

# Hoops Bears have Ansah for Isaac, Nasajpour in sweep

Stars shine for Wesmen in 90–85 loss on Friday and Bisons in 88–86 nail-biter

JANELLE SLOYCHUK  
Sports Writer

Although the outcome was a pair of wins for Alberta against the Winnipeg Wesmen, who they beat 90–85 on Friday, and the Manitoba Bison, who fell 88–86 Saturday, the weekend saw the Bears struggling against a pair of CIS headliners: Erfan Nasajpour from the Wesmen and the Bison's Isaac Ansah.

"Erfan, we couldn't stop him," Bears head coach Don Horwood said. "He just kept hitting everything, and otherwise we'd have won by 15 points. We had our chances to win by 15 points. We missed a lot of lay-ups a lot of free throws that could've given us the big lead."

Nasajpour, who is third and fourth in the country for scoring and assists respectively, was fundamental to the Wesmen's attack Friday night, with 27 points on 11–22 shooting. Many of his buckets came as the Wesmen eliminated a twelve point Alberta lead late in the game.

"Erfan made a couple of big plays at the end—you're never out of the game when you have a player of that ability. He makes big plays when he has to make big plays," Winnipeg head coach Dave Crooks said.

"Erfan is one of the best players

in the country; you can't really stop him—you have to contain him as a team," fifth-year guard Tyson Jones added. "[Manitoba] had a similar player, Isaac Ansah. We tried to limit him—he got a few of his points—but we tried to contain him and see if the other guys could win it and obviously it worked both nights for us."

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**TYSON JONES,  
GOLDEN BEARS GUARD**

Although the Bears did manage to keep Ansah from beating them, he still put up 22 points. Alberta countered with Alex Steele contributing 23 points and Jones adding 16 of his own without missing a shot, but Horwood was less contented by the situation.

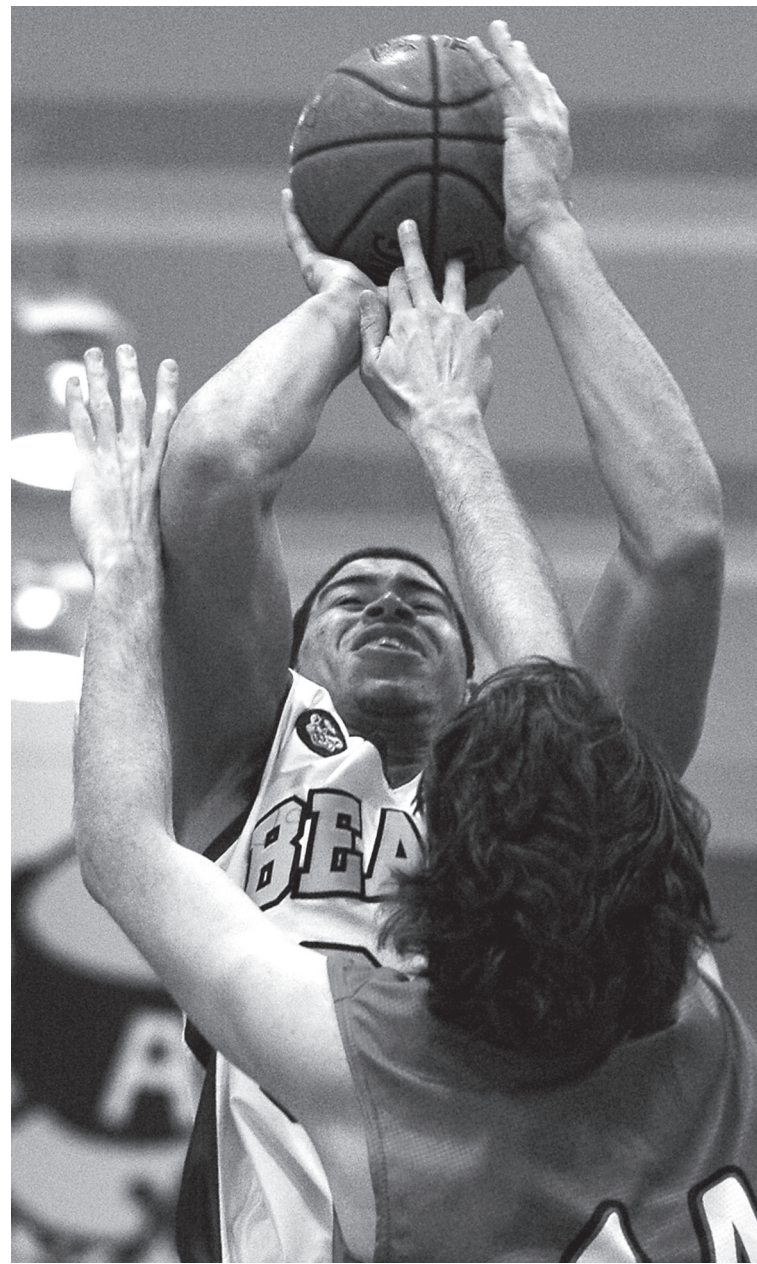
"We should have won by more, so the biggest factor is we couldn't stop them," he explained. "We scored

