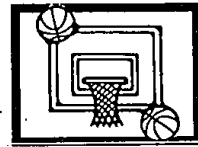


Sports

Chris McCosky, Brad Emons editor/591-2312

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(7/8)

Dues done, now it's time for fun

Small forwards play big at EMU

By Marty Budner
staff writer

Jim Boyce is trying to turn Eastern Michigan University's basketball program into a consistent Mid-American Conference contender.

What players appear to be smack in the midst of Boyce's long-range plans? A pair of 6-foot-4 sophomore forwards named Mike McCaskill and Lewis Scott.

McCaskill, a Southfield High School graduate, and Scott, a Redford Bishop Borgess grad, are proving Boyce's recruiting efforts weren't wasted. The young roommates are starting to make a name for themselves around Ypsilanti.

McCaskill and Scott have started all seven of the Hurons' games this season. Boyce has been more than satisfied with their progress.

"We have a lot of confidence in them. I think they can be two premier players in this conference," said Boyce, starting his sixth season at Eastern.

"They both work very hard on defense and that's all we want them to do right now. I think they can be very good defensive players," he said. "Mike just has to be more aggressive out there."

McCaskill and Scott, book ends underneath the board to EMU's star senior center Vince Giles, were in town last week playing a non-league tilt against the University of Detroit at Calihan Hall.

THE MORE experienced Titans won 85-80, but it wasn't easy. Eastern, which has lost all three of its road games, stayed within striking distance throughout the game. U-D simply wore

the Hurons down in the final minutes. McCaskill and Scott showed both their potential and inexperience in that game.

Known as "Springs" while playing at Southfield because of his tremendous leaping ability, McCaskill played one of his best halves ever against the Titans. He scored 12 points and pulled down 10 rebounds, well above his season average of 8.8 points and 5.2 rebounds.

McCaskill, who logged more minutes than any other freshman last year, scored all of his points in the second half. He played decent defense on U-D's talented forward Greg Wendt despite giving up some two inches in height and played a steady game around the boards.

He realizes his role in Boyce's plans. "I know I'm there to rebound and do the garbage work around the boards. I'm not there to score. We have other guys who can do that," said McCaskill, named EMU's most improved player last year.

"It's a big adjustment, not only from high school to college, but just playing more this year. I've got to get a feeling for getting more minutes. I am learning more about the game."

"I know I have to improve on my shooting and dribbling. That comes with time," he said. "The more I play the more I'll get used to it. College is a lot faster, tougher and there's more pressure. It's a big adjustment but I can handle it."

SCOTT PLAYED 37 minutes (McCaskill had 29) against the Titans and had his second-best offensive total of the season with 10 points (he had 12 earlier this year against Cleveland State). He made 3 of 7 shots from the



Lewis Scott (above), ex of Bishop Borgess, and Mike McCaskill (not pictured), ex of Southfield, have made their marks at Eastern Michigan.

photos by JERRY ZOLYNSKY

field and 4 of 5 free throws.

Scott, 170 pounds, also had two assists and played down the stretch when the game was still in doubt. He is shooting at a 66 percent clip for the season, while averaging 8.7 points and 4.2 rebounds.

"It hurts to lose, but we've got a good team and we're getting it together," said Scott, who averaged 21 points and 13 rebounds as a senior at Borgess.

Like McCaskill, Scott is 19 years old and enjoying life on and off the court at Eastern.

"We've known each other since 10th grade and we're tight," said McCaskill. "We knew our role as freshmen and we're working hard to stay in the line up as sophomores," said Scott.

Boyce simply is hoping their rapid improvement continues.

After Duke exile, Wendt finds home

By C.J. Riskak
staff writer

First, understand that Greg Wendt was not 100 percent when he took the court Wednesday against Eastern Michigan.

The starting University of Detroit forward sprained his ankle against Illinois State Dec. 15, and that bothered him.

"I wasn't able to move well enough to set up my jump shot," he said after the game.

"A lot of players wouldn't have played with that injury," said his coach, Don Slicko.

Don't be misled: These aren't meant as excuses. Wendt not only played, he turned in 33 minutes of hard work in the Titans' 85-80 victory, their fourth in seven games.

AND DON'T think the injury limited his contributions, either. Wendt scored 16 points on 8-of-11 shooting from the floor and 4-of-4 free throws, and grabbed 6 rebounds.

"He's a gamer," said Slicko of the Redford Catholic Central grad and Livonia native. "He loves to practice and can't wait for games."

"And he overcomes adversity." He's had his share. Wendt, a junior

athletically, accepted a scholarship to Duke University after a standout prep career at CC. His freshman season, while not spectacular, was solid enough to indicate a bright future.

That future never blossomed at Duke. It never had a chance. Wendt's playing time diminished his sophomore

year as coach Mike Krzyzewski opted to play his promising freshmen.

So Wendt transferred to U-D. NCAA bylaws dictated that he sit out a year, a span Wendt called "one of the most difficult things I ever did." That forced exile from the game made him more determined than ever to succeed.

AND SUCCEED he has — spectacularly. Wendt came out of high school with a reputation as a shooter, but that's no longer true. He has developed all phases of his game to the extent that Slicko uses him on the inside and outside, and even handling the ball.

"He and Keith (Gray, the Titans' leading scorer) are the best all-around players on the team," said Slicko. "(Greg) handles the ball for us, he can shoot the jumper and he posts up well. It's a tribute to his versatility."

Despite the layoff, Wendt hasn't lost a step. Indeed, he may have gained one. He's U-D's second-leading scorer with 15.2 points per game and he's the top rebounder with a 7.7 average.

His rebounding prowess may be both his most surprising and most welcome contribution.

"I thought he would be a good rebounder," Slicko said of the 6-foot-6 Wendt, "but, no, I didn't think he'd be our leader."

WENDT KNEW where the Titans needed help. "As a team, we didn't rebound that well last year," he said. "Coach (Slicko) brought that to our attention. He said Eastern was one team we should outbounce."

"I think I'm big and strong enough to go inside and mix it up. It's a challenge."

The Titans did outbounce Eastern — by a 37-36 margin. They also outshot the Hurons, hitting 33 of 67 shots (49 percent) to 30 of 64 (46).

Wendt hit all 3 of his first-half shots, including a slam-dunk, and 6 of his first 8. His ankle may have limited his ability to unleash his long range jumper, but he adjusted, scoring on drives and short, inside shots.

Still, Wendt's always been able to score, and he echoed former Titan and current Piston John Long's belief that "shooters never forget how to shoot." "You can always practice your shooting by yourself," said Wendt, which he did a lot of last season. "But you can't practice defense."

THAT'S COMING, as are all phases of Wendt's game, as he gets back into collegiate competition.

"It's getting better every game," he said. "I just go out and play as hard as I can. So far, I've fit in real well with the team."

"I've got to work on my movement without the ball, though."

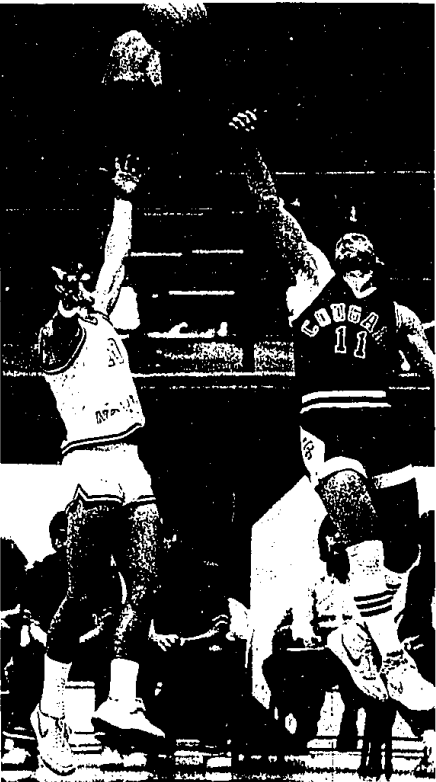
The team, too, is making progress. Wendt thought: "We proved it tonight. (Eastern) came back, with Fred (Coffield) hitting all those jumpers, and we kept our poise."

That's a lesson learned through experience, not coaching. Wendt has experience, not that, combined with his all-around court ability, makes him a valuable asset for the Titans.



Greg Wendt, Catholic Central grad, scored 16 points against EMU.

North cagers survive GC



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

North's Buddy Pope (white jersey) and Garden City's Kevin Sheridan battle for a loose ball in North's double OT win Thursday.

Free throws were the difference Thursday night at North Farmington. Garden City hit 12 of 14 in the fourth quarter to spark a comeback that tied the score at 41-all and forced overtime.

But it was North converting 7 foul shots in 2 overtimes that clinched a 54-52 Raider win.

Paul Wahman, who finished with 10 points, canned 2 free throws with 30 seconds remaining in the final overtime to put North ahead by 4, 53-49. But Garden City still fought back, getting a basket from Dave Weyryn and a free throw from Kevin Sheridan, to cut the margin to 1.

Buddy Pope followed by sinking 1 of 2 foul shots for the Raiders. Garden City then got off a final shot, but Steve Dunning's short jumper bounced out at the buzzer.

It was a welcome win for North, evening its Northwest Suburban League (NSL) record at 1-1, same as Garden City's.

"We've had a few injuries," said Raider coach Tom Negoshian. Point guard Rick Pennala returned to the lineup after missing a game and a half, and forward Rick Anderson was close to 100 percent after suffering a sprained big toe and a black eye.

"Pennala gave us a great lift," Negoshian added.

