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Bearcats Look For Balance, Leadership In 2011

NOVEMBER 29TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

Bearcats Look For Balance, Leadership In 2011

By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

For a coach, it's always hard to try and rebuild a team after having a big senior class. The difficulty is compounded when you're replacing the team's leading scorer and rebounder, and even more so when its the same person - but that's exactly what Rob Nichols and the Dexter Bearcats are out to do this season.

The player in question is Alan Flannigan - the six-foot seven post averaged a double-double (22 points, 12 boards) last season, and was the leader of the team in both the stats book and in spirit. Arguably the best basketball player to come through DHS since Brett Hale, Flannigan is currently playing Division-I ball at Lafayette College.

"Alan's definitely a great player - a lot of the other kids just gravitated to him," Nichols said. "They tried to let him do his thing, even if they weren't consciously doing it. They wanted to make sure in a tough situation, he had the ball. I think they can do more than what they did offensively, and I think we can show that this year. He averaged 22 points a game last year, and he earned every one of them."

Despite losing six seniors last season, the 'Cats return three of their starters and a player that came in off the bench frequently.

"We return three starters - Jordan Fitts, Jake Lee, and Tyler Miller. Chase Young played

quite a bit last year, and he's a solid guard," Nichols continued. "We're not very big, six-two, six-three is about as big as we go, so we're going to have to change the way we play a bit offensively and do some different things."

/images/Sports/2011/Basketball/DHS/2011_ReturningStarters.jpg

Miller, a 6'2" forward, averaged 8 points and 4 boards per game, but he had a propensity to pick up the team with big buckets when they were needed in his junior year. Lee, coming in at 6'3", averaged 6 points and rebounds a game, and Fitts, a 5'7" guard, averaging 5.6 points and 1 rebound per game.

The Bearcats might not have a 'star player' like the had the last few years - instead, the team is comprised of players that have a role and know it.

"Jake and Tyler /images/Sports/2011/Basketball/DHS/2011-11-16_7D_IMG_2248.jpg will have to be

leaders this year. Jake's really an emotional leader - he's a fiery kid, wears his emotion on his sleeves, and they'll have to step up a lot in scoring and rebounding," Nichols said.

"We expect Chase to step in at point guard and be a team leader running the point. Brad Potts is coming up off JV, and he'll see some time. We're going to dress two sophomores on Varsity that will play key roles in D.J. Dowdy and Cody Neldon, and then there's our big guys, Jonathan Page and Tyler Wilson. Everybody has a role that they'll need to play."

"We'll definitely have to be more balanced in scoring, do some different things offensively, and I think these kids can step up and do it," he continued. "I don't think we're as deep as we were last year. I'd say we were eight deep, but that eighth guy can change every night. We're not a deep team that can go 10 or 12 deep on a nightly basis."

The 'Cats open the 2011-2012 campaign with two of the toughest teams on the schedule - Charleston and Sikeston. Nichols noted the challenge of opening the season with two opponents this difficult, but he thinks his team's 'under the radar' status right now could help them early.

"It gives them a good measuring stick of where they are - if you've got a young team like this, sometimes it can be better to play some teams early where you're the favorite, but it'll give us a good gauge for the season," he said. "We're kind of an unknown, it was

hard to get them together during the summer - had kids playing baseball and football - but to me, even in my mind, we're an unknown until we play that first game."

"Everybody around here says the top two teams around here are Sikeston and Charleston," Nichols continued. "If we're an unknown commodity now, we'll be known after the first two weeks."

The Bearcats kick off the regular season Tuesday (Nov. 29) night on the road against the Charleston Blue Jays. Tipoff is set for JV action at 6:00 p.m., with the Varsity game immediately following.

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JV 'Cats Come Up Short In Notre Dame Tourney

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By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

CAPE GIRARDEAU - The JV Bearcats' struggles continued in the final two games of the Notre Dame JV Tournament on Friday and Saturday. Friday saw the 'Cats falling 61-32 to the Charleston Blue Jays, while Saturday morning, the 'Cats lost to Poplar Bluff to the tune of 57-26.

The Bearcats somewhat beat themselves early against Charleston - the 'Cats committed double-digit turnovers in the first half, and Charleston capitalized, scoring 28 of their 40 first half points in quick transition.

The 'Cats were dominated on the boards early, but Stevie Payne and Devon Hampton pulled down some key offensive rebounds late in the half.

Blake Horton opened the second half with a big three for the 'Cats, and sparked a 6-0 run that led the 'Cats to 12 points in the third, the highest total of any quarter in the game.

Dexter's defense stepped up in the fourth quarter, holding Charleston to only five points. Dakota Southerland came off the bench and had a big offensive rebound and putback in the last minute of the game to bring the final to 61-32 in the Blue Jays' favor and put the 'Cats in the seventh-place contest.

Saturday morning saw the 'Cats in action against the Poplar Bluff Mules for the seventh-place trophy. It was all Poplar Bluff early, as the Mules went on a 10-0 run to start the game. Hampton hit a 10-footer to break the ice and bring the score to 10-2 at the 4:15 mark.

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Cody Gibson showed great ability to penetrate the lane throughout the game, and also

proved effective from range, hitting a few deep jumpers and a three late in the game. Horton continued to impress from three-point land, hitting a three late in the second quarter. Payne completed the old-fashioned three point play at the end of the second quarter to bring the score to 36-17 at halftime.

The Mules went on another 10 point run in the third quarter, but Gibson hit a 15-footer to break the run at the 2:35 mark.

