

UAF Tops LMC In North Star Invite

Written by Whitney Noble

Saturday, 30 November 2013 00:26

The University of Alaska Fairbanks women's basketball team outscored Lees-McRae College by a 43-27 margin in the second half, rallying from a 38-34 halftime deficit for a 77-65 victory on the second day of

the Nanooks' North Star Invitational.

Alaska (6-1) posted a field goal percentage of 48.2 percent in the contest, including a clip of 63.6 percent in the second half, while holding Lees-McRae (2-4) to a percentage of 36.6 from the floor on the night. The teams each pulled down 41 rebounds, as Lees-McRae won the battle on the offensive glass by a 17-10 margin.

Layana De Souza (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) led the way for Lees-McRae with 17 points on 8-of-15 shooting, adding five rebounds and three assists, while Lauren Lewis (Concord, N.C.) chipped in 16 points. Alyssa Munson (Summerfield, N.C.) tallied 10 points and tied Natalija Cakarevic (Belgrade, Serbia) for the team-lead with seven rebounds. Kabrina Truesdale (Wilmington, N.C.) dished out a squad-best four assists.

Benissa Bulaya paced the Nanooks with 18 points, going 10-for-14 at the free throw line, as Jordan Wilson and Kaillee Skjold added 12 and 11 points, respectively. Bulaya and Victoria Milton each dished out a game-high five assists, while Skjold grabbed a contest-best nine

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rebounds.

The Bobcats opened the game with a 7-3 run before Alaska responded, evening the tally at 11-11 following a Wilson layup at the 14:29 mark. Lees-McRae would counter with a 5-0 spurt, reclaiming the advantage at 16-11 on a bucket by De Souza.

The Nanooks answered once again with a 9-2 run, taking a 20-18 lead on a jumper by Autumn Childers. The Bobcats quickly countered with a 5-0 spurt of their own, claiming a 23-20 advantage on a Lewis triple with 8:24 left in the half. After Alaska fought back with a 7-2 run, Lees-McRae responded with a 13-7 stretch, taking a 38-34 lead into the intermission following a Lewis jumper and a Kerri Belcher (Roanoke, Va.) freebie.

Alaska regained the momentum into the early moments of the second half, opening the period with a 14-6 run to claim a 48-44 advantage on a Wilson lay-in with 14:34 to play. After a put-back by Icey Patterson (Seneca, S.C.) brought the Bobcats to within two at 48-46, the Nanooks responded with 10 straight points, pushing the margin to 58-46 on a jumper by Wilson at the 8:18 mark.

The Bobcats would cut the lead to five points on a trio of occasions down the stretch, including a clutch triple by De Souza that closed the gap to 62-57 with 5:04 to play. Alaska managed to keep the Bobcats at arm's length for the remainder of the contest, widening the margin to 70-63 on a Wilson jumper, before closing out the victory with some critical conversions at the free

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throw line in the waning moments.

Lees-McRae returns to the court on Saturday when the Bobcats take the floor against Dominican University of California at 2 p.m. Alaska Standard Time on the final day of the North Star Invitational.

Photo Courtesy: Layana De Souza, LMC Athletics