

Sports

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A Chip comes of age

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

Missy Duczynski had felt this way before. She didn't like it.

The first six games as a collegiate basketball player had not gone exactly as she would have liked. After all, Central Michigan University had called Duczynski a "prize" recruit when it lured her from her home in Plymouth and Farmington Hills Mersey High School last winter. In six games Duczynski had averaged 2.7 points. She was getting about nine minutes of court time each game, usually in two- to three-minute segments.

By her own admission, Duczynski was not playing up to her capability. She was playing overly cautious basketball. The CMU coaches recruited her as a scorer, but Duczynski was reluctant to shoot.

"I was starting to feel like it was my junior year in high school all over again," Duczynski said. "I felt like there was someone else there to do it for me; why should I do it?"

If you know Missy Duczynski, you know that to let someone else do her job runs completely against her grain. This is the same person who took charge of the Mersey basketball team midway through the 1985 season and led it into the state Class A quarterfinals. This was the same unheralded player who came out of nowhere to win All-Area and all-state honors her senior season.

DU CZYNSKI SHOOK the ugly de ja vu feeling Friday night. And while she was at it, she sparked CMU's stunning 83-70 victory over heavily favored Brigham Young in the first round of the Palouse-Michigan State Holiday Classic Women's Basketball Tournament before a record crowd of 4,278 at Jensen Field House.

"I broke out tonight," said a delighted Duczynski after the game. CMU coach Donita Davenport agreed: "This was the first night our freshmen didn't play like freshmen. It was the first time they looked like they knew what they were doing."

Here's what Duczynski did: She entered the game with 4:12 left in the first half and CMU trailing BYU 28-22. BYU had just run off 10 unanswered points and Central hadn't scored a field goal in more than six minutes.

"Coach just said, 'You know how to score. Go in and be a shooter,'" Duczynski said.

The first time Duczynski touched the ball she knocked down a 15-footer from the corner to snap Central's dry spell. That's all it took to



RANDY BOST/Staff photographer

Missy Duczynski, Mersey grad and Plymouth native, got her first extensive action of the

season for Central Michigan last Friday and responded well to the challenge.

ignite the Chippewas. Before the half was over, Central was leading 36-33.

"IT FELT great to hit that first shot," she said. "It just gave me more confidence. I could feel it kind of lift the team up, too."

Duczynski got a surprise at halftime. Davenport said that Duczynski would start the second half.

"I was surprised because I think I have let her down the first part of the year," Duczynski said. "I haven't performed up to my ability. It was

good to get the feeling back I had in my senior year at high school. My confidence is back."

In the early moments of the second half, Duczynski was all over the court. She grabbed an offensive rebound and a defensive rebound in alternate possessions. She forced a turnover, made a nice assist to Jody Beerman to put the Chips up 41-38. Later she scored on a short jump shot.

When she left, CMU led 47-44. In

the 13 minutes she played, CMU went from a six-point deficit to a three-point lead and control of the game. She finished with four points, four rebounds, two assists and a much brighter outlook.

"This was the first time I played when it really counted. Usually I play two minutes here, two minutes there just to give the others a breather," she said. "Tonight I needed to perform. The team needed it. I got the good feeling back again."



Brad Emons

Allow fans, players to decide 3-pointer

THE 3-POINT SHOT.

It seems you either love it, hate it or want to modify it. But there's no doubt about it, the new semi-circle, 19 feet, 9 inches away from the basket, is causing a lot of discussion among basketball aficionados.

If you listen closely, the people squawking about it the most aren't the players or the fans. It's the coaches, particularly the college coaches.

Putting it bluntly, Indiana University's Bob Knight reasons: "It's a tragedy for the game."

Villanova's Rollie Massimino, who told the NCAA News that he wants it banned before the season ends, adds: "I think it's ridiculous. It's changed the game mentally and physically. I don't know one coach I've talked to along the way who said he likes it."

Apparently Massimino hasn't talked to one of his Philadelphia colleagues, John Chaney of Temple, who beat Villanova last Saturday night.

"WE NEED INNOVATIONS," Chaney told the Association Press. "It's no longer a game played in a cage for the coaches. It's an entertainment thing. If the three-point goal keeps people in the stands late in the game. The players love it."

You don't have to poll the players. I'd bet the house on their response.

Other coaches aren't sure. But like Mikey in the cereal commercial, maybe if they try it, they'll like it.

The issue has become a hot one and some day members of the Michigan High School Athletic Association will have to take a stand on the three-pointer.

Right now the MISAA is leaving it up to the individual conferences, foregoing the shot, at least for this season, for state tournament play.

SEVERAL AREA leagues have adopted the shot, including the Tri-River League, Greater Oakland Activities League and Metro Conference.

The 12-team Western Lakes Conference has not adopted the shot, although all of its league members have the three-point line painted on their floors.

