

LRU Women's Basketball Opens SAC Tournament At Home

Written by Staff Reports

Wednesday, 29 February 2012 08:09

Lenoir-Rhyne (19-8) will host Carson-Newman (16-10) in the Quarterfinal Round of the 2012 Food Lion South Atlantic Conference Women's Basketball Tournament on Wednesday beginning at 7:00 p.m., inside Shuford Memorial Gymnasium.

The Bears are the fourth seed in this year's tournament

while the Eagles are seeded fifth. Lenoir-Rhyne swept the season series from Carson-Newman in 2011-12, winning both on the road (80-69) and at home (74-61). The Eagles, however, lead the all-time series with the Bears by a 35-23 count.

The two teams will be meeting in the conference tournament for the seventh time in the past 11 seasons. Last year, Carson-Newman defeated Lenoir-Rhyne by a 77-67 score on the road in the opening round of the league tournament as well.

Lenoir-Rhyne has put together six straight winning seasons under seventh-year Head Coach Todd Starkey and is one victory away from its third 20-win season in four years.

The Bears are being led this season by senior guard Cameron Sealey (Mount Holly, N.C.), a two-time all-conference honoree who is first on the squad in scoring at 15.8 points per game. Meanwhile, junior guard Whitley Culler (Mount Airy, N.C.) is second on the team in scoring (13.6 ppg) to go along with a team-high 8.0 rebounds per outing.

Carson-Newman, under first-year Head Coach Mike Mincey, is led this year by Zoriah Williams (Calera, Ala). The all-league honoree is first on the squad in scoring (15.5 ppg) and rebounding (9.1 rpg).

The four winners from Wednesday's quarterfinals will travel to Hickory, N.C., on Saturday for the South Atlantic Conference Championship semifinals. The first women's game is slated to tip off at 5:30 p.m., at the Tarlton Complex on the campus of Catawba Valley Community College in Hickory, N.C.

Tickets for quarterfinal games are \$6.00 for adults, \$3.00 for children, students and college students with ID. Tickets for semifinals are \$12.00 and championship rounds are \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children, students and college students with ID for the final two rounds. Fans showing the Food Lion MVP card can save \$1.00 off the price of an adult ticket for the quarterfinals (\$5.00 with Food Lion MVP card) and championship round (\$9.00 with Food Lion MVP card) and \$2.00 off the price for the semifinal round (\$10.00 with Food Lion MVP card). The winner of the women's tournament will earn an automatic bid to the NCAA Division II playoffs.

**2012 Food Lion SAC Women's Basketball Tournament
Wednesday, February 29 - Quarterfinals**

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No. 8 Anderson at No. 1 Wingate, 6 p.m.

No. 5 Carson-Newman at No. 4 Lenoir-Rhyne, 7 p.m.

No. 6 Newberry at No. 3 Tusculum, 7 p.m.

No. 7 Lincoln Memorial at No. 2 Catawba, 7 p.m.

Saturday, March 3 - Semifinals

(at Hickory, N.C. - CVCC Arena)

Anderson/Wingate winner vs. Carson-Newman/Lenoir-Rhyne winner, 5:30 p.m.

Lincoln Memorial/Catawba winner vs. Newberry/Tusculum winner, 8 p.m.

Sunday, March 4 - Finals

(at Hickory, N.C. - CVCC Arena)

4:30 p.m.

Bears Travel To Newberry For SAC Tournament Opener

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The Lenoir-Rhyne Men's Basketball Team (12-15) is back in the Food Lion South Atlantic Conference Tournament and will face Newberry (15-11) in the opening round on Wednesday at Eleazer Arena in Newberry, S.C., beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Lenoir-Rhyne, in the tournament for the first time since the 2008-09 season when it was the No. 1 seed, is the fifth seed while Newberry checks in as the fourth seed.

The two squads split the season series in 2011-12. Newberry won by a 93-80 score on Saturday, December 3, in Newberry, S.C., before Lenoir-Rhyne prevailed at home, 83-81, on Saturday, February 4.

Lenoir-Rhyne leads the all-time series with Newberry, 68-20.

Lenoir-Rhyne improved from tenth to fifth place in the league standings this year and increased its win total from four victories to 12 under 26-year mentor John Lentz. However, the Bears will be looking to snap a four-game losing streak.

L-R is led this season by sophomore forward Allan Jones (Clemmons, N.C.), who averages a team-leading 12.4 points per game. Senior forward D.J. Blackmon (Albemarle, N.C.), a two-time All-SAC honoree, is second on the team in scoring (12.0 ppg).

For Newberry, Dondray Walker (Fountain Inn, S.C.) averages a team-best 16.5 points per game including 76 treys. As a team, Newberry leads the league in scoring offense (87.3 ppg) and three-pointers made (249).

All told, Lenoir-Rhyne has won four conference tournament championships (1991-92, 1992-93, 1994-95 and 2002-03).

The four winners from Wednesday's quarterfinals will travel to Hickory, N.C., on Saturday for the South Atlantic Conference Championship semifinals. The first men's contest is slated to tip off at Noon, at the Tarlton Complex on the campus of Catawba Valley Community College in Hickory, N.C.

Tickets for quarterfinal games are \$6.00 for adults, \$3.00 for children, students and college students with ID. Tickets for semifinals are \$12.00 and championship rounds are \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children, students and college students with ID for the final two rounds. Fans showing the Food Lion MVP card can save \$1.00 off the price of an adult ticket for the quarterfinals (\$5.00 with Food Lion MVP card) and championship round (\$9.00 with Food Lion MVP card) and \$2.00 off the price for the semifinal round (\$10.00 with Food Lion MVP card).

2012 Food Lion SAC Men's Basketball Tournament

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Wednesday, February 29 - Quarterfinals

No. 8 Catawba at No. 1 Anderson, 7 p.m.

No. 5 Lenoir-Rhyne at No. 4 Newberry, 7 p.m.

No. 6 Carson-Newman at No. 3 Wingate, 8 p.m.

No. 7 Tusculum at No. 2 Lincoln Memorial, 7 p.m.

Saturday, March 3 - Semifinals

(at Hickory, N.C. - CVCC Arena)

Catawba/Anderson winner vs. Lenoir-Rhyne/Newberry winner, Noon

Carson-Newman/Wingate winner vs. Tusculum/Lincoln Memorial winner, 2:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 4 - Finals

(at Hickory, N.C. - CVCC Arena)

2 p.m.

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Photo Courtesy: Jazmine Charles, LRU Athletics