

Wednesday, March 3, 2010

EASTERN M-BASKETBALL EMERGES WITH ECAC OPENING VICTORY
Levy, Kohn are key in second half as Warriors eliminate Wentworth Institute, 64-59

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – Sophomores **Hamilton Levy (Woodbury)** and **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)** combined for 20 second-half points to help lift the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team to its first post-season win in 17 years with a 64-59 victory over Wentworth Institute of Technology Wednesday night in the first round of the 2010 ECAC New England Division III Tournament at Geissler Gym.

With the win, top-seeded Eastern (19-8) advances to the tournament semifinals Saturday at 4 p.m. and will host fourth-seeded Becker College (19-9). In the other semifinal Saturday at 7 p.m. second-seeded Elms College 22-60 faces sixth-seeded Husson University (16-11). The tournament final is set for Sunday at 2 p.m. All games will be played at Geissler Gymnasium.

In the second half, Kohn had 11 points and six rebounds and Levy nine points, three steals and two assists in eight minutes to spark the Warriors to their second tight win over eighth-seeded Wentworth (15-12) this year.

Eastern outscored Wentworth 9-4 over the final three minutes after breaking a 55-55 tie to pull out its 11th home win in 14 tries. With two minutes left and Eastern leading by two, 59-57, Kohn grabbed the offensive rebound of a missed Eastern free throw and Levy sank a jumper to give Eastern a four-point lead. Wentworth senior guard Jack Barrett (Reading, MA) hit an off-balance layup while being fouled with 16 seconds left, but he missed the free throw and Eastern senior guard **Edwin Ortiz (Hartford)** converted one of two free throws 13 seconds left to give Eastern a three-point 62-59 lead. Kohn then swished two free throws with two seconds left after Wentworth missed an off-balance three-point heave .

Eastern scored 22 points on second-chance opportunities, more than doubling Wentworth's offensive rebound total.

With a team-high 15 points and game-high 11 rebounds, Kohn had his team-leading eighth double-double of the season. Sophomore guard **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)** had 13 points and six rebounds, Ortiz 12 points and five rebounds and Levy 11 points (4-for-6 from the floor) and four steals.

Wentworth scoring and rebounding leader Sam Herrick (Duxbury, MA), a 6-foot-11 inch junior, was held to five points and five rebounds, but senior forward Matt Abbott (Falmouth, MA) came off the bench for a game-high 16 points and five blocked shots, and team-high nine rebounds.

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Nedwick dropped in a driving layup off a pass from junior forward **Bill Roveto (South Windsor)**, then fired in his only three-point field goal of the game 90 seconds later to boost the Warriors into a nine-point lead -- their largest of the game -- eight minutes into the game and led by seven at halftime. Behind Abbott, however, the Leopards needed only two minutes in the second half to take their first lead since the opening basket of the game, 33-31. After sophomore guard Adam Dombrowski (Groton, MA) canned a three-point on Wentworth's first possession of the second half, Abbott turned two Eastern misses and a turnover (Abbott stealing the ball) into three consecutive hoops to give the visitors that two-point lead. The game was tied six times heading into the final minutes before Ortiz gave the Warriors the lead for good, 57-55, with two free throws with three minutes left.

All three of Levy's double-digit points this year have come in two Little East Conference and one ECAC tournament game. He has 44 points, nine rebounds and ten steals and is shooting .714 (3-for-3 from three-point range) in those three games.

A win Saturday will give Eastern its second 20-win season in 68 seasons. In 1992/93, the Warriors finished 21-7 and reached the NCAA Division III sectional tournament championship game.

Friday, Feb. 26, 2010

EASTERN BASKETBALL ELIMINATED IN LITTLE EAST SEMIFINALS
Perennial champion Southern Maine edges women, 48-46; Western routs men, 81-67

The Eastern Connecticut State University basketball teams will not contest for a 2010 Little East Conference championship, as both Eastern teams were eliminated in Friday night's semifinal rounds of their respective tournaments.

At Feldman Arena in Danbury, the women's team, second-seeded Eastern (17-9) and third-seeded University of Southern Maine (20-7) battled into the final minutes for the umpteenth time, with the Huskies surviving this time, 48-46, to advance to the championship game for the 23rd time in 24 years.

At the Murray Center on the Rhode Island College campus, second-seeded Western Connecticut State University (19-6) led from start to finish, taking a 22-point halftime lead and breezing to an 81-67 victory over third-seeded Eastern (18-9). Eastern was making its first appearance in the semifinals in ten years.

Southern Maine to face Western in women's final

Southern Maine, which posted its 20th straight 20-win season with the triumph, faces No. 1 seed and host Western Connecticut State University Saturday at 4 p.m. with a automatic bid to the NCAA Division III tournament on the line. USM is chasing its 20th conference tournament title, having beaten Western all four times the teams have met in the final. The Colonials have won one championship, that coming 16 years ago over visiting Plymouth State University. Southern Maine and Western will be meeting in the final for the first time in Danbury. Western eliminated fourth-seeded Keene State College, 63-56, earlier Friday.

Friday, Southern Maine defeated Eastern for the second time in three games this year -- with the three games decided by a total of five points -- but the verdict was not secure until the final shot of the game. There were eight ties and 12 lead changes before Southern Maine took the lead for good when it broke a 44-44 tie when freshman forward Curran Leighton scored in the paint with 2:12 left, and junior guard Kaylie DeMillo sank two free throws with 1:37 left after an Eastern turnover. DeMillo had taken just one free throw to that point in the game.

After junior forward **Amanda Pierlioni (Plainville)** scored on a baseline drive to the basket on a pass from junior guard **Brittany Whiteley (Windsor Locks)** with 40 seconds left that cut the USM lead to two, Eastern's tight defense forced a shot clock violation with eight seconds left that gave the Warriors a chance of at least forcing overtime. Eastern called timeout at half court with 5.2 seconds left, then got the ball inside the foul line, but the shot was off target as time expired.