"I've got mixed feelings about it," said Farmington Harrison

coach Mike Teachman. "I don't like it in college because you have everybody shooting all over the place, but it opens up the inside and it will change coaching strategies a lot. It's going to stop the all-bouncing bodies inside."

"The negative side of it is that, first, you don't have skilled enough people (in high school) to make it worthwhile and you're going to showcase only one or two guys; and secondly, when you're 15 or 16 years old, you haven't developed the strength and you may not be smart enough to know when or when not to shoot it."

Plymouth Salem coach Bob Brodie would like to see it adopted on a "trial basis."

"IT'S GOOD AS far as scoring goes and teams won't be able to pack their zone inside," he said. "The negative side is you work so hard to get your kids to get the shots inside. To make those shots worth less than a 20-foot bomb will make the kids think twice about busting to work the ball inside."

"As a coach, defensively we like to force teams to shoot from 21 feet. We may have to change the philosophy if they're going to get those points from that range."

Brodie also added that 19-9 is too close for college, but perfect for high school.

Like Massimino, Bloomfield Hills Lahar coach Mike Fedio doesn't care for the three-pointer.

"I think the game is fine the way it was," he said. "I don't see it enhancing the game. I've seen in in college and it's the distance I don't like."

The pros (23 feet, 9 inches) needed something to keep the interest in the game.

"I'M NOT A win-at-all-costs coach. It's not my job to entertain the Lahar fans. I teach my team to work hard and make sacrifices, playing to their strengths and weaknesses. In high school athletics, it should be educational. The game is not for the fans, it's for the players in high school. College is different. It's almost like the pros."

As a writer covering games, I'd like to see the pros try the shot on an experimental basis, maybe during the summer, as Teachman suggests.

I think it would win over some coaches, who, year after year, don't have the inside people to compete with the big boys.

Spartans chase coveted Joe Louis arena hat-trick

Will Michigan State University get the coveted Joe Louis Arena hat-trick this year?

The Spartans will shoot for the first goal this weekend when they compete with Western Michigan University of Michigan and Michigan Tech in the 22nd annual Great Lakes Invitational Collegiate Hockey Tournament Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 27-28 at Joe Louis.

MSU, the reigning NCAA champ and winners of four straight Great Lakes titles, just missed gaining the hat-trick two years ago when it lost in the preliminary round of the NCAA championships. The hat-trick consists of the Great Lakes, Central Collegiate Hockey Association and NCAA titles.

A MSU championship this weekend would tie the tournament's consecutive win record. Michigan Tech won the tournament five straight years, from 1976-1980.

ON PAPER, it appears MSU will be the heavy favorite again this year. The Spartans, who will take on Western at 7 p.m. Saturday, have a 16-2-0 record. Western is 10-8. U-M (6-12-0) will play Michigan Tech (4-15-1) at 3 p.m.

But as all four coaches said at a recent press conference, "It's not the team with the best record going into the tournament that will win the GLI. It's the team that plays the best on those two days."

hockey

Each team will have its own motivating force. Herb Borer and his Tech program are hoping to prove they are still a force in the tournament. Tech teams have won or placed second in all but three of the 21 tournaments. The Huskies have won the title nine times.

Red Berenson, head coach at U-M, is looking for his first GLI title. The Wolverines won the trophy once, in 1975.

Western, though no stranger to the Joe Louis Ice, is making its debut in the tournament. Western beat MSU last March at Joe Louis in the finals of the GLI tournament.

AS ALWAYS, the Great Lakes tournament will attract a throng of NHL scouts. Although a large percentage of the players in the tournament have been drafted, NHL scouts continue to monitor and evaluate the progress of their players.

"A hockey program with a heavy emphasis on practice is what the NHL wants for their college draftees," said Berenson. "So by having a player remain in school, both sides benefit — the pro team has their

draft pick in a solid program and the player receives an education."

Being drafted does not guarantee any player an NHL contract. Western coach Bill Wilkinson thinks this reality makes his drafted players work harder.

"They know they are still being watched," he said. "If they don't play hard, they don't play at all — drafted or not."

THE NUMBER of Observer & Eccentric players competing in the tournament is down somewhat this year. Don McSwen (Plymouth) is the anchor of MSU's defense. U-M features Alex Roberts (Bloomfield Hills) and Paul Rossi (Birmingham). Dave Bramble (Livonia) and Bob Worden (Canton) play for Western Tech is devoid of area players. However, the Huskies have picked up an entire Western Wayne County university. Wayne State has adopted the Huskies as its hockey team. The Tartans will be out in full force Saturday and Sunday.

The championship game will take place at 7 p.m. Sunday. The consolation game will start at 3 p.m.

Tickets, \$5.50 and \$3.50, are available at Joe Louis and all TicketWorld outlets. A two-day GLI pass can be purchased for \$22. A three-event, 12-game ticket for the GLI, CHA and NCAA tournaments can be purchased for \$49. Call 567-6009 for more ticket information.



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