

# Bolduc leads hardwood Pandas to series win

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After back-to-back fourth quarter meltdowns in Games 1 and 2 of their Canada West quarterfinal playoff series this past weekend, the basketball Pandas managed to withstand another late rally by the UBC Thunderbirds, and book their spot in next weekend's Final Four tournament with an 80–78 victory in the third and decisive game Sunday.

“All season long we have played full games and buckled down defensively. However, in the fourth quarter of the first two games, we struggled containing UBC’s offensive attack, and as such had difficulty scoring,” noted Pandas assistant head coach Cathy Butlin. “We really wanted the win [in Game 3] and we buckled down in the fourth quarter when we had to.”

Trailing by as many as 17 points early in the third quarter Sunday, the T-Birds chipped away at the Alberta lead with terrific inside shooting and a decided edge in rebounding. It appeared to be a case of deja-vu for Alberta when UBC

narrowed the deficit to two points with under one minute to play, but that was as close as they would get as UBC's Devan Lisson missed what would have been the series-winning three-pointer with 0.7 seconds remaining.

Led by fourth-year guard Emily Bolduc's career-high 27-point effort, the Pandas showed determination and grit in rebounding from a dejecting 76–59 Game 2 loss, in which the T-Birds closed out the game on a 23–3 run.

“In an elimination game, Emily stepped up and played really tough. She has past experience at nationals and she played with composure and wanted to shoot the ball,” Butlin explained.

The surprise of the weekend, however, was the play of freshman forward Kendra Asleson. Friday night, she sparked the Pandas 74–66 overtime win with a pair of tough inside baskets early in the extra frame, while in the series-decider, the Richmond, B.C. native scored 18 points while also turning in a feisty defensive effort.

“Kendra may have been a little naïve being a first-year player, but she became the focus of our inside attack [in Game 3]. She was huge on the boards for us on both sides of the floor,” Butlin said.

Although Game 3 was decided by a mere two points, the Pandas put together an outstanding second-quarter performance in which they shot 11-for-18 from the floor, en route to a 30–13 scoring edge over the T-Birds. More importantly, Alberta only committed one turnover in the second quarter, as opposed to six turnovers by UBC.

The talented UBC trio of Zara Huntley, Alex Vieweg, and Lia St. Pierre netted 17, 10, and 17 points respectively in their final game of the season. Senior guard Candace Morisset finished with 15 points and led the T-Birds with six rebounds in the final game of her CIS career.

Both teams will now travel to B.C. this coming weekend — UBC to clean out their lockers in the Olympic City, and the Pandas to play in the Canada West Final Four tournament at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby.