

Womens' Basketball

Contributed by Jared Buchholz
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The LSSU women's basketball team went down state to take on the tough University of Michigan and Michigan State from the equally tough Big Ten conference, a difficult task for any team. Saturday and Sunday at U of M and MSU, respectively, the basketball team played tough games but failed to prevail losing 80-51 and 71-52.

Against the Wolverines, the Laker ladies struggled. Despite a good FG percentage (44.4%) in the first half, the ladies turned the ball over 12 times, which the Wolverines turned into 8 points. LSSU was also out rebounded 23-16, and committed seven more fouls than U of M, who shot only 50% from the line on the ten attempts in the first half. Lake State failed to make any free throws in the first half.

Despite the woes in the first half, the Lakers made 4-9 three point shots, a solid 44.4%. They ended the first half trailing U of M, 42-28.

Opening the second period, the Lakers were shut out for the first 12:38 missing 8 shots, not including the two missed free throws by freshman guard Shelle Rochon. In that span U of M increased their lead to 68, scoring a blazing 26 points. This streak was stopped by Shalyn Beauchamp's three point shot, which started a flurry of scoring by the LSSU team, who, in the next 7:22, scored 23 points. Unfortunately, the scoring power of Michigan's 26 point drive was too much to overcome, falling to Michigan in the exhibition game.

Freshman forward Katherine LaPrairie lead the Lakers in scoring with 15 points on 45% from the field and 50% from both the tree point and free throw lines. She also contributed 5 rebounds, 3 assists and a steal. Shalyn Beauchamp scored 9 points, all threes where she shot a lights-out 3-4. She also grabbed three boards, had 2 assists and a steal.

The next night the Lady Lakers traveled to Eastern Lansing to take on U of M rival, the Michigan State Spartans. After coming off a tough loss to the Big Ten Wolverines, the Lakers accepted the challenge that was the Spartans.

Starting the game, LSSU led for the first 9:58 of the first period. First points of the game coming from Laker leading scorer Jaclyn Armstrong, who finished with 13 points, and took a game high 16 shots.

The game was not dominated by either team, as the largest lead in the first half was the Lakers 11-4 lead, which was matched late in the first half by the Spartans at 19-26. The Lakers finished the first half strong, with the final seven points.

The second half went about the same as the first for the first 7:03. Then the Spartans went in a huge run of 8 points to create the separating the Spartans needed to put the pressure on the Lakers. The run was stopped with a lay-up by Allison Jaynes, who finished with 7 points. The Laker defense could not find an answer for the Spartan offense and never got back into the game where they eventually trailed 22 points near the end.

The Spartans boasted three players over 11 points, Kalisha Keane lead them with a game high 21 points.

A question and answer session with the coach let the Laker leader to express her thoughts on the games.

What were your expectations going down to play those two tough teams?

Coach Pewinski: "I was expecting the team to compete against both teams and to play physical and aggressive on both ends. We were looking to get some stops and try to run our fast break as much as we could. The biggest thing was to get everyone, especially the freshman, some experience and to see us run our stuff against somebody other than ourselves."

What went well in the Michigan game? The State game?

C P: In the first half of Michigan, we were able to get some fast break points and we really battled them in the paint. Against State, we did a great job on the boards and again we were able to establish our offense. We just played really tough, scrappy defense...especially in the first half.

What did your team do wrong?

C P: In the first game (Michigan), we really had to battle some nerves and they pressured us into some mistakes. We

played a little more tentative in the second half and Michigan took advantage of our mistakes.

Against State, I think we got a little tired in the second half and they really started to pound us inside. There were some breakdowns in transition that really allowed State to get some big baskets and we couldn't come back from it.

How can you improve upon the performances?

C P: We will definitely get back to basics in practice. We've only had 2 weeks of practice and are trying to get 5 freshmen mixed into the rotation and understanding the system. That being said, I am really pleased with the way we played and the potential that this team has.