enough points that we could have won by ten or twelve or 14, but we didn't play good enough defence."

Along with failing to maintain multiple double-digit leads, the Bears allowed other Manitoba players to complement Ansah, as Christopher Pereira and Darcy Coss chipped in 44 points between the two of them, and shot a combined 10–16 from beyond the arc. Manitoba drained a dozen three-pointers in total to stay in the game.

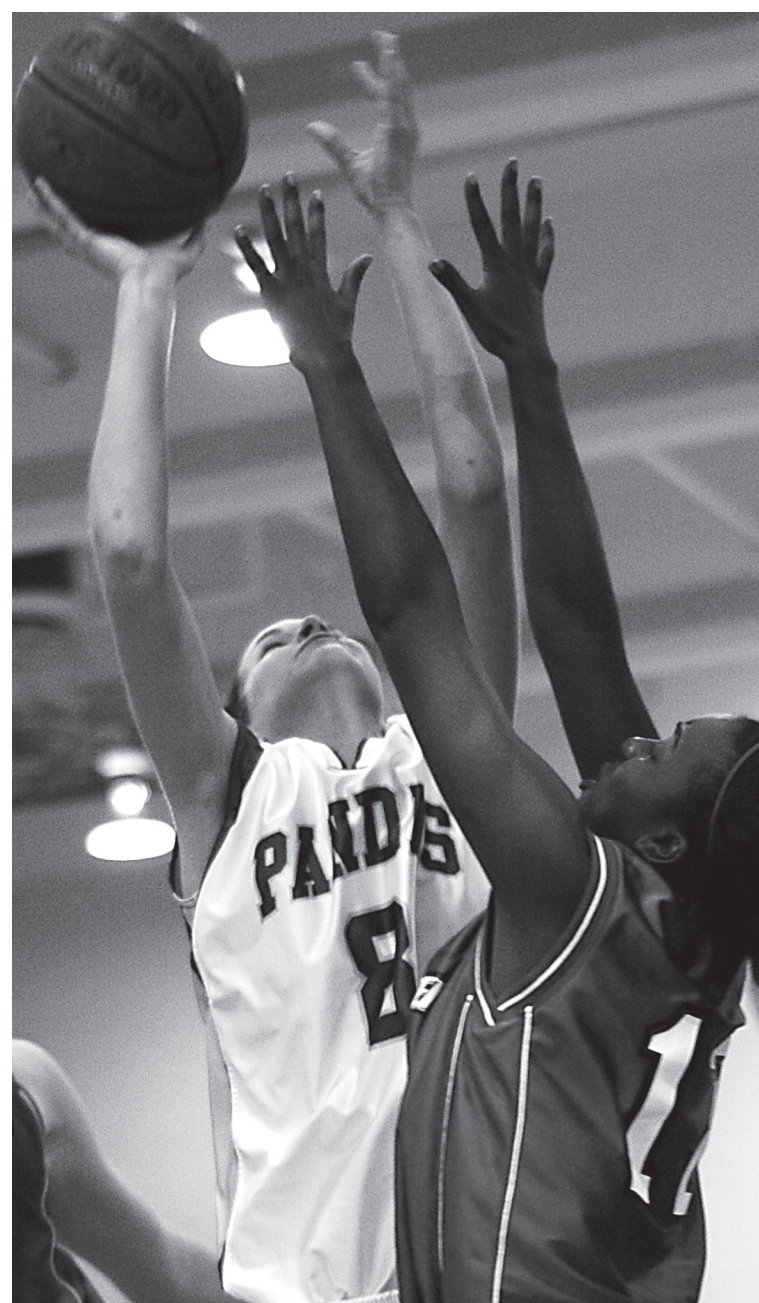
"I think defensively we were allowing them to take too many three-point shots they had a lot of players that were hot [Saturday] we just can't let teams do that because the better teams—UVic and UBC—will shut us down and beat us in the end," Jones said.

