

Coach still optimistic despite losses

BY C.J. RISAK
STAFF WRITER

Bill Sharpe insists the results of the first two weeks of Madonna University's men's basketball season — seven games, seven losses, the last two by lopsided margins — have not dimmed his outlook.

"Disappointed? Certainly," he said after the Fighting Crusaders absorbed a 52-point thrashing at Wayne State Monday. "And they're not happy. I'm starting to adjust to the idea that we're going to have to take more time with these kids than I thought."

Sharpe's optimism going into the season could be perceived as noble. Perhaps brash. But, among those familiar with the talent level in the NAIA, it seemed highly unrealistic.

A team consisting of 10 freshmen, two sophomores, two juniors and a senior should not

MADONNA MEN

contemplate a championship season. A team that loses one of its few strong pivot players — 6-foot-7 Ken Taylor, from Westland John Glenn, an academic casualty — should expect trouble.

At Wayne State Monday, Madonna got just that. The Tartars, one of the top teams in the NCAA Division II, routed the Crusaders behind a school-record for points, 136-84.

Madonna's trip to Ohio Dominican Saturday was no better — a 131-106 lashing.

"Our expectations were way high," Sharpe said. "Probably too high. I thought we'd be close to 500."

Although the Crusaders had stretched in both games during which they played solidly, there were far too many in which they were outperformed. They al-

lowed Wayne State to score the game's first 10 points but crawled back into it by the midpoint of the first half.

With eight minutes left, the deficit was just 34-29. Then in those final eight minutes, the Tartars outscored Madonna 36-5. Michael Aaron's 23 points and 12 from Livonia Churchhill and Randy Calcaterra sparked WSU's first-half surge. The bulge grew to 60 points midway through the second half.

Aaron finished with 33 points. Calcaterra had 19. Mark Herron netted 13. Derek Hardy and Brian Koscielski had 12 apiece. Bernie Burnett had 11, and Scott Armstrong totaled 10. WSU (now 3-0) outrebounded Madonna 66-41.

The Crusaders got a strong game from Shawn Brannum, 31 points. Kurt Carlson scored 12. But leading scorer Mike Stone was 0-for-10 from the floor; the team was a mere 30-of-90 (33

percent). "For us to ever win, we have to improve our shooting," said Sharpe. "We can get away with this offense if they're shooting well."

The Crusaders haven't been, not against WSU nor against Ohio Dominican. They trailed 60-51 at the half against Dominican for the game, Madonna made less than 44 percent of its floor shots (Dominican hit nearly 60 percent).

Donnell Foster's 23 points paced the Crusaders against Dominican. Brandon Stone scored 21, and Mike Stone added 14. Dominican got 29 from Jerry Lenier, 27 from Mike Bell, 17 from Brad Wolford, 16 from Brad Marzetz and 13 from Steve Antritt.

Once again, Madonna was outrebounded — this time by a 63-36 margin.

Such figures do not build confidence. But Sharpe believes his team could turn it around.

SPORTS SHORTS

Items for the Sports Roundup should be submitted by 5 p.m. Tuesday (for Thursday issue) and 5 p.m. Friday (for the Monday issue).

GIRLS HOOP TRYOUTS

The Oakland County Flyers will have tryouts for their AAU girls basketball teams according to the following dates and times.

Saturday, Dec. 11, at Warner Middle School (14 Mile Road in Farmington Hills): 16-year-olds, 9-11 a.m.; 16-18, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 12, at Warner Middle School: 11-and-under and 12-13, 9-11 a.m.; 14-year-olds, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 18, at East Middle School (Middlebelt Road between 10 and 11 Mile): 11-and-under and 12-13, 9-11 a.m.; 14-year-olds, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 19, at East Middle School: 16-year-olds, 9-11 a.m.; 16-18, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For information call Bob La-Cosse at 471-1177.

Tryouts for the West Metro Cougars AAU girls basketball team are scheduled for Friday, Dec. 3, at the Northville Recreation Center, 303 W. Main St., as follows: 6-7:30 p.m. for 11- and 12-year-olds; 7:30-9 p.m. for 13- and 14-year-olds. For more information call 349-0369 or 274-2163.

SOCCERDOME NEWS

The Canton Soccerdome is accepting a limited number of teams for its second session, which begins Jan. 8. Teams will play on eight-game schedule. The team fee is \$695. Call 483-5600, Ext. 102 for information.

Canton Soccerdome is accepting teams for its Shootout Holiday Tournament on Sunday and Monday, Dec. 26 and 27.

Players of all ages are welcome on a first-come, first-served basis. Teams are guaranteed three games. Five-on-five and three-on-three teams are welcome. The fees are \$200 and \$100, respectively. Call 483-5600, Ext. 102 to enter.

Madonna women focus on long term

The record may not reflect it, but Madonna University's women's basketball coach Bill Potter is convinced his team will be a regional contender in the NAIA by season's end.

The Lady Crusaders slipped to 1-4 with a two losses last weekend at the Grand Rapids Press Tournament, hosted by Aquinas College. On Saturday, they lost to Calvin College 66-64; on Friday, it was Oakland University that upended them, 70-58.

Against Calvin (ranked in the NCAA Division III), Madonna had two chances to win or tie in the final 30 seconds but couldn't convert. Shawn Bannon missed a three-pointer, and Jill Burt misfired on a two-pointer. Burt led the Crusaders with 15 points; Bannon had 14, five assists and five steals, and Stephanie Crelley scored 11.

Rebounding was the difference: Calvin (2-3 overall) had a 50-28 advantage. Pam Wubben had 16

points and eight rebounds, and Joyce Hollander added 15 points and 10 boards for the Saints.

In the loss to OU — one of the favorites to win the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference — Madonna got off to an 11-3 start but fell behind 31-23 by halftime. The Crusaders never closer than five after that. Bannon's 23 points paced Madonna. Meegan Marlatt had 16. For OU, Doreen Belkowski scored 15, Kim Bailey 14 and Kelli Kraljick 10.

S'craft cagers get revenge

There's an appropriate title to be put to Schoolcraft College's men's basketball game Tuesday against Siena Heights' junior varsity: Getting even.

As in avenging an earlier 24-point loss to the Saints' junior varsity, suffered Nov. 17. The Ocelots did that, posting a 69-64 win at SC.

But there's more: The victory also evened the Ocelots' record at 4-4. They have one nonconference game remaining — Saturday at home against Kellogg CC (3 p.m.) — before opening East-

ern Conference action Wednesday against St. Clair CC (7:30 p.m. at SC).

The win over Siena Heights came from a two-man offensive attack. Sophomore Steve Whitlow got into foul trouble early and played just 2 1/2 minutes in the first half. He finished with six points.

But Todd McNeill and Abu Hamilton picked up the slack. McNeill did the damage in the first half, scoring 13 points to lead SC to a 36-35 advantage at the break; he finished with 16.

OCC tumbles

The Oakland Community College men's basketball team is off to a rocky start.

A 20-point effort from Norris Burgess paced Lansing Community College to a 112-96 victory over the Raiders Saturday night.

The loss dropped OCC to 2-4. Lansing is 3-1.

Harold Golsen scored 26 points, and Craig Martin 22 for OCC. Mark Calbraith pulled down a game-high 11 rebounds.

The Raiders will play in a four-team tournament Friday and Saturday at Macomb Community College.

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