

OU manages win despite poor start

The first five minutes were horrendous.

Oakland University's men's basketball team had one basket to show for its efforts in that stretch. Host Hillsdale College had 15 points. Such a start, in the first Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference game of the season, and in a game on the road, usually spells doom.

But the Pioneers recovered, thanks again to the sharp shooting of sophomore guard Eric Taylor. They outscored Hillsdale 33-13 the rest of the half, with Taylor getting 13 of those, and cruised home with a 78-65 victory Saturday.

Taylor, who has already been named GLIAC player of the week once, was a strong contender again after last week. Thursday he poured in a career-high 33 points, making 13-of-19 floor shots and all three of his three-point efforts in an 87-83 loss at Northwood Institute.

Against Hillsdale, Taylor totaled 23 points and eight rebounds — both team highs. The key run in the game started with 5:22 to go in the first half and OU down 24-21. The Pioneers scored the next eight points, six by Taylor.

The closest the Chargers got in the second half was 70-62 with 3:39 remaining. A Brian Gregory baseline jumper restored OU to a 10-point advantage, and Hillsdale never again threatened.

ANDRE BOND contributed 18 points and six boards to OU's win. Gregory connected on eight consecutive free throws on route to scoring 12 points. He also had seven assists and five steals. Stacy Davis added eight points and six rebounds (five offensive) and Dave Hintz got eight points and five boards.

Jim Bauer's 18 points were best for the Chargers, who slipped to 1-6 overall and 0-1 in the GLIAC. Jerry Tharp had 14.

The win improved the Pioneers' record to 5-3 (1-0 in the conference). Wednesday's loss at Northwood came despite an OU rally that trimmed an 11-point Northmen lead (51-40) with 16:26 to play to three (79-76), on two Davis' free throws with 1:27 left.

But in the 54 seconds following Davis' foul shot, NI outscored the Pioneers 5-2 to go up 84-78, a lead too large to overcome. Joining Taylor (who also dished out four assists) in double-figure scoring for

OU were Davis with 16 and Bond with 13. Gregory collected nine points, eight rebounds and eight assists.

Jeff Williams and Fred Daraghol got 18 points apiece for the Northmen, who improved to 5-4 with the triumph.

The Pioneers outshot NI, making 31 of 60 floor shots (51.7 percent) to 26 of 59 (44 percent) for the Northmen. They also committed just 12 turnovers to 18 for NI.

But free throws and fouls spelled the difference. The Northmen made 28 of 40 (70 percent) to 16 of 24 (67 percent) for OU. Bond, Wallace Davis and Taylor all fouled out for OU, and Stacy Davis and Gregory each had four fouls. No one fouled out for Northwood.

OU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: The Lady Pioneers successfully opened the defense of their GLIAC championship Saturday at Hillsdale, pummeling the Lady Chargers 93-68.

The game was close until late in the first half and early in the second. The Lady Pioneers were ahead 32-30 two minutes before halftime; they scored six straight to lead 38-30 at the break, then opened the second half by netting the first nine points.

Debbie Delie did most of the damage, pumping in seven in the 15-0 run. She finished with 24 points (on 10-of-13 field shooting) and grabbed 15 rebounds.

Janice Kosman and Jennifer Golen kept OU in control throughout the second half. Each had two points in the opening 20 minutes; Kosman scored 12 and Golen had 10 in the second half.

Ann Serra contributed four points and 12 assists for the Lady Pioneers, who kept their record perfect at 8-0 (1-0 in the GLIAC). Hillsdale (4-5 overall, 0-1 in the GLIAC) was paced by Sandy Skalsgr's 16 points and 11 boards.

Last Wednesday (Dec. 6), OU wallowed visiting Ohio Northern 88-53. The win was so lopsided, no one played more than 30 minutes for the Lady Pioneers — who had a 47-18 cushion by halftime.

Delie had 16 points and Dawn Lichty, just back from knee surgery, scored 13 to lead OU. Delie had 10 and Lichty nine in the first half. Dawn Hill and Shelly Jackson each had 11 points for Northern (1-1 overall).

