

OCC wears out Schoolcraft

By C.J. Rieck
staff writer

Exam time for basketball players lasts for months. It starts with the first conference game and doesn't end until a champion is crowned.

So for this season, Oakland Community College's team deserves all A's.

The Raiders, ranked 18th in the NJCAA, remained unbeaten through 11 games with a 65-57 triumph at Schoolcraft College Wednesday. The win was OCC's fourth-straight in the Eastern Conference.

"It was our second road win," coach Tom McPhillips said, "and the league race is going to come down to who wins on the road."

While OCC has passed its early-season tests with flying colors, Schoolcraft has fared miserably, losing four straight conference games. The Ocelots started the season with 12 wins in 14 games. They are now 12-7.

Exams of a different kind have caused the Ocelot defense. Three starters and the team's top substitute were lost just prior to the start of the conference season to academic woes.

"Talent-wise, we're short at a couple of positions," Schoolcraft coach Rocky Watkins said. "We have new people who just don't know how to close out a game."

Lost to grades were starting point guard Clarence Jones and forward Bradley Turner, sometimes starting forward Frank Jones, and top sub Mike White.

"Clarence Jones was irreplaceable," said Watkins. "With Brad Turner, they were our Mr. Inside and Mr. Outside."

Jones' absence was, once again, painfully noticeable.

college sports

able against OCC. The game was tight until late in the second half. Schoolcraft trailed 55-50 with 5:36 left when OCC's Willie Jones was assessed a technical foul for hanging on the rim on a dunk. Harold Martin hit the free throw, and the Ocelots were within four and had the ball.

DESMOND STEELE, replacing Clarence Jones at point guard, brought the ball upcourt, picked up his dribble, then inexplicably started dribbling again. The violation was called immediately, OCC scored the next four points (with the Ocelots contributing two more turnovers) and Schoolcraft was never closer than six the rest of the way.

"It's very frustrating," Watkins admitted. "If we did the things I said at halftime that we had to do to win, we would have been successful."

Despite several silly mistakes — the Ocelots committed 18 second-half turnovers, six in the final 5:29 — they could not be faulted for lack of effort. They battled OCC evenly, but in the end the Raiders' experience and inside strength, combined with Schoolcraft's lack of same, was overpowering.

Center Pat Gardner scored six points in a row for the Raiders in a 12-11 span, the last coming with 2:17 left and boosting OCC to a 63-53 advantage.

"We were trying to get the ball in there," McPhillips said. "Pat's been our leading scorer all year."

GARDNER FINISHED with 18 points, while Jones pumped in 21, again doing the bulk of his

damage inside against overmatched opposition. Gary Holt scored 10 and Rod Thompson finished with eight.

Martin had an exceptional night for Schoolcraft. He scored the Ocelots' first seven points and had nine in the first half, including a driving basket in the final second that pulled them to within 30-29 at half. Martin finished with 18 points, five steals and four assists.

Martin's jumper to start the second half gave Schoolcraft the lead, and Derrick Kearney's steal and layup put the Ocelots up 38-35 with 17:31 to go.

OCC awoke after that behind Gardner, Jones and Holt. Holt's bucket with 14:42 left gave the Raiders a 45-44 lead and started an 8-0 run that kept them ahead the rest of the game. In the final 17:09, Gardner netted 12 of his points, Jones had six and Holt contributed four.

THE ONLY other player to score in double figures for Schoolcraft was Les English with 10 points. Kearney and Steele had eight apiece, and Don Edwards nabbed 13 rebounds.

"Last year we started at the bottom (of the league) and got to 500," McPhillips said in evaluating OCC's progress since his return as coach. "We started four freshmen (Thompson, Jones, Gardner and Darrell Darling) who are all back."

"This year we wanted to get to the upper echelon of the league, but after this start I think we have a good shot at the championship. I don't think we've reached our peak yet. I think we're going to get better."

The Raiders will have to, if they want to maintain the same grade in the remaining 10 conference games they earned through the first four. What lies ahead won't be any easier.

well enough to score consistently. The deficit grew to 65-56 with 8:12 left in the game.

FOUR OCELOTS reached double figures in scoring: Lubbe (21), Kim Chandler (18), Tracy Ladouceur (14) and McKay (10).

OCC got 16 points from Heidi Erlandson and 10 from Cindy Goraline.

"We've won every conference game by 20 points," said Kavanagh. "Our lack of height hasn't been a factor. If we can force them to play a full-court game, we can beat them."

On Saturday, Jan. 11, Schoolcraft blew out Highland Park on its home court, 75-53, with a 41-23 second-half onslaught. Chandler's 32 points paced the Lady Ocelots, with Lubbe getting 16 and Ladouceur 15.

2nd-half outburst gets win for OU

By C.J. Rieck
staff writer

Perhaps the most difficult task for a basketball team contending for a league title is to play the top team in the conference, then have to come back and play a team battling for cellar-dweller honors.

Oakland University's men's team faced just such a challenge Thursday. After turning in an inspired performance in an 84-83 loss at Wayne State five days earlier, the Pioneers hosted Lake Superior State.

Wayne State is 5-0 in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC); Lake Superior fell to 2-4 in the league (3-10 overall) after OU staged a second-half blitz to claim a 73-56 triumph.

A LETDOWN was inevitable for the Pioneers after their strong performance at WSU. Fortunately, it lasted only one half.

"We've been scoring a lot of points," said OU coach Greg Kampe after his team improved to 3-2 in the GLIAC and 9-8 overall. "We're a good shooting team. In the first half, our shots weren't falling and we started forcing them."

"We were shooting the quick shots. At halftime I told them to be more patient, look for the good shot, and to work the ball inside to (Randy) Strunk and (Walt) Dixon."

The counseling paid off quickly. After a Mike West jumper cut OU's lead to 29-25, the Pioneers rattled off nine straight points to go up 39-25 with 16:50 left in the game.

Chris Howze scored four points, Dixon had two and Strunk connected on a three-point play in the OU surge. The Lakers never got closer than a dozen the rest of the way.

THE OU OFFENSE, averaging 83.1 points per game (11th best in the NCAA Division II) coming into the contest, then clicked consistently. The Pioneers hit 14 of 31 floor shots (45.2 percent) in the first half and 13 of 28 (46.4 percent) in the second, and

OU sports

converted just 10 of 30 free throws (33.3 percent).

But the defense applied enough pressure to keep the Lakers off balance. And more importantly, the different style of press called for by Kampe shook the Pioneers out of the lethargic state they played in during the first half.

"We call it 'the clamp,'" was Kampe's description of the second-half defense. "We don't want to let them breathe. We run a contain press in the first half. Our second-half defense was designed to deny them the ball."

HOWZE AND STRUNK did most of the second-half damage for OU. Howze netted 13 of his game-high 18 points and Strunk scored 11 of his 18. Howze also had four rebounds and two steals for the game, while Strunk grabbed nine rebounds. Dixon and Scott Bittenger each finished with 10 points, with Dixon getting eight rebounds.

West's 13 points and Thomas Gordon's 11 were best for LSS. The Lakers were thrashed in their own poor shooting — 23 of 58 from the field (39.8 percent) and nine of 19 from the line (47.4 percent).

The game was not without excitement, even in the latter moments when the outcome was assured. With 54 seconds to play, OU's Rob Alvin fouled West, who took offense at Alvin's rough play and hurled the ball at him as he walked away. A skirmish erupted, with both benches emptying.

Alvin was charged with a two-shot intentional foul and West was tagged with a technical foul — his third of the game.

The fracas made no difference in the final result, but it did restrain the usual ceremonial handshaking at game's end.

Lady Ocelot cagers humble OCC

By C.J. Rieck
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After three Eastern Conference games, it's become clear that Schoolcraft College women's basketball coach Ed Kavanagh has instilled his team with a valuable asset:

Give no quarter, never let up, show no mercy.

Oakland Community College was the victim Wednesday. The Lady Ocelots were ruthless against visiting OCC, building a lead of 22 points in the first half and extending it to as many as 30 in the second to win in a runaway, 77-52.

Like the two conference victims before them, the Raiders simply could not match Schoolcraft's quickness, speed and perimeter shooting. Sue Lubbe's basket with 15:43 to play in the first half

put the Ocelots up 10-2; another Lubbe field goal capped a 12-4 run and put Schoolcraft ahead 22-6 with 11:55 left.

THE OCELOT bulge blossomed to 22 (38-16) on a Colleen McKay bucket with 1:43 left in the first half, which ended with Schoolcraft in command 40-20.

"We played a good game," said Kavanagh, whose team is now 12-4 and alone atop the conference at 3-0. "We've been playing that way all year. We don't have any real big, dominant girls. They know whatever they get they'll have to earn."

The Lady Ocelots earned everything they got Wednesday. Their pressure defense forced 20 OCC turnovers — in the first half. The Raiders, with just seven players, never solved Schoolcraft's defense,

North wins city title

Continued from Page 1

Two Tammy Spengler kills won side quilts for North, but it was Cuthran who ate through at the end. With Stacy Talamini serving, Cuthran spiked home three consecutive points to win the match.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer
Anna Quenneville passes one toward the net for Farmington.

SHE WAS named the tournament's Most Valuable Player.

"We started real slow in both games and that hurt us," Harrison coach Ron Shortt said. "The girls are very irritated at themselves. They know what was going on. The good thing is, at least it wasn't a league match."

Small consolation. North, led by the serving of Talamini (13 points and five aces) and the net play of Cuthran and sophomore Suzi Butcher, had little trouble with Farmington.

"I'm disappointed," first-year Farmington coach Maureen McNabb said. "We've played much better than we did today."

Harrison (7-5) also defeated Farmington, in what amounted to a consolation match, 15-4, 15-12.

"I was worried that our slump would continue right on through the Farmington match," Shortt said. "Farmington can play the ball back, and really, that's all North did against us in the first game."

FARMINGTON, despite the two setbacks and its 1-10 record, got strong play from Lori Casaroli and Kelli Ross. Hughes was not the only weapon in a Harrison uniform. Theresa Spies and Diana Radatz played well, especially at the net, and Doll gave the team a boost coming off the bench.

Unsung heroes for North (7-4) included Kris McMillan, a solid back row player who startled both Harrison and Farmington with her ability at the net, and sophomores Carrie Lee, Stephanie Knapp and Butcher. Diana Ritchie had big day serving, as well.



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