
little east conference

Tuesday, February 25, 2003

KEENE STATE MEN'S BASKETBALL SURVIVES UPSET BID
Sixth-seeded Eastern falls a point shy in opening round of LEC tournament

KEENE, NH -- Picked to finish last in the Little East Conference pre-season men's basketball coaches' poll, Eastern Connecticut State University fell a point shy Tuesday of upsetting third-seeded Keene State College 62-61 in the first round of the LEC tournament before 1,400 fans at Spaulding Gymnasium.

A winner of three games this year over Eastern, third-seeded Keene (20-6) faces second-seeded Plymouth State College (20-6) in a tournament semifinal-round game Friday at Western Connecticut State University. Sixth-seeded Eastern finishes its first season under head coach **Bill Geitner** with a 7-19 record, 2-13 on the road. The Warriors shared fifth place (5-9) in the final conference standings.

A 29-point loser at Keene State two weeks ago and coming off a 106-74 loss Saturday at conference cellar-dweller University of Southern Maine, Eastern shot 51.1 per cent from the floor in this game and held the 2002 regular-season champion Owls two points below their season's scoring average.

Sophomore post player **Tim Kinel's (EAST HARTFORD)** bucket with provided Eastern with the largest lead by either side in this game, 54-45 with nine minutes left but the Warriors were outscored 17-7 the rest of the way. Eastern's only baskets from the floor over the final nine minutes came from sophomore post player **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)**, who canned both of them.

Junior guard Chris Timson sank two three-point field goals to fuel the 17-7 for Keene State, which also sank seven of eight free throws. Junior post player **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** hit two free throws with just over three minutes left to give Eastern its final lead of the game, 61-60. The Warriors had a one-point lead and the ball but Keene turned a blocked shot into the go-ahead basket when junior forward Brandon Johanson put back the rebound of his own miss with 61 seconds left to give Keene a 62-61 lead. Johanson missed both ends of a two-shot free throw with 33 seconds left but Eastern couldn't capitalize. The Warriors called timeout twice, inbounding both times at mid-court, but junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** was stripped on a drive to the basket as time expired.

First-year junior guard **Steven Bartunek (DURHAM)** scored 13 of his season-high 16 points in the first half, scoring all seven of Eastern's points in one two-minute stretch. Bartunek canned two three-pointers in the game's first eight points to help carry the Warriors back from an early eight-point deficit. Eastern shot 60.9 per cent in taking a 36-30 lead into the lockerroom.

Smith followed Bartunek with 15 points and eight rebounds. Kipphut also had eight rebounds. Timson led Keene with 16 points, sinking five of seven field goals, with junior forward Matthew Wheeler scoring 14 points and grabbing a game-high ten rebounds. Johanson had 12 points.

Shepard had eight points in 40 minutes after returning to the lineup after missing his first career game Saturday with an ankle injury. Kipphut, the team's leading scorer (14.2 ppg), took only six shots and failed to reach double figures in points for only the fifth time this season. He had five points. Freshman starting guard **Martin Kokoszka (MERIDEN)** missed the final two games of the season with a concussion.

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little ~~Saturday~~ conference, 2003

SOUTHERN MAINE ROUTS ECSU M-BASKETBALL 106-74
Sixth-seeded Warriors to visit third-seeded Keene State in LEC Tuesday

GORHAM, Maine -- Sophomore swingman Ryan Garland scored a career-high 29 points and the University of Southern Maine sank 20 three-point field goals in routing the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team 106-74 Saturday in Little East Conference regular-season finale at the Warren G. Hill Gymnasium.

Eastern (7-18, 5-9 little east) finishes the regular season in a three-way tie for fifth place in the eight-team conference and is seeded sixth in the conference tournament, which gets underway with first-round games Tuesday. **Eastern will visit 2002 conference regular-season champion Keene State College Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in the second of a women's and men's tournament doubleheader.** The Owls are seeded third, finishing with a 10-4 regular-season LEC record following Saturday's 100-83 home win over Massachusetts Dartmouth.

