



NEIL WILDING



PETE YEE

**SHE PROBABLY DIDN'T GET THIS BALL** The white-wearing Pandas won with tough defence.

**BALD IS BETTER** Hair interferes with headers. Yes, they managed to get this one, but they also lost.

## Soccer teams finish weekend undefeated

Pandas post a pair of 1-0 wins against Lethbridge and Calgary

CHRIS O'LEARY  
Sports Staff

After having a number of close calls in front of the net this past weekend, it turned out that the Pandas soccer team only needed Alix Strap to get the job done.

The fifth-year striker was the lone source of offensive production for the Pandas, as they topped the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns 1-0 on Friday and found the same result against the University of Calgary Dinos on Sunday afternoon.

Strap's two goals were an understatement on the extent that the Pandas controlled the ball in both games; they out-shot Lethbridge 19-2, and Calgary only saw one shot, compared to the twelve that Alberta peppered at the Dinos.

Pandas head coach Liz Jespen was happy to have won the games, but would have liked to have seen scores that reflected the amount of time the Pandas spent controlling the attack against the Pronghorns.

"It's unfortunate," she said of her team's inability to score. "We created a lot of opportunities and we just have to work on finishing [them]. We were right on the line a few times, we hit lots of posts ... [the goals were] right there."

As the soccer Bears saw their win turn into a disappointing tie in their Friday match against Lethbridge, they can attest to the fact that anything can happen in the dying moments of a one-goal game. Jespen wanted to avoid that situation with her team.

"The end result is the end result, but other

teams feel like they're still in the game. You can punish a team if you score four goals. If it's 1-0, anything can happen. It's certainly not ideal. It's always much better when you score many goals," she said.

While Strap admitted that the games were tough, she was happy to come out of the weekend with her team at 2-0-0. After a pre-season tournament where she and her teammates were scoring with ease, she said the regular season always promises tougher defences.

"They were close games," she said. "We battled through them, but at the same time, during the pre-season [teams] weren't playing all their starters. We're happy though, because we got the wins.

"I thought as a team we played really well this weekend," she added. "We're building. Last year at nationals, we didn't do as well as we had thought, so we decided to start building now. We got two big wins and I was happy I could get two goals out of it."

With the team clicking defensively, Jespen is hopeful that they'll follow the lead of Strap, who's set a strong example offensively for her teammates.

"[Strap is] a fifth-year; she was our captain last year and our captain this year. She's just one of those players who's solid. She doesn't make any mistakes," Jespen said. "And she can turn ... she has an ability to turn and shoot really quickly, and that's something we'll look to use as much as we can. That really balances out the other two front-runners running, and they all make for a nice combination."

Bears let the win slip away versus the 'Horns, but beat the Dinos

VERONICA DOLEMAN  
Sports Writer

While the Golden Bears soccer team ended their first weekend of play with an undefeated record, a game-tying goal given up in the 92nd minute to the Lethbridge Pronghorns put a sour note on an otherwise successful opening weekend.

Matt Hillen's goal in extra time spoiled a dominant first half from the Bears in their opening game, and gave Alberta (1-0-1) an unsatisfying 1-1 tie to start the season.

"[Our play was] not good enough to get the win," Bears head coach Len Vickery admitted. "In the second half we conceded the game to Lethbridge. We had one or two chances to put them away; we weren't good enough to do that."

Alberta took charge in the first half of the game, but the Pronghorns reversed their fortunes in the second half, pressuring the Bears net until Hillen evened the score.

"I thought it was a game with two halves: they controlled the first and we completely controlled the second," Pronghorns head coach Randy Bardock said. "I thought we were a little nervous and tentative first half. In the second half, I thought we played the way we were capable of—it was great to watch."

"They took the play to us in the second half," Vickery agreed. "We could have had them mentally if we had been good enough to put a second or third goal past them early when we had opportunities, but they must have felt they were always in the game."

Redemption for the Bears would come Sunday

afternoon against the Calgary Dinos, as John Konye scored the only goal. This time, the Bears managed to hang on to the 1-0 lead.

The striker from Edmonton potted his first goal 45 minutes in, and almost added another at the end the game, but the attempt was saved.

"It was a good way to start off the season. I should have scored two goals, but I wasn't able to put the last one away," Konye said.

The goal heading into halftime gave a boost to an Alberta team with a blown lead still fresh in their minds. It also helped to quell a Calgary team coming off a 4-0 thrashing of Saskatchewan.

"Anytime in soccer, not just today, when you score just before the half it's a huge boost. I think the encouraging thing is that we had opportunities in the second half to put the results away," Vickery said. "The Dinos had come out with a game plan pretty strongly; we had to overcome a few obstacles—their confidence and our little bit of anxiety—and we accomplished that."

While the goal brightened the spirits of the Alberta players, it was their defence that was causing the problems for Calgary.

"We kept playing; though it may have put in a bit of a frustration factor because we weren't creating enough chances," Dinos head coach Andy Gibbs said.

While Vickery admitted that his team is slow out of the gate compared to other teams, he also noted that his team's play will improve as the season wears on.

"As we get physically stronger and get ourselves a little bit better prepared and organized, we're only going to get better," he said.