Leighton, the top candidate as the conference Rookie-of-the-Year, was held in check in the first half and was forced into six turnovers, but used a strong second half to finish with a double-double (15 points and 13 rebounds). She was the only Southern Maine player in double figures.

Eastern overcame a ten-point deficit with an 18-2 run that netted it a six-point lead late in the first half, but freshmen forwards **Tanisha Carter (East Hartford)** and **Lauren Kelleher (Dartmouth, MA)** both picked up their fourth personal fouls in the second half, when the Warriors shot 21.4 percent from the floor. Eastern's final shooting percentage of 25.0 was its second-lowest of the season.

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Pierlioni led Eastern with 14 points – 11 in the second half -- and nine rebounds and junior guard **Jessica Moriarty (East Haven)** had a season-high 11 rebounds and added five assists and four steals. Whiteley finished with ten points

Western in men's final for seventh time

Eastern accomplished a number of firsts this season in conference play, but one of them was not the ability to defeat second-seeded Western, which completed a three-game sweep of the Warriors to advance to the tournament title game Saturday at 5 p.m. against top seed and host Rhode Island College. In a re-match of the last two championship games, the Anchormen eliminated fourth-seeded Massachusetts Dartmouth, 74-72, earlier Friday. Western is 5-1 in championship games but will be meeting Rhode Island for the first time in the title tilt. Rhode Island is making its fourth straight championship game appearance, looking for its third title.

A winner of nine of its last 11, Western burst to a 17-2 lead in the game's opening minutes and Eastern was never able to dig out. The Colonials pushed the advantage to 33 eight minutes into the second half, finishing with a 59.1 shooting percentage after the break.

Eastern's starters managed a total of only 23 points, but sophomore forward **Hamilton Levy (Woodbury)** came off the bench for the second tournament game to provide quality minutes. Levy scored a career-high 19 points (he was the only Eastern player in double figures) and grabbed five rebounds in 19 minutes. In two tournament games, Levy had 33 points on 11-of-15 shooting from the floor and 9-of-11 free throw shooting, nine rebounds and six steals in 37 minutes.

Top post players **Broderick Sawyer (Norwalk)** and **Jeremy Thompson (Norwalk)** of Eastern combined for only 13 minutes of play due to knee injuries suffered in a first-round win over Keene State College Tuesday.

Sophomore guard DaQuan Brooks, the second-leading scorer in the LEC, led all players with 21 points, with junior forward Will Jarrett added 14 and junior center John Phillips scoring 11 off the bench.

Eastern is expected to receive a bid to the ECAC New England Division III Tournament Monday.

Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2010

EASTERN M-BASKETBALL WINS FIRST LEC TOURNEY GAME IN TEN YEARS

Warriors complete three-game sweep of Keene State to move into Friday's semifinals

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – Sophomore forward **Hamilton Levy (Woodbury)** and freshman guard **Mike Garrow (Terryville)** came off the bench to spark a 61-point second half as third-seeded Eastern Connecticut State University won a Little East Conference tournament game for the first time in ten years, 99-75, over sixth-seeded Keene State College Tuesday night at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

A winner of five of six since a four-game losing streak, Eastern (18-8) faces No. 2 seed Western Connecticut State University (18-6) Friday night at 7:3 p.m. in the second of two semifinal games at Rhode Island College. Top-seeded host Rhode Island (18-7) faces No. 4 Massachusetts Dartmouth (18-8) in the first semifinal game. Rhode Island and Western drew first-round byes while host UMass Dartmouth erased an early deficit to eliminate No. 5 Plymouth State University, 77-67.

Saturday's final at Rhode Island is scheduled for 5 p.m., with the winner being awarded an NCAA Division III tournament berth.

Eastern frittered away a nine-point first-half lead but jumped from a halftime tie by getting points from five different players in an early 10-2 lead that shot the Warriors into an eight-point, 48-40 lead less than four minutes into the frame. With Eastern leading by nine seven minutes into the second half, Levy and Garrow combined for the game's next ten points to boost the lead to 19, 69-50 with ten minutes left. The lead never dipped below 17 the rest of the way.

In that 10-0 run, Levy had six points (4-of-5 from the foul line) and Garrow added four points on a jumper and inside bucket. The Warriors shot 60.6 percent from the floor in the second half in totaling 61 points. The second-half and game scoring totals represented season-high for Eastern.

In 33 minutes off the bench, Levy and Garrow combined for 26 points (8-of-14 from the floor, 8-of-9 from the foul line) and eight rebounds with only one turnover between them. Sophomore guard **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)** led five double-figure scorers with a team-high 18 points and five steals, with junior post player **Broderick Sawyer (Norwalk)** adding 15, Levy a season-high 14 points (one shy of his career best) and four steals, sophomore guard **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)** 13 points and a team-high nine rebounds (one more than his conference-leading average) and Garrow 12 points. Senior guard **Edwin Ortiz (Hartford)**, the team's season scoring leader, missed nine of 11 shots but handed out a season-high seven assists. Ortiz's three-point field goal on the Warriors' first possession of the second half gave Eastern the lead for good and ignited the 10-2 run which changed the momentum for good. The three-pointer was Ortiz' second of the game and 71st of the season – breaking his program season record of 70 established as a freshman.

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Behind Levy and Garrow, Eastern's bench outscored Keene's (13-13) second unit by 23 points.

Conference scoring leader Derek D'Amours (Agawam, MA) of Keene State led all players with 20 points, four shy of his season average. D'Amours scored four of his eight first-half points from the foul line. The sophomore forward managed only two points through the game's first 14 minutes. Sophomore guard Cody Snow (Leyden, MA) scored 13 of his game total of 15 points in the first half. Freshman forward Nicco DeMasco (Swanzey, NH) had the only double-double of the game with 11 points and 11 rebounds.

In 2000, Eastern also defeated Keene State three times in a season, sweeping the regular-season series, then hitting a buzzer-beater for an 80-79 conference tournament win at Geissler Gym on the way to its most recent conference tournament title. That was the last conference tournament win for Eastern until Tuesday.

