

# Freshman challenged to lead

*With key players on the sidelines, Lindsay Anderson is finding out what it means to be under pressure*

By DOUG BROWN

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Lindsay Anderson doesn't just like pressure — she thrives on it.

That's a good thing, considering the freshman UNBC Timberwolf has suddenly been promoted from second point-guard to starter, shouldering the on-court responsibilities and leadership role that entails. It's definitely a good thing Lindsay Anderson thrives on pressure — because now she's got it in spades.

"It's been a benefit for me, despite the fact that it's not the best for the team overall," says Anderson of her sudden change of role.

At the start of the year she was a college rookie, fresh out of high school in Melfort, Saskatchewan. With third-year 'Wolf captain Nicole Kerr's steady hand on the team's rudder, Anderson was prepared to spend a few seasons learning the ropes and adjusting gradually to being starting guard when Kerr graduated. But when Kerr injured her knee between semesters at an exhibition tournament, the rookie suddenly became a starter, playing a full 40 minutes each game and expected to control the play on the court.

"It was different those first couple of games. The team wasn't used to me controlling the game and I wasn't used to being in control," she says. "But I like to be pushed. When I came here I wanted to be pushed and wanted to take on a role that would challenge me. Now I definitely have."

Pointguard is one of the most crucial positions on a basketball team, which is usually why it's filled by an experienced



Lindsay Anderson tries to outrun a UCC player at last weekend's home game. The T-Wolves lost to UCC, 57-41. JOHN MCKENZIE/FREE PRESS

player, often the team captain. Jumping into that role as a first-year player has forced Anderson's game to mature very quickly. In the long run that will help her, says UNBC women's coach Loralynn Murdoch. And Anderson isn't alone. Other Timberwolf rookies like Laura

Zielke and Christina Neufeld have had to step up to bigger roles since the team's bench has steadily been shrinking since the Christmas break. In addition to losing Nicole Kerr for the remainder of the season, team scoring-leader Laura Foster is also sidelined with a knee injury, Janelle

Yano is out with a stress fracture and Brady Kennedy has been out since the beginning of the season with an injured Achilles tendon. That means a 'Wolves bench that began with 11 is down to seven, leaving only two substitutes.

The loss of obvious play-makers like Kerr and Foster has forced the team to change their entire game. Now they can't rely on putting the ball into the hands of a certain player with the knowledge they'll find a way to get it to the basket. Each opposing defence has to be analyzed for weakness and each offence scrutinized for the key players to guard. It means a completely different style of play than the team relied on first semester. "We don't have the players to do an all-out man-to-man defence any more," says Murdoch. "The people we lost had a very definite role. Laura Foster was a shooter — we planned to put the ball in her hands X number of times every game. Kirby's job was to get the ball to the right person every time. Now I'm demanding them to understand more and read the defence. They have to understand why they do everything they're supposed to do ... There is a greater danger of physical fatigue and mental fatigue in that situation. They have to play so hard they don't realize they're burned-out."

Although the loss of key players like Kerr and Foster has hurt the 'Wolves play-off run, it will benefit the rookies in the long-term.

"At first Lindsay Anderson wasn't talked about at all," says Murdoch. "Now she's the player that everyone is talking about from UNBC. It means that CIAU dream is even closer for her."

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