



ANDREW RININSLAND, THE GAUNTLET

GOING TO SCORE Trinity Western dispatched of Alberta in the semis and Calgary in the final to win Canada West.

Soccer Bears blow unbeaten record with playoff losses

JANELLE SLOYCHUK
Sports Writer

As the final whistle blew Sunday afternoon, the University of Alberta Golden Bears strode off the Foote Field as quickly as they had entered on Saturday. Not because it was mercilessly cold for soccer uniform requirements, which it was, but because the Bears immaculate season was left in shambles after suffering their first two losses and a last place finish in the Canada West men's soccer championships this weekend.

The Trinity Western Spartans, who have proven to be a thorn in Alberta's side all season, shut out the Bears on Saturday with 2-0 victory, and while the top-seeded Bears out-shot the Spartans, it was the Spartan's consistency that ultimately determined the final score.

"We've played well this season; we've just done it in spurts," Trinity Western head coach Al Anderson said. "The nice thing about [Saturday] is that we did it for 90 minutes, which in a playoff game, really matters."

TWU's Stefan Leslie, who was also named Canada West Rookie of the Year, slotted the first goal past Alberta's Dan Gusberti with another

to follow by Adrian Kekec. While the intensity of play didn't falter for either team, Anderson credits his team's win on the fact that Alberta had a bye into the CIS championships next weekend.

"The real difference between the two teams was that at the end of the day, we needed this win, Alberta did not," Anderson said. "[Alberta's] playing a team with their backs completely against the wall. We had to give a good performance and that's how it played out [Saturday]."

"We wanted to earn the right as opposed to getting there through the back door."

**LEN VICKERY,
GOLDEN BEARS HEAD COACH**

"We knew it was going to be a tough game. It's a fine line between excellence and just being truly competitive," Alberta head coach Len Vickery said. "[TWU] found a little bit of inspirational play and we were found wanting in that regard. I believe

we left things to chance and unfortunately the chances were not in our favour."

Though Saturday's score was a tough one to swallow for the Bears, UBC added insult to injury by overtaking the Bears with a tie-breaking goal in the final minute of Sunday's bronze-medal game.

Trinity Western, who buried Calgary in a 4-1 victory for the gold medal, will carry on to the CIS Championship this weekend, along with the Dinos. The Bears will join them as host organization, instead of the number one ranked team as they would have liked.

"You always like to carry a little bit of momentum into a national finals right from day one," Vickery said. "We wanted to earn the right as opposed to getting there through the back door."

For Vickery however, this past weekend's disappointment doesn't forecast how the team will play at nationals.

"They need to put the experience of this weekend behind them," he said. "By the same token, they should learn from this past weekend. They're going to have to up the ante a little bit on inspirational play and, of course, all the truisms in sport have to come to the forefront; our best players need to be our best players."

Morrison regaining form after attack

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"I was concerned about not their physical—they looked alright physically other than CG had a big lump on his head and his eye was closed—but psychologically, how they're going to deal with the fact that they're both from BC, their parents think they're in a safe environment and now their parents are going to know that they've been beat up on Whyte Avenue," Horwood said.

Horwood also noted that the incident could damage the team's recruiting in BC. Six of the Bears new recruits hail from the western-most province, joining veteran BC transplants Scott Gordon and Harvey Bradford. Horwood coached high school basketball in Victoria before joining Alberta.

"We recruit in Victoria. We recruit in Vancouver. If parents out there hear,

'Shit, if you go to the University of Alberta and you might get beat up or shot in a nightclub.' They're not going to know that [Whyte Ave and the Red Light Lounge] aren't the same thing," Horwood explained.

Despite Horwood's reservations, Morrison has no problems with the city, though it's a far cry from his Victoria roots.

"I'm not worried about the city or anything. I still feel comfortable," he said. "I love [Edmonton] so far. I've never been in cold weather like this before, but everything else I love."

Horwood also expressed concern over Morrison's ability to return to the form that saw him earn the starting point guard spot in the preseason and put up big numbers in exhibition tournaments.

"CG was a tournament all-star the

week before down in Calgary. This weekend we're in Saskatchewan—these are really important games—he missed last weekend's play coming off a weekend he played really well. How quickly is he going to get back to where he was?" Horwood said. "Is this going to take a little bit more time, what does it do to his confidence now that he has to re-assimilate himself? That's my only concern [about Morrison]."

"It just took me a good day in practice to get comfortable with all the guys, and I felt good today," Morrison added after Monday's workout with the team. "I feel good. It's getting better every day. The swelling has gone down, so [all that's left is] slowly easing my way back into things and I was able to go pretty full-out today."



Ever since he was little, Rem Murray wanted to be a hockey player.



Ever since he was little, Ross Prusakowski wanted to be a firetruck.

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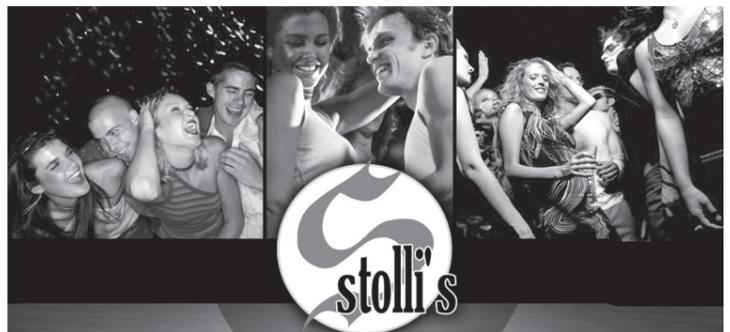


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