Keene, which features 15 freshmen and sophomores on its 17-player roster, lost for the fifth time in its last six outings. Its win in that stretch came by a 100-95 score at Western Connecticut.

Eastern's win total is its highest since 1992/93, when it won 21 games, reached the championship game of the conference tournament and earned the second of its three NCAA tournament bids. Eastern was swept this year by Western Connecticut, losing 76-69 most recently six days ago at Geissler Gymnasium.

Saturday, Feb. 20, 2010

EASTERN M-BASKETBALL ROUTS SOUTHERN MAINE, EARNS NO. 3 SEED

After winning most conference regular-season games ever, Warriors will host Keene Tuesday

GORHAM, Maine – The Eastern Connecticut State University men’s basketball team completed its winningest Little East Conference regular season ever by scoring the first 11 points of the game and cruising to an 85-62 victory over the University of Southern Maine Saturday afternoon at Warren Hill Gymnasium.

Eastern (17-8, 9-5 little east) entered play in a four-way tie for second place in the conference. Eastern, Western Connecticut State University and Massachusetts Dartmouth all finish with a share of second place in the final conference standings. Western earned the important No. 2 seed by sweeping both Eastern and UMass Dartmouth during the regular season, and Eastern’s two regular-season victories over the Corsairs made it the No. 3 seed.

In Tuesday’s first-round games at 7 p.m., Eastern will host No. 6 Keene State College (14-11, 7-7 little east) and No. 4 UMass Dartmouth will entertain No. 5 Plymouth State College. Regular-season champion Rhode Island College will host the semifinals and final Friday and Saturday. The Eastern-Keene winner meets Western Connecticut Friday at 7:30 p.m. after Rhode Island faces the UMass Dartmouth-Plymouth State victor at 5:30 p.m. The tournament final is scheduled for Saturday at 5 p.m.

Eastern got out quickly Saturday to ensure a winless conference season for Southern Maine (2-23, 0-14 little east), which was the Warriors’ opponent when Eastern won its most recent conference playoff championship in 2000. Sophomore guard **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)**, sophomore center **Jeremy Thompson (Berlin)** and freshman guard **Joe Ives (Avon)** combined for 26 of Eastern’s 41 first-half points and the Warriors nailed 12 of 13 free throws in racing to a 16-point, 41-25 halftime lead. The Huskies turned the ball over only four times in the first half, but shot just 23.5 percent from the floor.

In the second half, Southern Maine had several chances to cut the Eastern lead to single digits, but Eastern began a 13-2 run with eight minutes left as the lead ballooned to 22, 75-53, with four minutes remaining.

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All 14 players saw action for Eastern, with 13 contributing a point or rebound. In his first start in place of senior leading scorer **Edwin Ortiz (Hartford)**, Ives tossed in ten points – eight coming when he played the entire first half. Ives and freshman classmates **Tyler Hundley (Cheshire)**, **Mike Garrow (Terryville)** and **Chris Robitaille (Canton)** combined for 10-for-19 marksmanship from the floor.

Nedwick had a team-high 22 points – equaling his highest point total in a game on an opponent's home court this year. Nedwick also shared game-high honors with eight rebounds, helping the visitors to a +14 advantage in that category. Sophomore forward **Hamilton Levy (Woodbury)** had seven points and seven rebounds in 11 minutes, giving him 15 rebounds off the bench in his last two games. Levy was perfect on the afternoon (1-for-1 FG, 5-for-5 FT).

As a team, Eastern was 17-for-21 from the free throw line (81.0 percent) to close out the regular season at .690, a year after last year's dismal mark of .590.

For Eastern, the nine regular-season conference wins are its most ever in 24 seasons of LEC play. It has finished as high as second once and shared second place for the third time this year. The 17 overall victories are the most for the Warriors under eighth-year head coach **Bill Geitner** and, equal the most in a season since a 21-win campaign in 1992/93. Eastern has won more than 17 games five times in 67 seasons prior to this year.

Eastern swept Keene State during the regular season, winning 91-86 at Geissler Gymnasium Jan. 19 and 86-67 11 days ago at Keene, NH for its first regular-season sweep of the Owls in ten years. Nedwick has averaged 23 points against Keene this year on .607 field goal shooting, while junior forward **Bill Roveto (South Windsor)** has averaged ten rebounds and sophomore guard **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)** nine. The Warriors have outrebounded the Owls by forty in the two victories.

Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010

EASTERN M-BASKETBALL LOSS CREATES TANGLE IN LITTLE EAST
Western's 76-69 victory over Warriors creates four-way tie for second place in LEC

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – Junior forward Will Jarrett (Hartford) scored key five points in 30 seconds go give the Western Connecticut State University men's basketball team the momentum for good as the Colonials handed Eastern Connecticut State University a 76-69 loss Wednesday evening in a key Little East Conference game at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

With an opportunity to solidify sole possession of second place in the conference with a victory with just one regular-season game remaining, Eastern (16-8, 8-5 little east) instead drops into a four-way tangle for second place in the conference with Western (17-6, 8-5 little east), UMass Dartmouth and Plymouth State. Eastern is 2-0 against UMass, 0-2 against Western and 1-1 against Plymouth.

The top two teams in the final conference standings earn first-round tournament byes, while the next four seeds play first-round games Tuesday at the site of the higher seed. Rhode Island College has clinched its second straight regular-season title and will host the semifinals and final Feb. 26-27.

With eight minutes left in a tight game, Jarrett nailed a three-point field goal soon after Eastern missed two potential game-tying free throws. Jarrett then grabbed the rebound of an Eastern miss and buried a jumper to give the Colonials a seven-point, 63-56 lead with just over seven minutes. After Eastern cut the Western lead to three with 48 seconds left on two free throws by sophomore forward **Jeremy Thompson (Berlin)**, Western sophomore guard DaQuan Brooks (Brsitol) answered with two of his own to ice the victory for the Colonials.

The conference's second-leading scorer, Brooks shared game-high scoring honors with Eastern sophomore guard **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)** with 22 points. Nedwick's point total equaled the second-highest this year and the most since tossing in 36 eight games ago.

