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College Notes: UIS men's basketball made progress in loss

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The University of Illinois Springfield Prairie Stars' exhibition men's basketball game against Illinois-Chicago finished better than it started.

The end result was a 72-59 loss Saturday to UIC, but UIS made progress. After trailing 33-19 at the half, the Stars bounced back and outscored the Flames 40-39 in the second half.

"UIC played a zone the whole night and we didn't get to see much in our man-to-man offense, which we really worked on," UIS coach Kevin Gamble said. "We didn't play bad. We just didn't make shots. Against a zone, you have to shoot a pretty good percentage to be successful. That's something we didn't do. We took some shots that we kind of rushed. We did do some things in our zone offense."

Everyone on the roster saw action. UIS played seven players 15 minutes or more.

"We don't have the talent that we've had in the past as far as certain positions," Gamble said. "We'll be able to play more guys. We may go 10 to 11 deep."

The Stars emerged from the game without any injuries, but senior guard Steffen Spinks is nursing an ankle injury that he suffered in practice. Freshman forward Chigozie Umeadi, who started against UIC, is nursing a sprained elbow.

Gamble expects Umeadi to play in the Stars' season-opening game at home against 0-4 MacMurray Tuesday at 7:45 p.m.

A women's contest between UIS (1-0) and St. Ambrose (3-0) will tip off prior to the men's game at 5:30 p.m.

B2 Networks will air all the men's and women's home and Great Lakes Valley Conference road games online. To watch or obtain a list of scheduled events click on the B2 networks link at www.GoPrairieStars.com or log on to www.b2livetv.com.

Catching up with UIS A.D.

Starting the school's baseball program remains a work in progress for Rodger Jehlicka, UIS athletic director, and coach Brian Grunzke.

UIS, which will play its inaugural season in spring 2011, has not settled on a location to practice and play games. Jehlicka has been in contact with Springfield Park District executive director Mike Stratton about the possibility of playing at Lanphier or Chamberlain parks. Jehlicka said they're still working with the group that wants to build the STAR (Springfield Training & Athletic Recreational) Center on the south side of Springfield.

Progress is being made in other areas.

"We do know the dates for the 2011 season and Brian Grunzke has nine commitments already," Jehlicka said.

The search continues to replace UIS men's soccer coach Joe Eck, who resigned in October.

Jehlicka said a committee is in the process of evaluating "a fairly large number of applicants". He expects to name a new coach in early 2010.

Loggers hosting reunion Saturday

A reunion of former Lincoln Land Community College basketball players will take place Saturday at the men's basketball game between LLCC and Carl Sandburg College at Cass Gymnasium at 1 p.m.

Former players will be honored at 12:45 p.m. A social is scheduled for after the game.

Admission is free for all past LLCC basketball players and their families.

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