Soccer Bears enter playoffs with top spot in division

SOCCER PREVIEW

Canada West Playoffs

Thursday and Sunday, Nov. 1-4
Footes Field, Edmonton

Nicola Flynn

The Golden Bears wrapped up their regular season with the Battle of Alberta against the University of Calgary Bears this weekend, and came away with a 6-1 win on Saturday and a 3-1 win on Sunday. According to Vickery, despite the cold temperatures, snow and downpour, the Bears pulled together and played well as a unit.

“Most teams have injury concerns — it is the nature of the bear. Players will just have to play through,” Vickery said.

As the Golden Bears wrapped up their regular season with the Battle of Alberta against the University of Calgary Bears this weekend, and came away with a 6-1 win on Saturday and a 3-1 win on Sunday. According to Vickery, despite the cold temperatures, snow and downpour, the Bears pulled together and played well as a unit. Vickery added.

The team that finishes first in the Prairie Division — also the team with hosting rights — gets a bye for the first game of playoffs. This means the Bears start the playoffs with the bye on Thursday and will begin playing in the conference championships on Friday against the winner of a first-game between the second-place Prairie Division team and third-place Prairie Division team.

Puck Bears look for revenge in second series of season against MRU

HOCKEY PREVIEW

Bears vs. Cougars

Friday and Saturday, Nov. 2 & 3, 7 p.m.
Clare Drake Arena, Edmonton

Cameron Lewis

The Golden Bears hockey team just completed back-to-back victories against the Lethbridge Pronghorns, and will look to continue their success against the struggling Mount Royal Cougars in a home-and-home series this weekend.

The Bears destroyed Lethbridge twice last weekend, with a 7-1 victory on Friday and a 1-0 win on Saturday. The past weekend was highlighted by scoring from a handful of different Bears, including goaltender Rusty Mochio, who became the first goalie in CIS history to score a goal in league play.

“To be completely honest, I didn’t know the goal was mine until the five guys on the ice came by to give me a high five and said, ‘Nice goal, Mochio.’” Mochio said of his historic goal.

The biggest feeling I had after the goal was credited to me was obviously excitement and amazement, but the biggest challenge was to also keep my head in the game and keep control of my emotions because the goal happened so early in the game and there was still 50 minutes to be played.”

The two wins were paramount to put the Bears offence back on track this year. The team had only scored a measly five goals in the previous three games, which all ended in losses. The Mount Royal Cougars enter this series also on the upswing, as they beat the Canada West conference’s other Cougars from the University of Regina 6-2 on Saturday. Despite the victory, Mount Royal still sits in second last in the conference standings with a 2-6-0 record.

The Bears are 1-1 this season against the CIS newcomers from Mount Royal. When the two teams played each other in a home-and-home back in October, the Bears took the first game at home, but were defeated 2-1 in front of a packed crowd on the road in Calgary. That win will go down in Mount Royal University history as their first ever victory in CIS regular season play, while also marking the U of A’s first loss of the season.

“Out the first game against Mount Royal, we came out, dictated the play and played the way we have to to be successful,” Bears’ leading scorer Jordan Hickman said. “In the second game, we were tentative and waited to see what was going to happen instead of being prepared right from the start.”

Hickman picked up three points last weekend, moving him into a tie for second place in the conference scoring race with teammate Johnny Lam, just shy of Calgary Dinos forward Tyler Fidler for the lead.

“The goals for our team never change going into any weekend of play, and that is four points,” Hickman said. “Being close to the league lead in points doesn’t change my game. I want to play my best for the team and help the team win, and I know success will come from that.”

The Bears will look to take advantage of another challenging opportunity this weekend in order to continue working their way up the Canada West conference standings with another two wins and four points.