

Powers Scores 17, Proctor 14 In Outstanding Debuts As Redbirds Defeat Jersey 77-42 In Opener Of Alton Tip-Off Tournament

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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ALTON - Freshman forward Jarius Powers was the leading scorer with 17 points, adding four rebounds, an assist and a steal, while freshman point guard Kiyoko Proctor added 14 points with four assists and six steals in their debuts as Alton won over Jersey 77-42 in both teams' season opener in the Alton Tip-Off tournament Tuesday night at the Redbirds Nest.

It was an electrifying first game for the Redbirds with a new look under Coach Deserea Howard.

The two freshmen helped lead Alton Middle School's girls' team to back-to-back Illinois Elementary School Association state championships, and are expected to be key players for a vastly improved Redbird team this season.

Alton got out to a big start in the game and led wire-to-wire in taking their season-opening win, with Proctor leading the way in an incredible first quarter.

"I think the girls are really adopting our 'we over me' and 'trust the process' mottos," Coach Howard said. "We want to get after it defensively and we really showed some great stretches of intensity! The biggest change has been belief. The girls have set big goals and they allow us to hold them accountable to those goals at all time in practice!"

Besides the efforts of Powers and Proctor, Alyssa Lewis added 14 points to go along with 11 assists, six steals and three rebounds for the Redbirds, while Renee Raglin had 12 points, five assists, four steals and two rebounds, Laila Blakeny added 12 points along with an assist and a steal, and key returnee Khaliyah Goree added eight points, a rebound and a blocked shot. The Panthers' individual scorers were not available at press time, neither was the quarter-by-quarter score.

The Redbirds open the season 1-0, and will face Breese Mater Dei Catholic on Friday night in a 7:30 p.m. tip-off, then meet Springfield Southeast Saturday afternoon in a 2:30 p.m. start. The Panthers start off 0-1 and face Southeast in the round-robin tournament Thursday in a 6 p.m. start, then meet Mater Dei in a 1 p.m. tip-off.

In the first game of the tournament, the Knights, with new coach Craig Zurliene making his debut, defeated the Spartans 50-48.









[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)