



PHOTOS: LIZ DURDEN

**GOLDEN GOAL** Fifth-year Bear Hilaire Kamdem (right) blows a free kick past Trinity Western keeper Tyler DeJong (left) for the game-winning goal in the CIS championship final.

## Second gold fitting finish for fifth-year Bears

ROSS PRUSAKOWSKI  
Sports Staff

Every athlete desires to finish their careers with a gold medal around their neck. The five seniors on the Golden Bears soccer squad got to fulfill that wish this past weekend at Foote Field when they took home the Sam Davidson Memorial Trophy as CIS champions for the second and final time after winning the championship in 2003 as well.

Those fifth-years played a big role in this year's championship run; Hilaire Kamdem scored the only goal of the championship match, and Mark Korthuis was the team's captain and leader throughout the season.

Korthuis, the 2005 Canada West MVP, was forced out of the final game with a groin injury, but was still named a tournament all-star, along with fifth-year defender Jarin Myskiw.

"It was definitely nerve-racking on the bench watching ... I couldn't breathe for the most part after we scored that goal; I just wanted the game to get over with," Korthuis said. "It was disappointing, but in the same respect I knew that [my replacement, Quenton Zalazar] was going come on and do a good job and I had all the faith in my teammates that they were going to get the job done."

Joining Korthuis, Myskiw and Kamdem in winning their second CIS title with the team were defender

Michael Kennedy and injured keeper Devon Fraser. Last year's squad suffered from a lack of experience in missing the playoffs, but the return of Kennedy and Junior Castrillion-Rendon—another member of the 2003 championship team—provided stability and additional maturity for the Bears. It was the experience and mentorship these players brought to the team that Alberta head coach Len Vickery cited as making them championship material.

"They've been absolutely superb in terms of keeping the group together and bringing along the first year players," Vickery said. "Every team has to go through a little bit of adversity, unfortunately we had to go through

the Canada West championship with some. But we protected our confidence; we knew we were a good team ... and brought [that] to the national finals."

As they savored capturing their second and final title on the frozen turf of Foote, the handful of Bears that were part of the championship team three years ago tried to compare the victories.

"I think it's a different feeling for us now because we're fifth-years and we're the leaders on the team," Korthuis said. "We had to take the initiative throughout the year to get the team together and set the tone. It's just as nice, but it hasn't really set in yet." "It's completely different in that

it's a completely different team, but it's amazing just the same," Kennedy added. "Each is very special memory and this one's totally different because it's the last CIS game that I'll ever be allowed to play and we're walking away with the trophy—it's incredible."

For his part, third-year Bears keeper Daniel Gusberti was savoring his first taste of CIS gold after a stellar performance in the Alberta net during the National Championship. However, despite stealing the starting job after Fraser suffered a serious ankle injury earlier in the year, Gusberti wasn't feeling too sympathetic for his injured fifth-year teammate.

"Nah, I don't feel bad," Gusberti said. "He's already got a championship."

## Pandas looking to rebound against pucking sled dogs

NICK FROST  
Sports Staff

The last weekend series the Pandas hockey team played doubled as the first weekend series that they didn't sweep. Up until dropping a 4-2 decision to the University of Manitoba Bisons on 3 November—Manitoba's first ever victory against the Pandas in Canada West action—this season's team (7-1-0) has become pretty accustomed to scoring emphatic wins against their conference opposition. This weekend, the Pandas will look to rebound from their first loss, facing-off against the University of Saskatchewan Huskies (5-5-0).

"Well, I think, generally speaking, our team isn't used to losing," head coach Howie Draper admitted. "Anytime we lose, it's a hard thing to take; there's a certain degree of shock that runs down the bench. It's the sign of a good team, though, that can rebound in a positive way, turn things around in their favour and maybe even learn from it. I think that, from what I've seen of the intensity from our team this past week, they're not taking the loss as hard as [they've taken losses in the past. Ultimately, it will help us down the stretch.]"

The team doesn't see the one loss as being a lingering issue, either. Draper explained that despite losing, his team doesn't feel as though it makes them susceptible to losing more games.

"I don't know if we feel any more vulnerable than we did before. The team, in general, feels that we just weren't prepared, and didn't prepare enough for that game," he said.

Because the Pandas didn't see any action this past weekend, they took full advantage of the extra opportunity to work on the fundamentals and regain any focus or intensity that they may have lost two weeks ago.

"We previously had a bye-week just before Manitoba, in which we had, originally, wanted to give them a little bit of a break," Draper said. "As a result, we maybe weren't quite as ready in terms of intensity and preparedness on a competitive level when we got to Manitoba. So this time around, we've changed things a little: we front-end loaded last week with some really heavy work and a little bit more competitive work, just to push them a little bit more physically."

That extra training will be put to the test against the Huskies, a team Alberta hasn't faced yet this year; however, they



FILE PHOTO: KIM SMITH

**EAST OR WEST THE GOALS COME EASY** Putting the puck in the net hasn't been a problem for the Pandas this year.

won all four meetings last year, shutting them out in their last two outings.

"We're expecting a good team, and they're going to be a little bit more experienced than they were last year," Draper said. "I think the last few games

we played against them last year were very close games. Saskatchewan's got a young team and a fast team; they like to pressure their opposition pretty hard. We're just prepared to try and out energize them and bring more

intensity than they do, similar to what we were trying to do—or should have done—against Manitoba."

The puck drops at Clare Drake Arena this Saturday and Sunday; both start times are scheduled for 7pm.