Ranked seventh in the eight-team conference in three-point field goal percentage, Western found its touch against Eastern, nailing nine of 18. Brooks was 4-for-8 from behind the arch, Jarrett 2-for-2 and freshman forward Ryan Pelletier (Wolcott) 2-for-3.

The Warriors received quality minutes off the bench from Thompson and sophomore forward **Hamilton Levy (Woodbury)**. Thompson had 17 points and no turnovers in 22 minutes and Levy chipped in seven points and three steals in 15 minutes.

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Playing in the final regular-season home game of his career, senior guard **Edwin Ortiz (Hartford)** totaled 11 points – four shy of his team-leading average. Guarded mostly by Brooks, Ortiz was just 4-for-12 from the floor, but did collect three three-point field goals to extend his career-leading total to 255. Ortiz entered play leading the LEC in free throw percentage but did not make an appearance at the stripe in the game.

Sophomore guard **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)** of Eastern was held without a field goal but he grabbed a game-high 12 rebounds to help the Warriors to slim +4 edge in that department.

Eastern closes out the regular season Saturday at the University of Southern Maine at 3 p.m. The Huskies would avoid a winless conference record with a victory. Eastern was a 77-69 victor over USM in the first meeting this year a month ago at Geissler Gymnasium.

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Saturday, Feb. 13, 2010

EASTERN M-BASKETBALL RACES PAST UMASS DARTMOUTH, 85-66
Warriors gain share of second place with Corsairs in Little East Conference

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – Junior forward **Bill Roveto (South Windsor)** and sophomore guard **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)** combined to sink 18 of 24 field goals to help the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team complete its first Little East Conference regular-season sweep of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth in six years, 85-66, Saturday afternoon at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

With its ninth home win in 11 games (both losses by two points), Eastern (16-7, 8-4 little east) moves from a two-way tie for third place to a two-way tie for second with UMass Dartmouth (16-7, 8-4 little east) in the Little East Conference standings. Two regular-season conference games remain for Eastern, which has equaled its most regular-season conference wins in the 24-year history of conference basketball. The overall wins are the most in a season for the Warriors under eighth-year head coach **Bill Geitner**.

UMass Dartmouth, last year's LEC playoff champion, had a three-game winning streak snapped with only its second loss in ten games on its opponents' court.

Eastern shot 56.5 percent from the floor – most coming on drives to the basket when it solved the Corsairs' full-court press -- giving it a 57.4 field goal percentage in two wins this year over UMass Dartmouth.

In his highest scoring game this year since the season-opener, Roveto was 9-for-10 from the floor en route to 18 points. Kohn had a season-high 21 points (one shy of his career high) also had a game-high ten rebounds to give him his LEC-leading seventh double-double of the year (third in four games).

Eastern nearly doubled UMass' rebounding total and scored 18 points off 15 offensive rebounds, outscoring UMass by 12 on second-chance points.

The Warriors used long scoring runs in each half to first build, then maintain, a double-digit lead. Eastern trailed by eight points early but seized the momentum for good when it chalked up 11 straight points later in the half on the way to a seven-point, 40-33 halftime lead. While UMass was missing five shots and turning the ball over twice in that four-minute span, Eastern got four points from Kohn and junior post player **Broderick Sawyer (Norwalk)** and a three-point field goal by senior guard **Edwin Ortiz (Hartford)** to amass a 12-point, 34-22 lead.

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Eastern limited UMass to one field goal and four points over the first five minutes of the second half, outscoring the visitors 17-4 to roar to a 20-point, 57-37 lead. Roveto dropped in four inside baskets in that decisive run, Kohn added another hoop in the paint and Ortiz swished a three-pointer to fuel that surge.

In the second half alone, Roveto and Kohn combined to score five baskets directly as the result of put-backs, with the first of two by Kohn capping the 17-4 streak. After a modest UMass run had the visitors back to within 14 points with nine minutes left, Roveto and Kohn recorded put-back baskets less than two minutes apart to push the lead back to 19 with just under seven minutes left in the game.

Ortiz finished with 16 points, nine coming on three-point field goals. Sawyer added 13 points for Eastern – his second double-figure game in three games.

UMass' Lance Greene (Dorchester, MA), a 6-foot-7 inch sophomore, led all players with 26 points and added a team-high six rebounds. In the second half, Greene was 6-or-8 and had 18 points. Coming off a team-high 22-point effort earlier this year against Eastern, junior forward Brandon Stephens (Dorchester, MA) had ten points this time.

Eastern hosts Western Connecticut State University Tuesday at 5:30 p.m.. The Colonials are one game behind Eastern in the conference standings.

Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2010

EASTERN M-BASKETBALL SLAMS KEENE, 86-67; SWEEPS SEASON SERIES
Behind Kohn, Warriors shake off sluggish first half to gain Little East Conference win

KEENE, NH – Junior guard **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)** had a season-high 19 points on 8-of-12 shooting from the floor as the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team shook off a sluggish first half to pull away from Keene State College, 86-67, Tuesday night in a Little East Conference game at Spaulding Gymnasium.

The key conference win for Eastern (15-7, 7-4 little east) is the Warriors second straight conference road win after an overall four-game losing streak and completes the Warriors' first conference regular-season sweep of Keene (12-10, 5-6 little east) in ten years (Eastern defeated the Owls three times in 1999/00 en route to its most recent LEC tournament championship and NCAA berth).

After a lethargic first half, the Warriors turned it around after the break. Over the final 20 minutes, Eastern shot 65.5 percent from the floor and gave the ball away only five times, outscoring the Owls 24-9 over the final seven minutes to record the win and move up a spot and into a tie for third place with Western Connecticut in the conference standings. The Colonials dropped a 96-70 decision at conference leader Rhode Island College, which remains a game up in the standings.

In the second half Tuesday, Kohn was 5-for-5 from the floor, sophomore guard **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)** 4-for-6 and freshman guard **Mike Garrow (Terryville)** 3-for-3 as the Warriors totaled 54 second-half points after shooting 39.5 percent and turning the ball over 12 times in the first half and trailing 33-32 at halftime.

