

Basket-Bears continue to look for consistency in back-to-back losses

JANUARY 12, 2010 - 12:01AM

[Nathan Liewicki](#), Sports Staff



[PETE YEE](#)

The Alberta Golden Bears basketball squad ushered in 2010 with a pair of home losses: an 84–80 defeat against the Simon Fraser Clan on Friday and an 83–55 pounding at the hands of the Trinity Western Spartans on Saturday night.

Having dropped seven of their last eight games, including five of their last six at home, the Bears now sit at 5–7 and in a tie with the Brandon Bobcats for fourth in the conference's Prairie Division.

Against SFU, the Bears came out hungry, intense, and ready for battle, and the game went back and forth for much of the night.

Fifth-year senior Harvey Bradford scored to give the Bears a 77–73 lead with 1:52 remaining, but that was the last thing the crowd got to cheer for, as the Clan closed the game on an 11–3 run thanks to sloppy defence and forced turnovers.

Bradford and Jordan Baker combined to score half of the Bears' 80 points, yet the Bears could not keep up with the hot shooting of the Clan guards.

The quartet of Matt Kuzminski, Sean Burke, Chas Kok, and Kevin Shaw accounted for 55 of SFU's 84 points, including shooting a combined 18-of-20 from the free-throw line. The Bears only attempted 13 free throws themselves.

"I wish we had managed to beat SFU, because it was probably our best game in terms of executing the game plan. The margin for error for our team is so slim right now against the top teams," head coach Greg Francis explained.

As close as the Bears were to securing a much-needed victory against the Clan, Friday night's letdown appeared to play a factor in Saturday night's contest against TWU.

At the end of the first half, TWU led the Bears 40–19, with the Green and Gold lucky to escape down only 21. Alberta struggled in all facets of the game, including shooting an abysmal 29.6 per cent in the first half.

The Bears did, however, display a lot of scrappiness and intensity in the second half against the Spartans, but they were unable to slow down Jacob Doerksen who recorded a double-double with 25 points and 14 rebounds.

“TWU basically came into our building and said, 'we are playing really well right now' and dominated us. We looked a little small versus Trinity, but I am still encouraged that the guys are continuing to scrap,” Francis said.

One of those guys who didn't quit was freshman forward Todd Bergen-Henengouwen, who drained three-pointers on three consecutive offensive possessions in the fourth quarter.

“Is it frustrating? Yes,” Francis noted. “The guys are focused and working hard, but we just have to find ways to win some games and then we will be right back in second place [in the division].”

The Bears will try to get out of their mid-season funk when they travel to Calgary to take on the Dinos next weekend.