Eighth-seeded Southern Maine (4-20, 3-11 little east), a winner of two straight conference games for the first time this year, visits regular-season champion and top-seeded Western Connecticut State University Tuesday at 7 p.m.

Eastern was playing without injured starting guards **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** and **Martin Kokoszka (MERIDEN)**. A junior and the team's second-leading scorer, Shepard missed his first career game after 75 appearances with an ankle sprain (he should be available Tuesday). The freshman Kokoszka has a concussion. The Huskies had little need for injured sophomore guard Jason Levecque. Levecque, the LEC scoring leader with a 23.8 average, missed his second start of the year with a knee injury.

Southern Maine shot 72.2 per cent from the floor in scoring 70 second-half points Saturday to break from a 36-33 halftime lead. The Huskies converted 13 of 16 three-pointers in the half, 20 of 34 in the game. Southern Maine leads the conference by averaging 10.0 three-point field goals per game. It is the most one-sided decision in the 40-game conference history between the two schools, eclipsing Southern Maine's 21-point win (78-57) in the first game of the series in 1986.

Garland, sophomore guard Mike Francoeur (24) and sophomore guard Derek Lovely (23) combined to outscore Eastern by two points. The trio was 16-for-21 from three-point range, with Lovely going 7-for-8.

The team's leading scorer, junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** had a team-high 18 points for Eastern and was followed by sophomore center **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** and junior guard **Steven Bartunck (DURHAM)**, each adding 14. It was a career-high for Bartunck, a first-year player who contributed a career-high four three-point field goals. Eastern equalled its season-high of 12 three-point field goals. Smith led all players with nine rebounds, Kipphut grabbing eight.

The loss snaps a seven-game winning streak against Southern Maine for Eastern, which concludes the regular season with a 2-12 road record.

Eastern defeated Keene State 80-79 in the first round the last time the clubs met in the conference tournament. The Warriors went on to win the LEC tournament during that 2000 season. Keene won both regular-season games this year, 70-67 at Willimantic and 87-58 at Keene, NH.

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little east conference

Tuesday, February 18, 2003

ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL SCORES TWICE AT BUZZER FOR WIN
Shepard ties game in regulation, Smith wins game vs. Western Conn. in ot

W.C. BY NEST

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. -- Junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** forced overtime when he banked in a three-pointer at the buzzer and sophomore center **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** won the game with a buzzer-beating layup in overtime as the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team defeated Western Connecticut State University 78-77 Tuesday night in Little East Conference action at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

Eastern (7-17, 5-8 little east) ended a six-game losing streak, halting conference-leader Western's (15-8, 10-3 little) four-game winning streak. The Warriors had lost five of six to the Colonials, including a 94-63 decision Jan. 28 at Danbury, Conn.

With Eastern trailing 71-68 in the final seconds of regulation, Shepard banked in a game-tying three-point field goal from the top of the key to force overtime. In overtime, Smith scored six of Eastern's seven points, including the winning layup a split second before the final horn. Smith scored the winning basket after receiving a pass in traffic underneath from senior guard **Christopher Morgan (HIGGANUM)**, who found Smith after grabbing a loose ball with the clock winding down.

By virtue of Plymouth State's 69-63 loss to Keene State Tuesday night, Western clinches the No. 1 seed in the upcoming conference tournament and at least a share of its first regular-season title. Plymouth and Keene State are both 9-4 with one regular-season game remaining. Umass Dartmouth's 101-90 home win over Rhode Island College Tuesday guarantees that Eastern can finish no higher than fifth and must play a first-round LEC tournament game on the road.

Eastern junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** scored a career-high 28 points and tied his career-high with 14 rebounds. He led all players in both categories. He was 10-for-14 from the floor. Smith, Shepard and sophomore center **Tim Kinel (EAST HARTFORD)** each added 12 points, with Smith adding seven rebounds as the Warriors held a 41-36 advantage on the board. It was a career-high for Kinel, who scored ten points in the first half.

