

Bears host Dinos on quest for football post-season

Alberta leading a pack of three teams vying for the final two playoff spots

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With more than half the season over and the battle for playoff spots tightening up in Canada West, the matchup this weekend between the Golden Bears (3-2) and the University of Calgary Dinos (0-5) is far more important than the records might indicate. With just three games remaining in the season, five teams still have legitimate claims to the four post-season spots that are up for grabs.

While the Manitoba Bisons and Saskatchewan Huskies have separated themselves from the rest of the pack and almost guaranteed themselves playoff berths by posting five wins apiece, it's the tier of teams that the Bears are mixed in with that could provide the most fireworks down the stretch. Sharing a 3-2 record with the University of British Columbia and with the University of Regina hot on their heels with two wins, Alberta head coach Jerry Friesen figures the struggle for the final playoff spots could come down to the final weekend of the regular season.

"There are lots of games to be played and if you look at the schedules UBC has games left against Simon Fraser (0-5), Calgary and Manitoba (5-0) and that will probably give them four or five wins," Friesen said. "Then Regina plays Saskatchewan

(5-1), Manitoba and us, so between us and those other teams, it's going to be a shooting match."

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JERRY FRIESEN
BEARS FOOTBALL HEAD COACH

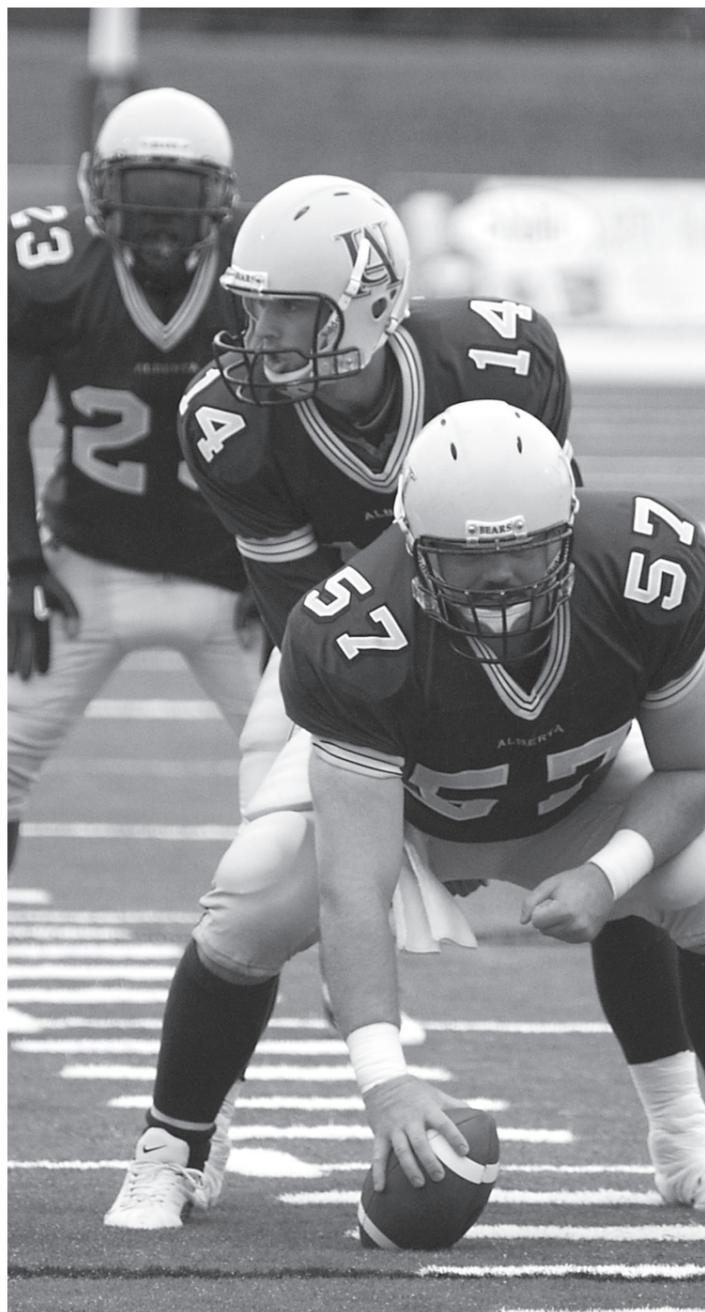
The Bears will close out the season at home: Calgary rolls into town this weekend, perennial rivals and Canada West power Saskatchewan—who dismantled Alberta 27-6 in the first meeting between the two this season—stops by next week, and Alberta wraps up the season by hosting Regina in the final Canada West regular season game of the year—a game that could make or break the Bears' playoff hopes. It's a middle-of-the-road schedule for the Bears that, on paper, pales to the easy route UBC has before them, but is simpler

than Regina's—who will likely need to win out and get some help from Alberta and UBC losses if they're to make a post-season appearance.

"We've played every team that we're going to be facing in the next three games so I think we've got enough firepower to meet challenges, and we're all at home and that's a huge factor [in our favour]," Friesen said. "We took care of our road games so now we can settle in and [hopefully] benefit from [our] key games being at home."

While ending the season victorious on their home field will be essential if the Bears are to make the playoffs for their fourth-straight season, they can't expect the winless Dinos to be a pushover this weekend. While Calgary hasn't torn up the conference under new head coach and two-time Vanier Cup champion Blake Nill, the Dinos will be looking to avenge a last-play loss to the Bears that derailed their season in week two. First-year running back Tendayi Jozzy rushed for 187 yards and safety-turned-placekicker Scott Stevenson booted a 22-yard field goal to give Alberta a 17-15 victory in Calgary on 9 September.

The Dinos and Bears kick off at 7pm Saturday at Foote Field. If you're unwilling to get frostbite outdoors, you can hear the game live on the TEAM 1260, brought to you by Blake Dermott and Bob "Drives the ladies crazy" Stauffer.



FILE PHOTO: NICK WIEBE

TAKING THE SNAP The Bears are in the centre of a tight playoff race.

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Dr. Krauss will be the featured guest on CBC Radio's *Wild Rose Country* at noon on Tuesday October 17

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