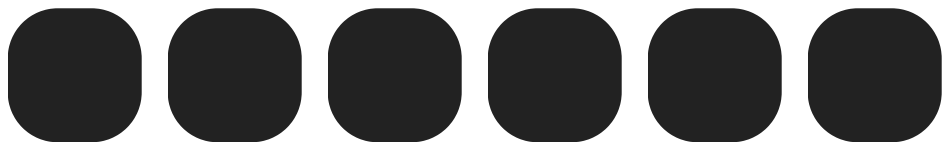
The Bearcat D picked up their game in the fourth quarter, holding the Mules to only 4 points. Myles Urhan had a pair of steals late in the game to breathe some life back in the Bearcats, but they ultimately fell 57-26.

The JV squad will be back in action on Tuesday night, when they hit the road to open the regular season at Charleston. Tipoff for the JV game is set for 6:00 p.m., with Varsity action immediately following.

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S&T Grinds Out Win Over San Francisco State

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S&T Grinds Out Win Over San Francisco State

PHOENIX - It wasn't very pretty times but the Missouri S&T Lady Miners were able to grind out a 51-39 win over San Francisco State on Saturday in the Grand Canyon Thanksgiving Classic in Phoenix, Ariz.

S&T trailed 34-26 with 12:19 to play in the contest and were struggling on the offensive end with the Gators (0-5) defensive pressure. From that point on the Lady Miners outscored SFSU 25-5 to improve to 3-0 for the first time since the 2007-08 season.

Julie Meyer got the run started with a driving layup then Senait McLeod buried a three from the left wing to pull S&T within a bucket. Courtney Kemp tied the game at 34-all with a layup as the shot clock expired.

Kayla Davis gave the Gators their final lead of the contest with a jumper at the 6:57 mark.

From there the Lady Miners ran off the next 17 points. Taylor Jensen hit a pair of free throws to it back up and then Kemp hit a pair at the charity stripe to take the lead for good.

The lead eventually grew to 15 points on a Meyer jumper with 0:27 left.

S&T shot only 37 percent (17-for-46) from the field but made the shots when it had to down the stretch. It outrebounded SFSU by a 39-to-31 margin. Defensively, it blocked four shots and finished with 13 steals.

Karli Sample led the Lady Miners with 11 points and had six rebounds. Hailee Parks finished with 10 points while Meyer added eight. Dexter native Katelyn Heil had seven rebounds.

The Gators were only 15-of-51 (29 percent) from the field and were led by Lauren Varney with 11 points. Candyce Matthews scored nine while Nicole Hicks added eight.

S&T is back at home next Thursday, Dec. 1, when it opens conference action against Maryville University beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Missouri S&T is a four-year, NCAA Division II school, located in Rolla, Mo.

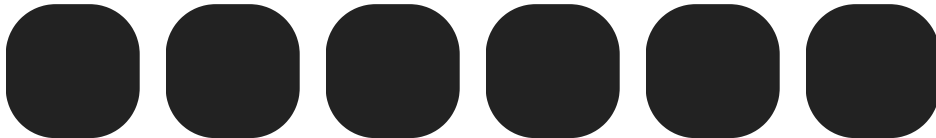
2009 DHS Alums Katelyn and Cathryn Heil are both members of the S&T Women's basketball team.

For more information on everything Miners Athletics, visit sports.mst.edu.

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BEARCAT NATION Wins HFF Best Fans Contest

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[BEARCAT NATION Wins HFF Best Fans Contest](#)

BEARCAT NATION, you have been voted the Heartland's Best Fans on Heartland

Football Friday!

DHS Athletic Director Chuck Powers accepted the award from Todd Richards during Friday night's 10 o'clock news on KFVS-12.

"It's a great honor, we have great fans. It all starts with the coaches, and our fans out there on Friday nights," he said.

When asked where he would put the trophy, Powers laughed and said he would keep it on his desk for a few days.

Congratulations Bearcat Nation!

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JV 'Cats Fall Hard In Notre Dame Tourney

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JV 'Cats Fall Hard In Notre Dame Tourney

By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

CAPE GIRARDEAU - The JV Bearcats opened the season on Wednesday afternoon in the Notre Dame JV Tournament. The 'Cats faced off against the Jackson Indians and fell 52-22.

The JV 'Cats were without the services of Holden Bruce, who had season-ending knee surgery last Friday.

The Indians came out hard and fast, thanks to an eight-point effort in the opening frame from Brandon Leuders. Myles Urhan and Noah Krunk were the only Bearcats to find the basket, with two points each to bring the score to 21-4 at the end of the first.

Nick Noble and Cody Gibson were both good from three-point land in the second quarter, with a three apiece. Jackson's Blake Reiman hit a pair of treys, and the Indians held a commanding 34-12 lead going in to halftime.

The Bearcats' defense played better to open the second half, forcing several turnovers in the third, but Jackson put in 10 unanswered points to increase their lead to 49-17 at the end of the frame.

Krunk hit the only field goal of the fourth quarter for the 'Cats - the rest of their five points came off free-throws from Jacob Murdock and Stevie Payne - but the Bearcat D was able to hold the Indians to only three points in the fourth.

The defensive effort was too little, too late for the Bearcats, as were handed their first loss of the season in the 30 point blowout.

The 'Cats will be in action again on Friday morning, when they face off against the Charleston Blue Jays in the consolation bracket. Tipoff is scheduled for 11:30 a.m.

Thanks to SMT Reader - and Bearcat Mom - Tracy Horton for the photo!

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