Sophomore guard Jay Reginatto led four double-digit scorers for Western with 16 points, junior forward Marvin Evans adding 16 points and a team-high eight rebounds.

Eastern closes out its regular season Saturday at the University of Southern Maine in conference action at 3 p.m. while Western hosts Massachusetts Boston at 3 p.m.

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Saturday, February 15, 2003

UMD SNAPS THREE-GAME HEX AGAINST ECSU M-BASKETBALL
Corsairs post key Little East Conference victory over Warriors 83-61

NORTH DARTMOUTH, Mass. -- The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth men's basketball team used a run of 12 straight points late in the first half to post a key 83-61 Little East Conference victory over Eastern Connecticut State University Saturday at the Francis Tripp Athletic Center.

Eastern (6-17, 4-8), which had beaten the 12-time conference regular-season champions the last three times the teams had met, lost for the sixth straight time and fell into seventh place in the eight-team conference. With two regular-season conference games remaining, UMass (11-12, 6-6) takes over sole possession of fourth place in the conference. All eight teams qualify for this year's LEC tournament, which gets underway Feb. 25, but the top four finishers earn first-round home games.

After holding off the Corsairs 76-75 Jan. 14 at Geissler Gymnasium, Eastern led by only two points early in this game and trailed by as many as 33 late in the game. Eastern had snapped a six-game losing streak in its earlier win over UMass.

In the loss to Eastern last month, UMass missed 13 of 18 three-pointers and eight of 18 free throws while the Warriors shot 53.2 per cent from the floor. This time, UMass pumped in ten three-pointers in 19 tries while Eastern shot just 33.3 per cent from the floor.

The Warriors limited all-conference forward Brian Cagle to 12 points after his 25-point error in January but the Corsairs got 46 points off the bench. Freshman guard Derek Thatcher equalled his season total of 11 points and exceeded his season total with three three-point field goals.

Leading by nine points, 31-22, UMass scored 12 straight to push the lead to 21, 43-22 in the closing minute of the first half. The Corsairs led by 21 at halftime and scored six of the first eight points of the second half to push the advantage to 25, 51-26. UMass shot 54.8 per cent in the second half and committed only six turnovers to maintain a comfortable cushion.

Despite battling two larger opponents, Eastern junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** enjoyed his second outstanding effort against UMass this year. Kipphut (9-for-10 from the free throw line, who totalled a career-high 25 points in this year's win over the Corsairs, led both teams with 21 points, with senior guard **Christopher Morgan (HIGGANUM)** adding nine and tossing in three of the team's five three-pointers. However, sophomore center **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** managed only three points and three rebounds after totalling 13 points and eight rebounds in this year's win over UMass. Junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)**, the team's second-leading scorer, missed his first ten shots and finished with four points, four assists and four steals.

Eastern hosts conference leader Western Connecticut State University Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. The game is scheduled to be webcast live by *Sportsjuice.com*.

Thursday, February 13, 2003

ALBERTUS RALLIES TO CATCH ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL 71-69
Sharod Blizzard's two late field goals lift Falcons over Warriors

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. -- Sophomore forward Sharod Blizzard hit two driving layups in the final 42 seconds -- dropping in the game-winner with 2.4 seconds left -- to lift the Albertus Magnus College men's basketball team to a 71-69 win over Eastern Connecticut State University Thursday night at Geissler Gymnasium.

Blizzard tied the game for Albertus (14-6) with 42.6 seconds left with a bucket on a drive down the middle. Eastern (6-16) missed on a driving attempt on its next possession, and after a pair of timeouts, Blizzard outraced an Eastern defense attempting to foul in the backcourt (the Warriors had only five team fouls at the time) and converted a layup on a pass from junior guard Curtis Miller with 2.4 seconds left.