S'craft women pound Alpena

One thing became very evident after a few minutes of Saturday's Alpena Community College-Schoolcraft College women's basketball game: Alpena just didn't have it.

If the game had been a horse race, SC's home court stallions would have made Alpena look like plow horses. The 69-51 final margin might have been worse had the Lady Ocelots maintained their intensity for the entire 40 minutes.

"We played a full-court man-to-man defense in the first half," said SC coach Jack Grenan. "The kids just dug in. Alpena had trouble getting it past mid-court."

Guards Tracy Osborne, Ann Hardy and Teresa Farkas forced a bundle of Alpena turnovers. When on offense, SC proved just as effective — thanks to Alpena's sticking to a zone defense throughout the first half.

Osborne took advantage of that. She sank a pair of three-pointers and scored 11 points from the perimeter in the opening 20 minutes to give SC to a 35-21 halftime lead. When Alpena was fast enough to cover Osborne on one wing, the Lady Ocelots rotated the ball to Denise Kokowicz on the opposite side.

KOKOWICZ RESPONDED by hit-

Schoolcraft sports

ting five-of-six outside shots, scoring 10 first-half points.

After a few minutes of the second half, SC's lead had grown to 20 and Alpena abandoned its zone for a man-to-man defense. The move worked for a while, as the Lady Ocelot lead was trimmed to 12. After baffling Alpena with its high-speed fast break in the first half, SC relaxed, and the tempo reflected it.

The Lady Ocelots' rebounding also slackened, which perturbed Grenan. But they did adjust to Alpena's defensive change, pegging the ball inside to center Barb Krug. Krug had just four points in the first half against the zone, but against the man-to-man she found enough openings to score 12 second-half points.

Krug finished with 16 points and 11 rebounds. Osborne totaled 15 points, Kokowicz notched 14 and Farkas had 10 (eight in the second half). Lisa DePlante collected eight points and 10 boards.

Joy Ilyvarinen's 18 points led Alpena. Kris Thurston netted 15.

The win allowed SC to open its Eastern Conference season on a winning note. The Lady Ocelots are 5-2 overall, with four consecutive victories. Alpena slipped to 4-3 overall and to 1-1 in the conference.

SC MENS BASKETBALL: The optimistic view would be: How many times in the last two years were the Ocelots even in position to win a game in the final seconds?

The obvious answer is very seldom. But in Saturday's Eastern Conference opener against Alpena at SC, Ken Fuster was at the free-throw line with 14 seconds to play and his team trailing 70-68.

Unfortunately for the Ocelots, while the situation may have been new, the results were all-too-familiar. Fuster, an 86 percent shooter at the line, missed the first in his one-

and-one opportunity. Alpena got the ball and Bobby Allen was fouled.

He made one-of-two foul shots with seven seconds remaining, increasing Alpena's advantage to three. The Ocelots tried to get the ball into Ed Hudson's hands for a tying three-pointer, but Darrin Morgan intercepted and scored at the buzzer, making the final 73-68 in favor of Alpena.

"It was a tough loss, but we played well," said SC coach Dave Bogataj. "It was one of those games we had a chance to win and we just didn't do it."

BLAMING FUSTER, a sophomore, for the loss would be grossly unfair. Several other experienced players suffered through sub-par performances. Ed Hudson, averaging better than 18 points a game, managed just nine and missed all seven of his three-point attempts. Al Hudson played less than 20 minutes because of foul trouble, totalling seven points and eight rebounds.

Rob Harmon was limited to nine points. All, like Fuster (who had six points), are sophomores.

The main reason SC was able to stay in the game was freshman Randy Watters, who rattled Alpena for 25 points and grabbed nine rebounds. Watters made five-of-seven three-point efforts.

Alpena led 40-37 at the half. The game remained close the rest of the way, until Morgan (16 points), Scott Olsen (15) and Allen (13) carried Alpena to the win.

Bogataj admitted he is having trouble accepting losses, close or not. This defeat dropped SC to 5-7 overall and to 0-1 in the conference. Alpena is 7-3 overall, 1-1 in the conference.

"We play hard like this and I just got to believe the breaks will start going our way," he said.

The only question is, when?

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