PETE YEE

THE OL 'HOW'S SHE GOIN' The Pandas split their weekend series against the U of S Huskies at Foote Field.

Dogs run around Panda cubs

Alberta's young soccer squad was inconsistent against the University of Saskatchewan Huskies this weekend, splitting the weekend series at home

ROBIN COLLUM
Sports Editor

If the hundred-plus curious soccer fans at the Pandas first series of the season were hoping to see a consistent performance by the squad, they were out of luck this weekend. The Pandas split the weekend pairing against the University of Saskatchewan Huskies, winning the first game handily but letting Sunday's match slip away.

On Saturday, under looming clouds, the Pandas ran around the Huskies to a 3–1 win in front of a cheering home crowd, with a goal from Jacqueline Smith and two from Sarah Smyth. The sunnier skies the next day didn't help them, however, and they lost 1–0 on Sunday.

Alberta head coach Liz Jepsen was disappointed by Sunday's result, but pragmatic about her team's performance.

"It's tough to drop a game, especially at this stage of the season, but such is life," she said after the game. "Prior to the weekend, people were asking me, 'What do you think your squad is going to be?' and my answer was that they're going to be young, and they're going to be inexperienced. That's what today showed."

Jepsen acknowledged the deficiencies in Alberta's game on Sunday, but was hopeful that with more work, the team can have more results like Saturday's.

"Our execution was poor; our first touch was poor. We need to work on just creating more opportunities and that drive to finish."

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> **LIZ JEPSEN**
> PANDAS SOCCER HEAD COACH

The Pandas may have been missing the spark they'd had the day before, but Tom LaPointe's Huskies were also a changed team on Sunday afternoon. They studied their mistakes on Saturday and adjusted their game overnight.

"The biggest thing we asked our players to do was get stuck in and pressure the ball, and the second thing was to play with our system of play," LaPointe said. "They bought into it and it showed. We scored a goal that was well-deserved."

Though LaPointe emphasized that the victory was a team effort, there were a few standout players on his roster: particularly strikers Elizabeth Hudon, who scored on Saturday, Jamie Lemay, and midfielder Heather Campbell, who put in Sunday's game-winner.

"[Lemay] had an overnight change in her game," LaPointe said. "She made a drastic improvement."

Jepsen noted Lemay's skills against her team, and praised the Huskies coach, who is in his first year as head of the Huskies program.

"[LaPointe] coached tactically and effectively, and in the second game we weren't able to counteract that. We tried, but again that's down to being a young team," she said.

Overall, Jepsen viewed the weekend as a learning experience for the many first- and second-year Pandas on the roster, and a good way to gauge Alberta's strength against an opponent she described as a "mid-pack" team in the—extremely competitive—Canada West conference.

"We're a young team, and we're going to have these situations, so it's better to have them happen right now," she said. "It creates an opportunity for us to know how hard we need to work to be successful, which a lot of these girls don't know yet."

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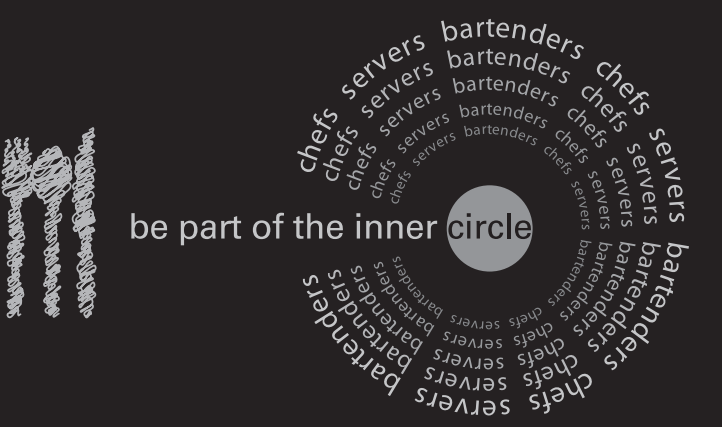

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