Following a timeout, Eastern junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** snared a long inbounds pass from junior forward **Steven Bartunek (DURHAM)** in the paint but was forced into a hurried, off-balance attempt which was rebounded by Albertus senior center Jayson Douthwright as time expired.

Eastern led by 11 with eight minutes left following a three-point field goal by sophomore forward **Kelvin Harris (WEST HAVEN)** but Albertus answered with a run of 13 straight points that was capped by Blizzard's two free throws with four minutes left. Three of Albertus's baskets in that stretch followed offensive rebounds. Junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** and Douthwright exchanged three-point field goals before Blizzard tied the game with his bucket with 42.6 seconds left.

Douthwright led all players with 22 points, 12 rebounds and four blocked shots while Blizzard had 18 points and nine rebounds and sophomore guard Tim Russell 15 points. Russell had scored 30 when Albertus defeated Eastern for the first time after 12 losses last year. Douthwright was 6-for-8 from three-point range, his team 10-for-16.

Kipphut led Eastern with 17 points and added nine rebounds, Shepard adding 12 points and freshman guard **Martin Kokoszka (MERIDEN)** 11 points and career-highs of ten rebounds and five assists. In a six-minute stretch in the second half, Kokoszka had two field goals, four defensive rebounds and three assists.

Eastern returns to Little East Conference play Saturday, visiting Massachusetts Dartmouth at 3 p.m.

little east conference

Tuesday, February 11, 2003

ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL DROPS FOURTH STRAIGHT, 87-58
Chris Timson sparks 11-0 run in second half as Keene State pulls away

KEENE, NH - Junior guard Chris Timson scored six points in a run of ten straight Keene State College points midway through the second half as the Owls pulled away for an 87-58 Little East Conference men's basketball victory over Eastern Connecticut State University Tuesday at Spaulding Gymnasium.

It is the sixth straight win for Keene (16-5, 8-3 little east), which had escaped with a three-point win when the teams met Jan 21 at Willimantic. Eastern (6-15, 4-7 little east) lost for the fourth straight time. The Warriors have dropped eight of ten road games this season.

Eastern trailed by 13 at halftime and by 13 with just under ten minutes left before the Owls scored 11 straight over a stretch of three minutes to push the lead to 24, 69-45. Timson scored six of his team's points in that run and finished with a game-high 17 points. Timson's scoring effort -- which included 7-for-8 shooting from the floor -- offset senior guard Derek Swenson's six-point total. Swenson entered play ranked seventh in the LEC with a 15.4 average. He was limited to just eight shots.

Keene, last year's regular-season conference champion, is the conference's top-rated offensive and defensive squad.

Eastern senior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** scored in double figures for the 17th time this year. Kipphut shared game-high honors with Timson with 17 points and also shared game-high rebounding honors with eight. Sophomore center **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** followed with ten points and eight rebounds.

Keene turned the ball over only 12 times, helping it amass 20 more shots from the floor.

Eastern hosts Albertus Magnus College Thursday at 7 p.m. at Geissler Gymnasium.

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little east conference

Saturday, February 8, 2003

ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL RALLY FALLS SHORT IN 64-62 LEC LOSS
Warriors erase 19-point second-half setback but lose to UMass Boston

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. -- The Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team erased a 19-point second-half deficit but couldn't complete the comeback as the University of Massachusetts Boston snapped a four-game losing streak with a 64-62 Little East Conference victory Saturday afternoon at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

After trailing by 19, 48-29 six minutes into the second half, Eastern (6-14, 4-6 little east) outscored the Beacons (10-11, 4-6 little east) 26-6 to take their first lead since the opening minute, 55-54 on an inside hoop from sophomore post player **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** with three minutes left. UMass then scored four points on a bucket and two free throws with the help of three offensive rebounds to re-gain the lead for good, 58-55 with 2:23 left.

Sophomore guards Eric Summerville and Roger Perry canned two free throws each in the final 15 seconds to help the Beacons hold on: Following a timeout, Eastern prepared for a potential game-tying three-point field goal in the final seconds but committed an unforced turnover with six seconds left, eventually swishing a meaningless three-pointer at the buzzer to conclude the scoring.