Bob Chwalk led North with 17 points, with Anderson testing in 16. Anderson led the Raider rebounders with 13, with Chwalk nabbing 6.

Dunning topped Garden City with 19 points. Steve Freiler bagged 15. North is 3-2 overall; Garden City is 2-3.

SALEM 45, BELLEVILLE 40: LeSean Haygood converted a 3-point play and Mike White and Paul Makara each connected on a pair of clutch free throws to assure Plymouth Salem's victory Thursday at Belleville.

The Rocks (2-2 overall) were in control all the way and led by 10 early in the fourth quarter, but Belleville, behind point guard Chris Granham's 7 points, climbed back to within a basket (41-39) with less than two minutes left.

White's and Makara's free throws iced the win for Salem.

"We were getting good scoring opportunities inside," said Salem coach Bob Brodie. "We just couldn't get them to fall."

Haygood was high scorer for the

Rocks with 10 points. Eric Sovine and Mike Hale contributed 8 each.

JOHN GLENN 45, FRANKLIN 60: Westland John Glenn fired in 53 second-half points to bury visiting Livonia Franklin Thursday.

It was a 1-point ballgame (32-31) at the half, but the Rockets (3-2 overall, 2-0 in the NSL) started hitting after the intermission. They outpointed Franklin 29-17 in the third period, with Phil Koeller scoring 8, and 24-12 in the fourth.

Four Glenn players reached double figures in scoring: Mike Baydarian (17), Koeller (14), Scott Winfrey (13) and Dave Jensen (12).

Jeff McCann paced Franklin (0-2 in the NSL) with 19 points. Chris Parenti and Bob Soloshinski each netted 13. FARMINGTON 46, NORTVILLE 44: Farmington couldn't buy a basket in the fourth quarter, but fortunately Bruce Kratt was sharp from the free throw line.

Kratt sank 4 straight foul shots in the final period to help the visiting Falcons stave off Nortville Thursday. Farmington had just one basket in the quarter, but hit 6 of 9 from the line to hold on.

The Falcons, 3-1 overall and 2-0 in the Western Lakes Activities Association (WLAA), led by 3 at the half (19-16) before blowing it open with a 22-16 scoring surge in the third quarter.

Kratt poured in 10 points in the rally. Farmington finished with 18 points. Bill Robinson contributed 9, while Kyle Muts came off the bench to grab 12 rebounds.

BENTLEY 52, DEARBORN 50: Livonia Bentley stalled away the final 1:44 of the game, and Pat Schneider made the move work by sinking a layup at the buzzer to even the Bulldogs record at 3-2.

Schneider ended with 10 points. Sal DeMillo paced Bentley with 13 points and 13 rebounds. Dennis Patchett also scored 10 points.

OSBORN 63, CHURCHILL 47: "1984 is over. We're looking forward to 1985."

That's how Livonia Churchill coach Don Albertson summed up his team's slow start. The Chargers remained winless, losing their fourth straight to Detroit Coburn Thursday.

Scott Hills and Mike Hernandez each scored 14 points for Churchill. Osborn (4-1) was paced by Scott Bell (14), Horatio Williams (11) and Ken Donaldson (10).

North tankers show Falcons no mercy

The North Farmington swim team will never win the Florence Nightingale Award — if there ever was such a thing.

The Raiders played host to a flurried Farmington team and showed no mercy hammering the Falcons 117-55. But, as Raider coach Pat Duthie said, the Falcons may have been undermanned, but they weren't short on valor.

"We didn't exactly blow them out," he said. "There were a lot of close races. We were just fortunate to win the close ones tonight."

Modesty, modesty.

Fact is, the Raiders won every event. Brian Goins, an All-American butterfly, hasn't swum his specialty lately but he keeps racking up the firsts. He won both the 200-yard freestyle (1:50.02) and the 100 backstroke (58.73).

MEANWHILE, sophomore Mike Tukey is getting darn good at the fly. He won the event in 2:05.61. He also won

the 200 individual medley in 2:05.61, just off the Raider record.

Mike Buttl won both the 50 free (23.50) and the 100 free (51.14).

Other individual Raider firsts were scored by Craig Arnold in diving (176.23), Scott Stinson in the 500 free (5:16.13) and Chris Heintzman in the 100 breaststroke (1:09.83).

Angelo Evangelista, Heintzman, Tukey and Buttl won the 200 medley relay in 1:47.68.

Craig Burland, Stinson, Kevin Lee and Goins won the freestyle relay in 3:31.77.

For the Falcons, Eric Davis took a pair of seconds: 23.93 in the 50 free and 52.32 in the 100 free. He also anchored the Falcons' second-place medley relay (1:51.29).

Jay Weaver was second in the backstroke (1:02.01) and Chris Inch was runner up in the 500 free (5:18.23).

North is now 2-0-1 on the season, Farmington 2-1.