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By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

PORTAGEVILLE - They were close two times in December: 94 points at New Madrid, and 97 points at Fredericktown. This time, they got there.

Thursday night saw the Lady Bearcats pass the century mark for the first time in the 2011-2012 season with a 103-26 victory over the Portageville Lady Bulldogs. The Lady 'Cats used hot shooting - 50% from beyond the arc, 54% from the floor - coupled with great defense in the last three quarters of the game to cruise to the big victory.

"I thought defensively we didn't really start out that well," LBB head coach Chad Allen said after the game. "We got down and guarded really well, especially in the second quarter. We had a lot of stops and a lot of points off turnovers, and overall I thought we played with a lot of intensity tonight."

"We wore them down; you could tell there in the second half, Portageville was tired," he continued. "I thought we did a much better job in the second half defensively and we pushed the ball down the floor in transition well."

The Lady 'Cats started five sophomores in the contest - Paige Patterson, Mollie Whitehead, Hannah Noe, Erika Cobb, and Alison Jarrell - and opened the game with nine unanswered points. The Bulldogs would fight back late in the first quarter, but the 'Cats

still exited the frame with a 22-9 advantage.

LBB's defense kicked into high gear during the second quarter; Brittany Harris and Patterson both recorded blocks, while Jarrell and Noe had multiple steals in the frame. Patterson also pulled down seven of her 15 rebounds in the second quarter.

Noe picked off back-to-back inbound passes under her own basket before Jarrell knocked down a deep three at the 5:00 mark to give the 'Cats a 36-13 lead. Jarrell came up with a steal on the next possession that led to a 12 footer for Harris. Katelynn Frazier picked up a loose ball and dropped in a layup in the closing seconds of the first half to send the 'Cats to the locker room with a commanding 54-17 lead.

Cobb had /images/Sports/2012/LBB/2012.1.19 - Portageville/20120119_IMG_3150.jpg a solid

all-around performance in the third quarter; the sophomore guard pulled up her dribble for two easy jumpers, while earning three assists, a steal, and a block in the frame. Noe and Jarrell both knocked down threes to help the Lady 'Cats head into the fourth and final quarter with a 89-21 lead.

Latavia Harris dropped in a quick bucket to open the fourth quarter for the Bulldogs, but the Bearcats quickly rattled off eight points to take a 97-24 lead into a timeout at the 3:18 mark.

Cobb knocked down a 15 footer after a Portageville turnover to put the 'Cats at 99 points with just over 2:00 left in the game. Whitehead was fouled the next trip down the floor and hit two free throws to push the 'Cats across the century mark and end the game with a 103-26 victory.

The JV Lady 'Cats picked up a 47-15 win in their contest; a 22 point first quarter gave the young 'Cats a comfortable lead that they padded with an improved defensive performance. Taylor Owens led the JV squad with 13 points, while Katie Reiker added 10 points.

The Lady Bearcats will be back in action on Monday, when they put their 12 game win streak on the line at Perryville.

"It seems like every time we go up to Perryville, they always give us a good game," Allen said of the Lady Pirates. "It's always a close game; they're well coached, and they've been in a lot of playoffs in the past. They'll try to slow things down, play a 3-2 defense.

We'll have to make sure we're prepared and get after it that game.”

Tipoff is scheduled for 6:00 p.m.

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