Smith led Eastern with 19 points, with senior guard **Christopher Morgan (HIGGANUM)** added 18 -- matching his highest total in 16 games. Each was 6-for-9 from the floor.

UMass six-foot-six inch sophomore post player Billy Allen, last year's conference Rookie-of-the-Year, led all players with 23 points and 13 rebounds (seven on the offensive end). Allen, who turned the ball over only once in 29 minutes, had six points and a key offensive rebound in the final three minutes. With the score tied, Allen grabbed the offensive rebound of a missed three-point field goal and converted a conventional three-point play to give UMass a 58-55 lead with 2:23 left. Summerville added 13 points for the Beacons while sophomore guard Roderic Joseph and sophomore forward Yassin Osman had eight rebounds each.

The Beacons, who had lost four straight after head coach Charlie Titus recorded his 300th coaching win Jan. 23, shot just 27.5 per cent from the floor but grabbed 27 offensive rebounds and sank 24 of 34 free throws. UMass outrebounded Eastern 51-35. The Warriors shot 45.8 per cent in the second half to outscore the visitors 37-29, 33-16 over the final 14 minutes of the half. Led by Smith (7-for-8), Eastern shot a season-best 79.2 per cent (19-for-24) from the stripe.

With their second win this year over Eastern, the Beacons sweep the regular-season conference series for the first time since 1996/97. The Warriors have lost four of their last five conference games.

Eastern visits Keene State College Tuesday in a Little East Conference game at 7:30 p.m.

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little east conference

Saturday, February 1, 2003

PLYMOUTH STATE USES 51-POINT SECOND HALF TO DUMP ECSU
Panthers shoot 66.7 per cent in second half in LEC men's basketball win

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. -- Six different Plymouth State College players contributed points during a run of 21 straight points early in the second half that carried the Panthers to an 82-67 Little East Conference men's basketball win over Eastern Connecticut State University Saturday afternoon at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

By beating Eastern (6-13, 4-5 little east) for the sixth straight time, Plymouth (14-4, 7-2 little east) moves into a tie for the first place in the conference with defending conference tournament champion Western Conn. State University. The Colonials were beaten 94-71 at Massachusetts Dartmouth Saturday.

Trailing by one against Eastern, Plymouth scored 21 straight points over a five-minute stretch to take a 20-point, 59-39 lead with 13 minutes left. The Panthers began the stretch by sinking three straight three-point field goals -- going 4-for-4 from three-point range during the stretch. During the scoring spree, the Panthers converted eight of ten field goals while Eastern was missing eight straight field goals and committing three turnovers. Plymouth got scoring contributions from six different players during the run, five from freshman center Kevin Boutilier.

After shooting just 37.9 per cent from the floor and trailing by two, 33-31 at halftime, Plymouth connected on 20 of 30 tries in the second half (66.7 per cent) to outscore Eastern 51-34.

Sophomore guard Nick Pelotte equalled his season average with a game-high 20 points (8-for-16 from the floor) to lead four double-digit scorers. Senior guard Kenny Stewart and Boutilier each added 13 and sophomore forward Anthony Oglesby 11 points and a game-high 11 rebounds. Plymouth is the conference's top offensive team and equalled its scoring average.

Eastern, which has lost two straight conference home games after winning its first three, got 17 points from senior guard **Christopher Morgan (HIGGANUM)**. Morgan was 6-for-8 from the floor and helped Eastern equal its second-most three-point field goals (10) with a career-high five in as many attempts. Junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** and junior post player **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** had 16 each.

Eastern hosts Massachusetts Boston in a conference game Saturday at 3 p.m.