The conference's leading rebounder, the 6-foot-5 inch Kohn also had a game-high 12 rebounds en route to his sixth double-double of the season. Half of Kohn's rebounds came on the offensive boards and helped the Warriors outscore the hosts by 14 on second tries.

Garrow and sophomore post players **Hamilton Levy (Woodbury)** and **Jeremy Thompson (Berlin)** provided a lift off the bench. The trio combined for 24 points (9-of-15 from the floor) and 13 rebounds in 43 minutes.

Although there were seven lead changes in the game, the momentum shifted for good in a three-minute stretch late in the game, when the Warriors ripped off a 13-3 scoring spurt that extended a three-point lead to 13, 71-58, with 5:35 left. Hamilton Levy jump-started the streak by scoring two inside baskets around a rebound from Thompson, who then followed with a pair of free

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throws. With the lead at seven, 64-57, Kohn scored the team's next seven points with an inside hoop, three-pointer off a rebound and pass from senior guard **Edwin Ortiz (Hartford)** and a jumper to push the advantage to 13 points.

While Nedwick managed only ten points Tuesday after wrecking Keene with a career-high 36 point effort Jan. 19, Kohn responded with his double-double after managing only two points in 16 minutes in the first meeting against Keene.

Ortiz followed Kohn with 17 points – his 16th game of double figures this year – with junior forward **Bill Roveto (South Windsor)** adding eight points, six rebounds and five assists without a turnover in 28 minutes. Kohn also had four assists. With his point total, Ortiz moved ahead of Eastern Hall of Famer Ron Pires into fifth place all-time with 1,358 points, 235 behind program scoring leader Rich Vega.

Conference scoring leader Derek D'Amours of Keene led all players with 28 points but his four starting teammates combined for only 18 points.

With three regular-season conference games remaining, Eastern is guaranteed no worse than a .500 record in conference regular-season play. One win will equal the program record for regular-season conference victories in a season and two would be the most in 24 seasons of conference play.

Eastern hosts Massachusetts Dartmouth Saturday at 3 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 6, 2010

WITH OT WIN, EASTERN M-BASKETBALL CLINCHES LEC PLAYOFF BERTH
Warriors continue to experience success at free throw line and in overtime with 74-65 victory

BOSTON, Mass. – The Eastern Connecticut State University men’s basketball continues to excel this season at the foul line, and because of that, continues to win overtime games.

Saturday, the Warriors sank 27 of 36 free throws – ten of 12 in overtime -- and clinched a berth in the upcoming Little East Conference tournament with a 74-65 victory over the University of Massachusetts Boston at the Clark Athletic Center.

The win snaps a four-game losing skid for Eastern (14-7, 6-4 little east) and assures the Warriors of a spot in the six-team conference tournament. With four regular-season conference games remaining, Eastern is in fourth place, four games ahead of seventh-place UMass Boston (4-17, 2-8 little east). By sweeping UMass in this year’s home-and-home series, Eastern would be given the No. 6 and final seed in the LEC tournament in the event of a tie with the Beacons in the final standings.

Saturday, Eastern outscored UMass 14-5 in overtime to improve to 4-1 in overtime games this year. Sophomore guard **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)** had six overtime points, hitting all four of his free throws. Freshman guard **Mike Garrow (Terryville)** was 3-for-4 from the line in overtime. UMass missed all six of its overtime shots and missed three of eight overtime free throws.

Led by Garrow and freshman guard **Joe Ives (Avon)**, Eastern's bench scored 31 points in the game. Ives brought 15 career points into the game but scored a season-high 13 and handed out four assists. Garrow had eight points, three rebounds, three assists and two blocks. Nedwick had a game-high 18 points, five rebounds, five steals and three assists. The performances by Garrow and Ives made up for the loss of junior guard **Courtney Simmons (Middletown)** and the sub-par game of senior guard Edwin Ortiz (Hartford), the team’s top scorer. Simmons is out indefinitely with a finger injury.

Eastern tied its season-high by sinking 27 free throws. The Warriors were 27-for-36 (75.0 percent). UMass was 23-for-31 (74.2 percent). In two games this year, the teams combined to take 122 free throws, sinking 91.

After downing UMass 67-63 a month ago at Geissler Gymnasium, Eastern led by 14 points early in the second half this time, but trailed by three with 73 seconds left. At that point, Nedwick hit two free throws, and Garrow stole the ball and fed Nedwick to give Eastern a 59-58 lead in the final minute of regulation. UMass' Pat Joseph scored an inside basket with five seconds left after Eastern missed one of two free throws with 17 seconds left to tie the game 60-all and force overtime.

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Joseph led UMass with 15 points and grabbed a game-high nine rebounds.

The Warriors never trailed in the five-minute extra session. Nedwick got things going by sinking two free throws and Garrow stuck a jump off a steal by junior post player **Broderick Sawyer (Norwalk)**. Nedwick later rebounded a missed UMass shot and took it in himself. A steal by Nedwick moments later set up Ives to convert one of two free throws, and the Warriors cemented the victory by connecting on seven of their final eight free throws in the final minute.

Eastern looks for a season sweep of Keene State College when the teams meet Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. at Keene, NH. Keene is tied for fifth place in the conference, a game behind Eastern. The top two teams in the final tournament standings are awarded first-round tournament byes, and the No. 3 and No. 4 seeds host first-round tournament games.

Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2010

SLUMPING EASTERN M-BASKETBALL DROPS FOURTH IN ROW, 67-64
Warriors commit 22 turnovers, shoot 22 percent from three-point range in setback

MIDDLETOWN, Conn. – A lethal combination of 22 turnovers and 22 percent shooting from three-point range was the recipe for defeat Tuesday night for the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team in a 67-64 non-conference loss to Wesleyan University at Silloway Gymnasium.

