the first period and went ahead 2-0. But in the second they pumped a couple of soft goals past our goalie (John Krill) and then seemed to pick up momentum from there.

"But it's not as if we didn't have our chances to score."

An obvious statement considering the fact that the shots on goal heavily favoured Alberta on both nights, 53-25 and 60-41. So it may not yet be time to panic, but one thing's for sure, the slump must end soon.

"There's a run of bad things that have been happening to us defen-

sively, and it seems that every time the other team gets a chance, they capitalize," said a frustrated Drake. "We have a few team breakdowns each game and they cost us."

"But we haven't lost our team confidence yet."

Bear Facts — Tonight the Golden Bears take on the **Canadian Olympic Team** at the Varsity Arena at 7:30. Tickets are \$5 across the board and the U of A must sell 800 of them just to break even. Word is that the Oly's cost \$4,000 per appearance — that includes return airfare plus accommodations for the Calgary-based team. With the game coming right in the middle of exam week, don't expect to see this team at the U of A too soon in the future... After the 113 shot - 9 goal weekend, Drake ran an optional practice yesterday at which "some of the guys (did) a little shooting practice."

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