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Sports News

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little east conference

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL FALLS TO LEC LEADER WCSU 94-63 *Regionally-ranked Colonials shoot over 50 per cent from floor in conference win*

DANBURY, Conn. -- The Western Connecticut State University men's basketball team converted five consecutive field goals late in the first half to break open a tight game and pull away for a 94-63 Little East Conference victory over Eastern Connecticut State University Tuesday at the William A. O'Neill Athletic and Convocation Center.

Ranked sixth in the latest NCAA Division III Northeast Region poll, Western (11-5, 7-1 little east) remained atop the conference standings with its fifth win against Eastern (6-12, 4-4 little east) in its last six tries. The Colonials won last year's conference tournament and qualified for the 2002 NCAA Division III tournament.

In falling to 2-8 on the road this year, Eastern was outscored 13-4 over the final 4:35 of the first half and trailed by 12, 44-32 at the break. Western nailed five straight field goals and six of its final eight of the half to amass its halftime lead. Western's Andoni Alberdi had a basket, three steals and two rebounds over the final five minutes of the half.

Early in the second half, Western put the game away with a 10-2 scoring burst -- the Warriors missing four of five field goals in that stretch -- to push its lead to 18, 56-38 five minutes into the half.

The conference's top offensive and rebounding team, Western sank 52.9 percent of its field goals and outrebounded the Warriors 46-31. Junior Marvin Evans led the hosts with 18 points and nine rebound before fouling out with five minutes left and his team leading by 35 points.

Junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** led Eastern with 19 points -- his third-highest point total this year -- on 8-for-12 shooting from the floor. He also grabbed a team-high nine rebounds. Sophomore center **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** had 16 points (5-for-10 from the floor) and seven rebounds and Western Connecticut transfer **Jason Gunn (BLOOMFIELD)**, a junior forward, had ten points in 14 minutes off the bench. Two Eastern starters did not score and three combined for only seven points 74 minutes.

Eastern host Plymouth State College Saturday at 3 p.m.

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Saturday, January 25, 2003

ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL GAINS KEY LITTLE EAST VICTORY 63-60
Warriors score seven straight points late in game in 63-60 win over Rhode Island

PROVIDENCE, RI -- Junior forward **Steven Bartunek (DURHAM)** keyed a run of seven straight points in the final two minutes with his only three-point field goal of the game as the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team recorded a key 63-60 Little East Conference victory over Rhode Island College Saturday afternoon.

Trailing by four, 59-55 with two minutes left, Eastern (6-11, 4-3) scored seven straight points and outscored Rhode Island (10-6, 3-4) 8-1 the rest of the way to snap a streak of seven straight road losses. Junior post player **Michael Kippnut (MERIDEN)** completed a conventional three-point play with a free throw to pull Eastern to within one 59-58 and Bartunek sank his only three-point field goal in six tries moments later to put the Warriors ahead for good 61-59 with one minute left. Sophomore post player **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** and junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** each hit one of two free throws to help Eastern maintain the lead.

With an opportunity to tie, the Anchormen missed two open three-point field goals in the final seconds. *RIC was 7-1 at home.*

In a battle of two of the conference's three best defensive teams, Eastern gave up the first five points of the game but never trailed by more than six in the first half, pulling into a 27-all tie at the end of a low-scoring first half on Shepard's late bucket.

The teams traded buckets throughout the first ten minutes of the second half before the hosts moved out to a seven-point lead, 51-44 midway through the period with a run of eight straight points capped by junior guard Andre Daley's three-point field goal.

Rhode Island featured two of the conference's three leading rebounders but Eastern battled the hosts to a rebounding stalemate behind Smith (game-high 10 rebounds) and Kippnut (9).

Shepard led Eastern with 13 points while Kippnut and junior forward **Jason Gunn (BLOOMFIELD)** had 12 each. Gunn had last totalled double figures eight games ago. Senior guard **Christopher Morgan (HIGGANUM)** contributed a career-high six rebounds. The Warriors turned the ball over a season-low eight times. Shepard played 36 minutes without a turnover.

