

Cagers drop to last place

Graves' 23-point effort not enough against UMass

By ANDRIJA SILICH
Collegian Sports Writer

Despite a career-high 23 points by Terry Graves, 17 of which came in the second half, and a strong performance by David Griffin (18 points), the men's basketball team bowed to the Massachusetts Minutemen 88-81 Saturday night at Curry Hicks Cage in Amherst, Mass.

The loss marks the ninth straight for the Lions and their seventh straight in the Atlantic 10 Conference. Penn State, which had a record of 5-6 overall and 3-2 in the division just a few weeks ago, now owns sole position of last place in the Atlantic 10 with a 3-9 record. It also boasts the worst overall record (5-15) among Atlantic Ten teams.

UMass is not a basketball powerhouse itself, however. The Minutemen were 8-11 overall and 4-7 in the conference going into the game and with a victory, Penn State could have pulled into a tie for ninth place with them.

The Lions never led in this game, however, and as in so many other games in this long streak they put themselves in the hole in the first half. Penn State's second half effort for a comeback fell short again.

This time it was the inside game that got the Lions in trouble. The UMass front line (which consisted of Edwin Green, John Hemple and Horace Neysmith) outscored the four

players from Penn State's frontline (Graves, Griffin, Dick Mumma, Marshall Grier) by a 28-16 count.

In addition to the UMass domination underneath the basket, the Lions were victims of their usual blunders—turnovers and poor rebounding.

Penn State turned the ball over 13 times in the first half alone. Head Coach Bruce Parkhill felt that was the worst of all the evils in the first twenty minutes of play.

"In the first half, our main problems were on offense," he said. "We couldn't run our offense, we were turning the ball over too much, we were impatient. And the results were alarming, however, was the fact that we scored probably 10 points on fast break baskets off turnovers."

UMass outscored Penn State 22-15 in the first half. But even more alarming, however, was the fact that 6-10 Dick Mumma had no rebounds in the first half for the Lions.

Parkhill said the rebounding, or lack of it, by Penn State made things that much worse because the Minutemen were getting second and third chances when their first shots didn't go in.

All these factors combined to give the Minutemen a 48-35 lead at the half and it looked as if that margin would remain as large throughout the game.

17 points 78-61.

But that's when then the UMass domination ended. Things started to go sour for the Minutemen and Penn State slowly found itself with a chance to win the game.

With six minutes left in the contest Neysmith fouled out for the Minutemen. Green, who had 10 points in the first half and finished the game with 16 points, 14 rebounds, and four blocked shots, cooled off significantly near the end of the second half.

On the outside of the court things started to look good and Penn State was getting hot. Graves went on his scoring rampage in the second half and also finished with six rebounds.

Other factors began to contribute to the Lion comeback and before long (1:06 remaining) they only trailed by five 82-77. UMass got into foul trouble, the Lions began to rebound (Jim Forjan came off the bench to grab 10 and Penn State outscored UMass 44-41 overall despite the unproductive first half) and when given the opportunity to put the game out of reach UMass foul shooters missed.

In the end, however, Penn State ran out of ticks on the clock. Given another two or three minutes they might have pulled this one off, but in the books it just goes down as another loss.

The Lions trailed by 13 or more points for more than 15 minutes in the second half. With just 5:35 remaining the Minutemen boosted their lead to

the victory 88-81.

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Spikers overcome sluggish start

Lions rally to crush Ball State in 4 games

By JOHN WEISS
Collegian Sports Writer

If things aren't running smoothly with a team, if there are a few sputters and kinks in the system, a coach needs to make some changes and the players need to respond.

Head Coach Tom Tait and his No. 7 men's volleyball team had to do both Saturday night at Rec Hall after they stumbled their way through a 14-16 opening game loss to No. 9 Ball State.

But thanks to a few adjustments, both psychological and physical, things turned around and the Nittany Lions (12-4) swept the remaining three games of the match 15-6, 15-9, 15-7.

"In the first game we probably made every mistake a volleyball team could make," Tait said. "We came out playing hard, but we came out playing a little bit tight and that attributed to some of the errors."

The errors Tait noted were a number of net violations off the blocking, probably due to the overzealous play of the Nittany Lions.

As a result of the opening game loss, the coach made a lineup switch. He started sophomore John Hartranft over junior Bob Palka at outside hitter.

"Our rhythm was a little slow and I wanted to change that," Tait explained. "John's a faster style player. Bobby's a slow, higher player."

Tait used the Hartranft-Palka switch again in the third game, with Hartranft starting but Palka relieving after the Cardinals had opened a 9-6 lead. The result was nine unanswered points for the Nittany Lions.

Palka then started game four and Penn State soared to a 12-0 lead. But even when the score stood at 14-0, Tait was still at work, moving Hartranft back in to finish the match.

Tait said it was more than just a physical change that came over his team. There was also a positive mental attitude that developed following the opening game loss.

"We didn't really get involved in the match well until we were down badly in that first ballgame, and then began to do some things really well," Tait said. "I think each player felt a responsibility to start generating some excitement on the floor."

Sophomore middle blocker Boris Kaz said a key factor in the team's comeback was its ability to adjust to Ball State.

"We looked at what they were doing and adjusted to it," Kaz said. "We just kept playing our game and getting more and more into it."

"Since there are many freshmen in the team to be mentally prepared going into a match."

"Every time one is down, one is up and it's really hard to get psyched up together," Kaz said.

Tait agreed, citing senior outside hitter Steve Hunkins and sophomore setter Duane Trumble as two of the few who came up with strong overall matches.

"The rest of the team was kind of up and down, off and on throughout the match," Tait said. "I think we beat a good, solid team when we were not playing particularly well. I thought it was not a particularly sharp match."

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