

Volley-streak snapped by Dinos

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Bears Volleyball squad sees their 24-game conference win streak end

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If this past Saturday's match against the Calgary Dinos is any indication, it won't be clear sailing in Canada West this year for the Golden Bears volleyball team.

In just 90 minutes, the Bears went from the undisputed number-one team in the country to a team with vulnerabilities. A night after a gritty four-set victory over Calgary, the Bears lacked intensity and were clearly out of sync on Saturday in

dropping a straight-set decision to the Dinos. The Bears' loss was their first since losing 3–1 to UBC on January 25, 2008.

“We could not seem to find any rhythm [on Saturday] and I thought we started out very lethargic. It was just one of those days where I think we were just expecting them to make mistakes and they didn't, but we made enough on our own,” head coach Terry Danyluk said.

Although the Bears escaped with the win Friday, it was evident that the fourth-ranked Dinos were the better team this past weekend. On Saturday especially, Calgary constantly took the game to the two-time defending CIS Champions with tight passing and powerful attacks, and in effect proved that they'll be a force in Canada West.

As always, Alberta's Thomas Jarmoc and Spencer Leiske helped lead the way for the Bears. Jarmoc registered 25 kills while Leiske had 26 over the two matches.

Nevertheless, the Bears defence is what propelled them to victory on Friday and gave them a chance to pull off an improbable second-set comeback on Saturday.

“We had three chances to serve for that [second] set. We missed those opportunities, but the positive thing is that we did respond and fight back,” Danyluk noted. “We need to do that right from the start of the match and not sit back and wait to see what's going to happen.”

“Defensively in our blocking and digging, those two things were better than Calgary both nights, yet we still need to win the longer rallies more often.”

“When we did play well the energy level was there and the execution was good. However, there are still some areas we need to improve in and that includes our attacking efficiency, the ability to serve to better spots, and our side-out efficiency,” Danyluk said.

Bears volleyball will look to bounce back this weekend against another formidable conference foe when they host the Thompson Rivers WolfPack for a pair of matinee matches on Saturday and Sunday, with games going at 2:30 p.m. and 1 p.m., respectively.