In a game which featured eight ties and nine lead changes, Wesleyan (9-12) freshman Mike Callaghan converted two free throws with 17 seconds left and Eastern (13-7) missed two shots in the closing seconds as the Cardinals escaped with their first win over the Warriors after three consecutive losses.

The game was the 11th straight this year decided by eight or less points for Eastern, which has lost four in a row by a total of 11 points after winning five straight. All but three of the Warriors' games this year have been determined by single figures, with the deciding margin having been six or less points 13 times.

Behind a career-high 17 rebounds by sophomore guard **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)**, Eastern finished with a +16 advantage on the boards against Wesleyan, whose 15-person roster includes nine freshmen (three of whom start). The Warriors' 22 turnovers equaled their highest number this year, however, and their three-point percentage of .222 represented their second-worst of the season. In mid-January, Eastern survived .167 three-point shooting to defeat the University of Southern Maine. The Warriors were not as fortunate against Wesleyan.

Starting guards **Edwin Ortiz (Hartford)** and **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)** – the team's top scorers this season -- combined to shoot 6-for-25 from the floor and were 3-for-14 from long range. Ortiz and Kohn led Eastern with 15 points each. The double-double was the fifth this season for Kohn.

Wesleyan ran off nine straight points after the Warriors had taken a three-point, 55-52 lead with four-and-a-half minutes left to carry a six-point, 61-55 advantage into the final two minutes. With Eastern trailing by six with 1:17 left, junior forward **Bill Roveto (South Windsor)** and Ortiz sandwiched baskets around a Wesleyan turnover to cut the gap to one, 63-62 with 39 seconds left, but Callaghan matched two free throws by Nedwick in the final seconds to preserve his team's lead.

Eastern played without junior guard **Courtney Simmons (Middletown)** – the team's third double-figure scorer this season -- for the second straight game. Simmons is expected to miss another week with a finger injury.

Eastern plays its final five regular-season games in the Little East Conference, beginning Saturday at Massachusetts Boston at 3 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2010

FOR EASTERN M-BASKETBALL, RALLY FALLS SHORT IN 78-73 LEC LOSS
Western finds free-throw touch in final 25 seconds, pulls even with Warriors in conference

DANBURY, Conn. – The Western Connecticut State University men's basketball team didn't look like one of the top free-throw shooting teams in the Little East Conference Tuesday night, but managed to regain its touch in the final 25 seconds to stave off a second-half rally by Eastern Connecticut State University and record a 78-73 victory at Feldman Arena.

Ranked second in the conference in free-throw shooting, Western (12-4, 5-3 little east) missed seven of its first 11 free throws until canning five of six over the final 25 seconds to hold off Eastern (13-5, 5-3 little east) and pull even with the Warriors into second place in the conference. The teams are one game behind co-leaders UMass Dartmouth and Rhode Island College. UMass pulled into a tie for first with a 91-89 road win over Rhode Island.

Eastern senior guard **Edwin Ortiz (Hartford)** scored 16 of his game-high 21 points in the final 17 minutes to pull to within seven points of becoming the ninth player in program history with 1,300 career points. Ortiz was 4-for-6 from three-point range in the second half, 5-for-10 in the game.

Western used run of seven straight points early in the second half to expand a five-point halftime lead to double figures and later jacked the lead to 16,56-40, with 11:30 left. Western still led by ten with 3:30 left before Ortiz hit a drive following a steal by junior guard **Courtney Simmons (Middletown)**, sophomore guard **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)** scored in the paint off a steal by Ortiz, and freshman guard **Mike Garrow (Terryville)** scored off a put-back as Eastern cut the deficit to four, 70-66 with two minutes left. Trailing by five with the ball, Eastern was whistled for an offensive foul with 29 seconds left, and conference free throw leader DaQuan Brookes sank a pair to make it 75-68. Tyshawn Gillespie followed with two more free throws nine seconds later, and Brooks converted one of two with ten seconds left to seal the Western win.

Western bettered its conference-leading field shooting by scoring on 50.8 percent of its field goals.. Brooks was 7-for-14 from the floor for a team-high 19 points, Gillespie 5-for-7 for 15 points. Wilburt Jarrett was 5-for-8 and Leroy Mayers came off the bench to connect on half of his ten field goal attempts to add 11 points each for Western.

Sophomore guard **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)** followed Ortiz with 19 points before fouling out with Eastern down by six with 16 seconds left. He was 7-for-12 from the floor and combined to go 9-for-9 from the free throw line with Ortiz and also shared game-high assist honors with junior forward **Bill Roveto (South Windsor)**, with four. Sophomore post player **Jeremy Thompson (Berlin)** had ten points and shared game-high rebounding honors with six in 18 minutes off the bench.

For the fourth time in five games, Eastern shot well over .700 from the free throw line. The Warriors were 17-for-22 (.773), Western 9-for-17 (.529).

Since snapping a seven-game losing streak at the hands of Western, Eastern has split its last six meetings with the Colonials.

Eastern hosts Plymouth State University Saturday at 3 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 23, 2010

EASTERN MEN'S BASKETBALL FALLS FROM FIRST PLACE IN 72-71 LOSS
In battle of Little East Conference co-leaders, Rhode Island holds on to re-gain top spot

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – The Rhode Island College men's basketball team won the Little East Conference regular season a year ago. And although they lost a number of key players from that team, the Anchormen still know something about winning. And winning close games.

For the second time in as many games this year, Rhode Island (12-5, 6-1 little east) prevailed down the stretch against Eastern Connecticut State University (13-4, 5-2 little east). Saturday, the hosts rode to a 12-point lead early in the second half, and escaped with a tight 72-71 decision in a battle of teams sharing first place.

It was the first time this year that Eastern has been swept in seven conference doubleheaders in men's and women's basketball. The Warriors had swept six and split one.

Eastern had climbed into a share of first place with Rhode Island last Saturday with a victory over the University of Southern Maine that was coupled with RIC's loss to Plymouth State. The teams remained deadlocked at the top after both clubs won mid-week conference games.

