



GEOFF MACINTOSH, THE GAUNTLET

**DON'T JUST STAND THERE** Alberta midfielder Junior Castrillon-Rendon was a key to the Bears' win over Calgary.

## Bears need most senior Junior to lead

NICK FROST  
Sports Staff

When the reality set in that only a handful of last year's championship roster would be returning for the 2007/08 campaign, the U of A men's soccer coaching staff had to have been a little worried about what the coming season held for them. Luckily, however, at least part of that fear must have been alleviated by the fact that Canada West Player of the Year Junior Castrillon-Rendon wouldn't be one of those departing.

With a wealth of experience at the college and international levels—including two years spent abroad playing soccer in Germany, and a recent appearance for Team Canada at the 2007 Universiade Games in Bangkok—the highly skilled midfielder will be heavily relied upon this season. The young, inexperienced team will especially need him for his skills and knowledge as the try to improve on their 2-2 record.

"Junior is probably one of the most technically proficient players in Canada West," Bears head coach Len Vickery says. "He helped the team tremendously in the absence of another great soccer player last year, Mark Korthuis—who struggled for the most part during the season with a groin problem—and a lot is expected of him in terms of helping a fairly new squad that replaced, for one reason or another, twelve players."

After his last season, the coaching staff has high expectations of Castrillon-Rendon. His seven goals in 2006 put him among the top goal-scorers in the country; offensive contribution will have to be a staple of his gameplay.

"We need all his strengths to come

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LEN VICKERY  
BEARS SOCCER HEAD COACH

to the forefront, and that necessitates us getting him the ball in areas where he can do a little bit of damage offensively," Vickery explained. "He'll play the more attacking role in the midfield, hopefully with a view to get in forward and help them with the goals."

"We've got basically an inexperienced group in those other forward positions. We need his influence high in the midfield—not the least of which is his passing ability—and also his leadership."

While the pressure to be a leader and to contribute may seem enormous for the third-year athlete, he welcomes the challenge and feels

that it adds a certain new dimension to his role as a player.

"There is pressure, and it's not necessarily bad pressure, but you do feel responsible for the younger guys because you want them to get up to speed and do it as quickly as possible," Castrillon-Rendon admits.

"So the main thing is that you really want them to understand what it takes to play at this level. You do whatever you can to help them out, and hopefully they pick it up quick."

Castrillon-Rendon believes that the best way he can help the new guys get accustomed to the system, the team, and the pace of the game is by letting his play do the talking. And while the typically easy-going individual jokes that he can become pretty animated when either he or the team not performing up to standard, he hopes that the positives that he brings to the team will ultimately be what rubs off on the young players around him.

"I just do what I do—you know, I try and lead by example as much as possible, and hopefully the other guys can take from that lead," he explained. "I try to explain to them as much as I can when things are going wrong."

"I tend to scream every once in a while, but most of the time you hope that the guys can pick up on what you do as a player, and then just go from there. That's usually, in my opinion, the best way to do things."

lost 24-23. The Bears points came from a Duncan Hankinson touchdown, four field goals from Hugh O'Neill—the longest of which was 43 yards—and two safeties.

### Soccer boys maul 'Horns, Dinos ...

The soccer Bears were on the road this weekend, travelling down to southern Alberta for one match each against the Lethbridge Pronghorns and the Calgary Dinos.

Alberta (2-2) swept the weekend, earning a 4-3 victory against the 'Horns (1-2-1) on Saturday and a 2-1 win over Calgary (0-2) on Sunday. The Bears got three goals out of Manav Deol and one

from Brett Colvin against Lethbridge, while the Dinos were beaten by goals from Junior Castrillon-Rendon and John Konye.

### ... But the Pandas were gored

The soccer women followed the same route as the men this weekend, but weren't able to procure as favourable an outcome. The Pandas are now 1-3 for the season so far after losing to both Lethbridge (1-1-2) and Calgary (2-0).

Saturday saw them go down 3-1, with their lone goal coming from Lisa Jennings. On Sunday they were shut out altogether as the Dinos put up a 1-0 victory.

## SPORTS SHORTS

by Robin Collum

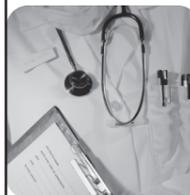
### Footballers blow 18-point lead

The Bears were able to score some first-quarter points for the first time this season on Saturday, but it didn't help them pull out a win against the UBC Thunderbirds (2-1) in Vancouver.

Leading 18-0 at the half and 23-10 at the end of three, the Bears (0-3) let allowed two T-Birds touchdowns and

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BY JEAN GENET

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