

L&C Women's Basketball Drops Season-Opener To SWIC

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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GODFREY - It hasn't been quite smooth sailing for the Lewis and Clark Community College women's basketball program over the last couple of years.

The Trailblazers were only able to get in half a season in the 2022-23 school year.

They played their final game back on Dec. 19 after a decision was made by LCCC Athletic Director Dr. Cedric Brown to forfeit the remainder of the season due to low numbers.

L&C only had a handful of subs, beginning the season with just 11 rostered players.

These low numbers were caused by injuries, illness, and players just not coming back from holiday break, deciding they had enough after a 1-8 start.

Trailblazers head coach Jaron Young believes that things are starting to turn around for the program, even after an 89-44 loss in his team's season opener against Southwestern Illinois College Wednesday night inside Riverbend Arena.

"We're starting over," Young said after the game. "We're going to get better though. I'm optimistic."

Probably not a surprise, but no one returned to the team from a season ago. Instead, Young is starting from the ground up with all freshmen.

"We're young this season and we're just trying to get used to each other, learn our system, and hopefully, we can get some positive things," Young said.

"We're just looking at having positive possessions right now and we've got a long way to go because we're so young. We're just looking to grow together with 16 new kids."

With 16 new players comes a lot of choices to be made about positioning and playing time. But Young just wants them all to come together and see the bigger picture.

"We've got a lot of kids in each position," he said.

"Everyone feels they belong in the lineup because they are the same age, they're all freshman, and I'm just trying to get them to understand that we have to play together," Young added. "We're going to be fine. Everyone's just going to have to learn their role in the system."

The learning of the system began Wednesday as the Trailblazers hosted the Blue Storm in both teams' season-opener.

The game featured many local players including a few former Marquette Catholic Explorers and an Alton Redbird.

Haley Rodgers and Payton Patterson are both 2023 Marquette grads playing together still at L&C alongside 2023 Alton High grad Khaliyah Goree. On the other side for SWIC was 2022 Marquette graduate Abigail Williams.





Wednesday night saw the Blue Storm jump ahead to a 26-13 lead after the first quarter and then grow it to 48-17 at the half after L&C had some offensive struggles, scoring just four points in the second quarter.

It was a game that SWIC led the whole way including 68-29 after three on the way to an 89-44 final.

SWIC had four ladies in double-digit scoring and was led by freshman Keyara Baerga-Plumey and sophomore Arian Bennett with 16 points each. Freshman Natalie Peterson scored 12 and freshman Mariah Maxie had 11.

Annalise Dorr led the Trailblazers' scoring with 12 points. Regan Daly had eight and Yatria Cooper added six.

L&C will be back in action at home this Saturday against Missouri Baptist while SWIC takes the court next on Monday when it hosts John Wood College.