

UIS men's basketball team routs MacMurray

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The University of Illinois Springfield Prairie Stars didn't score more than 100 points in a men's basketball game last season.

The Stars lit up the scoreboard in this season's opener for a 115-60 non-conference victory over the MacMurray Highlanders on Tuesday at The Recreation and Athletic Center.

"I liked our pace of the game," UIS coach Kevin Gamble said. "What I didn't like was we didn't play hard the entire game. We took plays off. You can't do that against good teams."

While Gamble said the Stars' defensive effort was "OK", the offense shot 58.6 percent from the field for the game and 63.6 percent in the opening half.

UIS took a 39-10 lead after a 16-0 UIS run that started with junior Justin Sims' tipping in a miss by Zach Lewis with 12 minutes remaining in the opening half and ended with Richard Oruche's layup at the 7:51 mark. During the stretch, NCAA Division III MacMurray (0-5) suffered through a 4½ minute scoring drought.

Tuesday's win was indicative of what to expect from the NCAA Division II Prairie Stars this season. For example, 12 players took the court for the Stars with six different players scoring more than 10 points.

"Other than (Oruche), we don't really have a distinguished scorer," said Lewis, a senior guard. "To get wins, we're going to have to have nights like (Tuesday) when we have a bunch of kids in double figures."

MacMurray had just one player in double figures. Senior forward Ryan Sichting scored 15 points. The Highlanders' leading scorer this season, junior forward Jerel Robertson, struggled with foul trouble and scored just four points.

Oruche led UIS with 20 points. Lewis added 19, and senior guard Derrick Tribble scored 17 off the bench. Junior guard Brandon Farmer and junior forward Ryan Thornton scored 14 apiece. Sims, a forward, contributed 10 points.

"When you look at the team's averages at midseason, it's going to be pretty neck and neck," Sims said. "It's not going to be a lot of standouts."

Work in progress

With one regular-season contest and a 72-59 exhibition loss to University of Illinois-Chicago under their belts, Gamble and his staff are getting some questions answered.

"We still haven't got a set rotation of who we're going to play the whole time," Gamble said. "We've got 10 guys that can play. If the point guard needs a break, we know who we're going to put in. If the 2-guard needs a break, we know who we're going to put in."

"We've got every position filled. We just need guys to play at a high level when they're in the ballgame. We can't have a dropoff. From what I've seen so far, we shouldn't have a huge dropoff when somebody comes out of the ballgame."

The Stars played without freshman forward Chigozie Umeadi (shoulder) and senior guard Steffen Spinks (ankle). Gamble said Umeadi will practice and go full speed Friday. Spinks is still experiencing pain and remains out indefinitely.

The Stars (1-0) play Monday at Central State in Wilberforce, Ohio.

Marcia Martinez can be reached at 788-1547.

AT UIS

MacMurray 25 35 - 60

UIS

56 59 - 115

MacMurray (60) – Ryan Sichtung 6-9 3-3 15; Adam Polston 2-8 2-2 8; Marc Randle 4-6 0-0 8; CJ McClellan 2-7 0-0 5; Jerel Robertson 2-8 0-1 4; Brady Slagle 3-10 2-4 8; Jake Columbia 2-3 0-1 6; Chad Fortenberry-Miller 2-4 0-0 4; John Fuller 1-2 0-0 2; Luke Bishop 0-3 0-0 0; Adam Martinez 0-0 0-0 0; Zac Ozee 0-1 0-0 0; Chris Sardgon 0-0 0-0 0. Totals: 24-61 7-11 60.

3-point goals: 5-16 (Jake Columbia 2-2, Adam Polston 2-7, CJ McClellan 1-2, Brady Slagle 0-2, Luke Bishop 0-3). Rebounds: 29 (Marc Randle 6, Ryan Sichtung 5, Adam Polston 4, Jerel Robertson 4, Chad Fortenberry-Miller 3, Adam Martinez 3, Brady Slagle 3, CJ McClellan 1). Fouls: 18. Turnovers: 30.

UIS (115) – Richard Oruche 7-13 4-4 20; Zach Lewis 8-11 0-0 19; Brandon Farmer 5-6 2-3 14; Miranda DeAndre 2-4 1-2 5; Matt Reynolds 0-2 0-0 0; Derrick Tribble 6-9 2-2 17; Ryan Thornton 4-5 2-2 14; Justin Sims 4-9 2-2 10; Caleb Sutton 3-3 3-5 9; Kendall Burrage 2-5 1-2 5; Carl Hayes 0-0 2-2 2; Damiko Reese 0-3 0-1 0. Totals: 41-70 19-25 115.

3-point goals: 14-20 (Ryan Thornton 4-4, Derrick Tribble 3-4, Zach Lewis 3-4, Brandon Farmer 2-2, Richard Oruche 2-4, Caleb Sutton 0-1, Justin Sims 0-1). Rebounds: 31 (Miranda DeAndre 5, Zach Lewis 5, Justin Sims 4, Ryan Thornton 4, Richard Oruche 3, Matt Reynolds 3, Damiko Reese 2, Kendall Burrage 1, Brandon Farmer 1, Carl Hayes 1, Caleb Sutton 1, Derrick Tribble 1). Fouls: 19. Turnovers: 13.

Technical fouls: MacMurray - Team. UIS - Sutton.

Officials: Brian Nottrott, Dennis Bracco, Bobby Daw.

Records: MacMurray, 0-5. UIS, 1-0.

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