"Certainly it happens to us a lot of times that [opposing] guys [statistically] don't do anything. They play against us, and they're all-world, and there's several of their players tonight in that boat that [exceeded their averages]," Horwood said, indicating Pereira's 4.4 points per game this season. "That's frustrating because it shouldn't come down to a lucky break or having to eke it out at the end where the ball could bounce and go the other way."



PETE YEE

**RISE ABOVE** Alberta's Justin Van Loo shoots over Dan Shynkaryk of Winnipeg.



ANDREW RURAK

**IN TRAFFIC** Carly McLennan (8) shoots over Winnipeg's Nina Adusei in action on Friday night. McLennan had 10 points in 19 minutes of floor time in the win.

## Comeback queens show stuff versus Wesmen, fall short against Bisons

Pandas earn win over 'Peg but upset by Manitoba in up-and-down weekend

ROBIN COLLUM  
Sports Staff

Trailing on Saturday to the University of Manitoba Bisons, the basketball Pandas were unable to put together the same kind of rousing third-quarter comeback they'd managed the night before against the University of Winnipeg.

It was a weekend of demanding matches for the Pandas; on both nights they let their opponents get ahead of them in the first half but came back fighting after the break. Only on Friday was the fight successful, however.

"It's hard in Canada West basketball, against really good teams like these, to put yourself in a hole like that," U of A head coach Scott Edwards said after Saturday's game. "We've had these tough starts the last four games, and you can't do that at this level. To fight back and fight back two nights in a row takes a lot of emotional and physical energy, and I don't think we had the legs by the second half tonight."

"Last night when we needed to get back in the game, we played unselfish basketball, and were energetic and intense," he added. "Tonight we were all inside ourselves and wanting to do it on our own. We're never going to be able to win games like that; we're not talented enough individually."

Pandas fourth-year guard Ashley

Wigg, who fouled out with about two minutes left on both nights, agreed with her coach's assessment.

"I don't think we played our game in the first half, and it came back to bite us in the ass," she said on Saturday. "We got down and it was hard to fight back. We couldn't get them to let us in. Last night, we had some big plays and we played really well. Today, everyone was just kind of coasting."

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**SCOTT EDWARDS,  
ON SATURDAY'S PERFORMANCE**

The Pandas were able to shrink a nine-point deficit at the break on Saturday to only three points in the fourth quarter, before finally losing 84–73. That sits in contrast to Friday night, when they turned a five-point Wesmen lead at halftime into an 84–77 home victory.

"They're a heck of a basketball team, and it was battles, battles, battles," Edwards said of the Wesmen on Friday night. "We needed to play at a high level, and in the second half we found a way to do that. It's the most physical we've had to play all year, and I thought our kids showed some great character down the stretch."

Several of the Pandas had excellent games on Friday night, led by Kristin Jarock and Michelle Smith in particular. Jarock posted 22 points and ten rebounds, while guard Smith led the team in scoring with 30, including five three-pointers.

"Smith is very good; she can hit threes, she can penetrate to score, and she's a tremendous leader for them," Winnipeg head coach Tanya McKay said. "She's a fifth-year, and she's playing like a fifth-year. She's a great player."

While the Bisons play a team-based style similar to that of the Pandas, the Wesmen had the much-touted guard Uzo Asagwara on their side. Asagwara led the game with 35 points in the loss.

"With Winnipeg we had to plan a little differently because they have the superstar. We didn't do a great job on her, but I think we did down the stretch," Edwards said on Friday night. "We had her tired and the last few minutes of the game she missed a lot of shots because we'd pushed her so hard for 40 minutes."