Saturday, junior Darius Debnam sank the back end of a two-shot foul with three seconds left to break a tie and provide the hosts with the one-point win. An offensive rebound and putback by Eastern freshman guard **Mike Garrow (Terryville)** had pulled Eastern even at 71-71 with 24 seconds left, but Debnam was fouled with the clock winding down. He missed the first shot but connected on the second.

The loss was the first in the last six games for Eastern, playing its first road game since upending defending LEC playoff champion UMass Dartmouth by six points 11 days ago. Rhode Island has won seven of its last eight.

Rhode Island defeated Eastern in this year's home-and-home set by a total of three points, using different routes to record the key victory. Saturday, the Anchormen built a substantial second-half lead, and hung on. Six weeks ago at Geissler Gym in the conference opener for both teams, they roared back from a 17-point deficit in the opening minutes of the second half, finally outscoring the Warriors 14-2 over the final three minutes with the help of seven Eastern turnovers in an eventual 89-87 victory.

Saturday, it was Eastern's turn to reverse a double-digit deficit as the Warriors used a 12-2 burst to take what would eventually prove to be its only second half lead, 63-62. With Eastern trailing by nine with nine minutes left, junior guard **Courtney Simmons (Middletown)** sandwiched two

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baskets around his own steal to cut the deficit to five. Garrow followed with the same formula, stealing the ball and clicking on a three-pointer to make it a two-point game. Rhode Island junior Carl Lee then stopped the bleeding by scoring upon his insertion into the lineup, but sophomore guard **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)** buried a three-point on the Warriors' next possession, then turned a missed RIC shot into a two-point basket as Eastern surged into the lead with six minutes left.

Eastern trailed by four in the final minute but Nedwick gave the Warriors life again with a follow-up three-pointer with 40 seconds later. An RIC free throw made it 71-69 before Garrow hauled in a rebound and put it back in to tie the game for the sixth time with 24 seconds left.

Nedwick and Garrow each had 17 points for Eastern, with Simmons finishing with 11. After dumping in 14 points in Tuesday's LEC triumph over visiting Keene State College, Garrow improved his career-high for the second straight game. Simmons handed out five assists and junior forward **Bill Roveto (South Windsor)** grabbed a game-high eight rebounds.

Eastern turned the ball over only 11 times in the game, resulting in only seven Rhode Island points off of those miscues.

With 14 points, sophomore Mason Choice was among four Rhode Island players in double figures. Junior Nick Manson added 13 and Lee and sophomore Mike Akinrola 12 each. Senior Jake Grimes missed eight of ten field goals but finished with nine points, seven rebounds and five assists.

Eastern visits Western Connecticut State University Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 19, 2010

BEHIND NEDWICK AND ROVETO, EASTERN M-BASKETBALL OUTGUNS KEENE

Nedwick leads five double-digit scorers with career-high 36 in wild 91-86 Little East win

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – One of the toughest defensive players in the Little East Conference, sophomore guard **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)** rolled out his offensive skills Tuesday night, pouring in six three-point field goals on the way to a career-high 36 points as the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team outgunned Keene State College, 91-86, in a conference game at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

A member of the conference All-Defensive Team as a freshman last year, Nedwick played strong first-half defense on Keene sophomore forward Derek D'Amours (Agawam, MA) despite giving away four inches to help the Warriors roll up an 11-point lead late in the opening half. D'Amours, the LEC's second-ranked scorer, had only one field goal and three points in the first half before scoring 18 in the second half on 6-of-15 shooting from the floor.

After scoring 14 points in the first half on 5-for-7 shooting from the floor, Nedwick turned it up a notch after the break by scoring 22 points on 8-for-10 shooting (4-for-4 from three-point range) as the Warriors withstood Keene's second half bid to gain revenge for a 20-point loss a year ago at Geissler Gym. Nedwick points came on a combination of long-range baskets and drive to the basket. (A 70 percent free-throw shooter, Nedwick missed five of nine free throws which may have cost him a 40-point night).

Eastern (13-3, 5-1 little east) maintained a share of the top spot in the conference with its fifth straight win – matching its season-opening winning streak. The Warriors and defending conference regular-season champion Rhode Island College share the top spot. The Anchormen routed Western Connecticut State University, 81-65, Tuesday night in Danbury. Keene State (8-8, 2-4 little east) remains in sixth place in the eight-team conference.

By clicking on 13 of 17 shots from the floor (6-for-7 on three-pointers en route to his 36-point total, Nedwick paced five double-digit scorers as the Warriors recorded their first 90-point game of the year to outlast Keene, ranked seventh nationally by averaging 84 points per game. Junior forward **Bill Roveto (South Windsor)** pulled down a career-high 14 rebounds (nine in the first half) and dished out a career-high six assists, and junior forward **Broderick Sawyer (Norwalk)** blocked five shots for the second straight game. Behind Roveto, freshman guard **Mike Garrow (Terryville)** and sophomore guard **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)** the Warriors amassed a 49-33 advantage on the boards (nearly doubling Keene's total in the first half).

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Garrow nearly doubled his season point total by tossing in 14 off the bench and pulling down eight rebounds in 22 minutes. Senior guard **Edwin Ortiz (Hartford)** – the conference leader in three-point field goals – had little room to operate against Keene freshman Anthony Mariano (Naugatuck), but scored eight of his 11 points in the second half. Sawyer and sophomore post player **Jeremy Thompson (Berlin)** contributed ten points

Behind three successive three-point field goals – two by D’Amours – Keene went on an 11-point run early in the second half to erase a five-point deficit and surge to a six-point lead. D’Amours’ fourth three-point bomb of the half made it 68-62 midway through the second half. In a game which featured ten lead changes and ten ties, Keene led by two, 82-80, with three minutes left before Eastern had the final say.

Edwin dropped in a jumper to tie the game at 82-all, and Nedwick converted two free throws and a layup to give Eastern a four-point, 86-82 lead with 1:23 left. Eastern iced the win by connecting on five of six free throws over the final 24.4 seconds Ortiz (36-for-40/90 percent from the line this year) hit a pair with 24.4 seconds left and Kohn swished two with 14.7 seconds left to make it 90-86.

In addition to grabbing a team-high eight rebounds, Mariano led Keene with 29 points – scoring 15 of his points on five three-pointers and six more on seven free throws. D’Amours took 21 shots from the floor and finished with 21 points, while freshman forward Eric Fazio (Hopewell Junction, NY) added 13 points. Keene scored 36 points on 12 three-point field goals.

Eastern visits Rhode Island College Saturday at 3 p.m.

Saturday, January 16, 2010

SAWYER'S CAREER GAME LIFTS EASTERN M-BASKETBALL IN LITTLE EAST
Junior center breaks out with career-high 31 points in 77-69 win over Southern Maine

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – Eastern Connecticut State University junior center **Broderick Sawyer (Norwalk)** scored a career-high 31 points and sophomore guard **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)** added ten points and 12 rebounds in a 77-69 Little East Conference men's basketball victory over the University of Southern Maine Saturday afternoon at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

With its fourth straight win, Eastern (12-3, 4-1 little east) slides into a first-place tie for the conference lead with defending LEC regular-season champion Rhode Island College. The Anchormen dropped a 62-60 decision at Plymouth State University Saturday. Southern Maine (2-13, 0-5 little east) lost its seventh straight.

Eastern has not started a season with a 12-3 record after 15 games in 40 years – since the 1969/70 squad won 12 of its first 15 and went on to a 21-4 record under Eastern Hall of Fame coach Clyde Washburne.

The double-figure total was the first in nine games (since a 20-point effort Dec. 5) for Sawyer, who was 13-of-19 from the floor and 5-of-8 from the foul line. Sawyer also tied his career highs with nine rebounds and five blocked shots and did not give the ball away in 33 minutes. Sawyer entered the game averaging 7.6 points and 3.4 rebounds with a team-high 20 blocked shots.

In addition to shadowing conference scoring leader Cortez Isaac (Washington, DC), Eastern sophomore guard **Nick Nedwick (Irvington, NY)** had ten points, seven rebounds and five assists and limited Isaac (6-of-17 from the floor) to 19 points – seven below his season average. Kohn, ranked third in the LEC in rebounding, teamed with Sawyer and Eastern junior forward **Bill Roveto (South Windsor)** on the boards to provide the Warriors with a 46-30 rebounding edge. Roveto corralled ten rebounds – his first-double figure rebounding total in eight games. Seven of Roveto's rebounds came on the offensive end and were integral as the Warriors scored 30 of their points on second-chance tries (23 offensive rebounds).

Neither team led by more than three points in the first half of a game which featured 12 lead changes. A run of 12 consecutive points in the opening four minutes of the second half (Nedwick and Sawyer scoring five each) put the Warriors in control of a 14-point, 48-34 lead, before the Huskies chipped away. Trailing by 11 with eight minutes left, USM got back into the game with six quick points. After two free throws by Isaac with 30 seconds left made it 73-69, Roveto snared consecutive offensive rebounds off a missed free throw, scoring on the second one to make it 75-69. Junior guard **Courtney Simmons (Middletown)** connected on two free throws with 14 seconds left to close out the scoring. Simmons scored eight of his ten points in the second half.

Isaac, sophomore forward Leif O'Connell (Hodgdon, ME) and junior guard John Sewall (Bath, ME) did the heavy lifting for the Huskies. The trio combined for all but 14 of Southern Maine's points as only five players contributed to the team's scoring load. O'Connell came off the bench to sink 9 of 11 field goals, both of his misses being blocked by Sawyer. O'Connell matched Isaac with 19 points and Sewall netted 17 on 7-of-10 shooting.

Eastern has won six of the last nine meetings between the teams.

Eastern hosts Keene State College Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 14, 2010

BENCH PLAY SPARKS EASTERN M-BASKETBALL PAST WENTWORTH

Thompson and Simmons combine for 28 points on 12-for-17 shooting in 75-67 win

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. – Sophomore center **Jeremy Thompson (Berlin)** and junior guard **Courtney Simmons (Middletown)** came off the bench to score 28 points on 12-for-17 shooting from the floor to vault the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team to a 75-67 victory over Wentworth Institute of Technology in a non-conference game Thursday night at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

Eastern (11-3) took over the momentum for good early in the second half with a 6-0 run when senior guard **Edwin Ortiz (Hartford)** converted a four-point play on a three-point field goal and free throw and Simmons hit the first of five field goals over the next ten minutes upon entering the game to give Eastern a seven-point, 44-37 lead. The lead never dipped below four after that, peaking at 12, 63-51 when Simmons sank the back end of a two-shot foul with three minutes left.

With its sixth home win in seven outings, Eastern is off to its best overall start after 14 games since the 1985-86 season, when the Warriors finished 18-9 and qualified for the ECAC tournament. Wentworth (5-8) has alternated wins and losses over its last seven games.

Thompson dropped in seven of his eight shots in the game and finished with 17 points. The 6-foot-5 inch, 215-pounder is 19-for-25 in his last four games. Thompson came off the bench to equal his career high of 20 points in Tuesday's Little East Conference road win over UMass Dartmouth. Simmons had missed the last two games with a finger injury before spelling Ortiz with Eastern leading by five minutes into the second half. He canned five of nine shots on a variety of drives to the baskets and mid-range jumpers and finished with 11 points.

Eastern scored its final 13 points of the game from the foul line on 17 tries over the final three minutes. Ortiz led all players with 21 points (his second straight game of at least 20). Nine of his points came on ten free throw attempts (he is now 32-for-36 from the line this year). Ortiz was 6-for-6 from the stripe in the final minute of play.

The Warriors' final basket of the game came with just over three minutes left and expanded Eastern's lead to 11, 62-51. Wentworth missed a jumper and as 6-foot-11 inch Wentworth forward Sam Herrick (Duxbury, MA) was reaching for the offensive rebound, the ball was knocked away by Eastern sophomore guard **Jamie Kohn (Columbia)**. Kohn lunged for the ball

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