Daley led Rhode Island with a game-high 21 points and sophomore forward Jason Harris added 12 points and nine rebounds. Eastern posted the win despite missing 16 of 19 three-pointers and being outscored 15-6 from the foul line. The Anchormen could not capitalize further despite having 13 more free throw attempts than Eastern. Junior forward Johnafer White missed eight of 12 from the stripe.

Eastern has swept the regular-season series from Rhode Island two straight seasons and in four of the last five. The Anchormen had received mention in this week's NCAA Division III Northeast Region rankings.

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

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Thursday, January 23, 2003

ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL DROPS SEVENTH STRAIGHT ROAD DECISION *Westfield State College pulls away to snap eight-game skid and post 87-72 win*

WESTFIELD, Mass. – Senior guards Shawn Jones, Ethan Slavin and Mitch Mitchell combined for 64 points as the Westfield State College men's basketball team snapped an eight-game losing streak with an 87-72 victory over Eastern Connecticut State University Thursday at Parenzo Gymnasium.

The loss is the seventh straight road one for Eastern (5-11) after an opening road victory. The Owls (3-10) had lost eight straight decisions prior to shooting 51 per cent from the floor and outscoring the Warriors 22-11 from the foul line en route to the victory.

Jones, a first-year transfer from Division I Sacred Heart University, scored 22 of his 24 points in the second half – 12 from the foul line – while Slavin had 14 of his 23 over the final 20 minutes.

Jones, the Massachusetts State College Athletic Conference scoring leader with a 24.0 average, was held scoreless from the floor in the first half, making just two free throws. Jones was limited to 4-for-13 shooting in the game by Eastern senior guard **Christopher Morgan (HIGGANUM)** but converted 14 of 16 free throws in the game and also contributed seven rebounds and eight assists.

Slavin hit two of his three pointers in the final 2:20 to help the Owls stave off a late Eastern bid. An inside basket by junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** and a steal and layup by junior forward **Steven Bartunek (DURHAM)** had helped Eastern slice eight points off a ten-point deficit but Slavin and Jones each dropped in two free throws around an Eastern turnover to push the Westfield lead back to six, 72-66 with 2:38 left. Slavin drained a three-pointer moments later and Jones converted a steal into a bucket to seal the Westfield win.

Mitchell kept the Owls close by scoring 11 of his 17 points in the first half. Eastern has moved out to an early 18-10 lead but Westfield answered with nine straight points to assume a one-point advantage with nine minutes left in the first half. The teams traded buckets throughout most of the second half until Westfield scored seven straight points to build a ten-point, 64-54 lead with eight minutes left.

Morgan (4-for-9 three-pointers) and Kipphut each had 18 points for Eastern while junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** added 13 and sophomore center **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** recorded his first double-double since the season-opener. He had 12 points and a career-high 14 rebounds against the institution from which he had transferred from this year. Smith did not miss on five field goal tries in the first half and wound up going 6-for-9 from the floor. On Jan. 9, he was 9-for-9 from the floor against Endicott College.

Eastern visits Rhode Island College Saturday at 3 p.m. in a Little East Conference game.

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little east conference

Tuesday, January 21, 2003

ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL DROPS FIRST HOME LEC GAME
Gordon Shepard scores all 18 of his points in second half in 70-67 loss to Keene

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. -- Two Eastern Connecticut State University starters were held scoreless in the first half and the Keene State College men's basketball team rode an eight-point halftime lead to a 70-67 Little East Conference victory Tuesday at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

The loss is Eastern's (5-10, 3-3 little east) first conference one at home after three wins while the defending conference regular-season champion Owls (11-3, 4-2 little east) snap a two-game conference losing streak. Keene has beaten Eastern three straight times and four of the last five.

Eastern outscored Keene State 9-2 early in the second half to erase an eight-point halftime deficit and take a 41-40 lead. The Owls scored their final five points from the foul line to hold off the Warriors, who had pulled two within two on a three-point field goal by junior forward **Steven Bartunek (DURHAM)** with ten seconds left.

Eastern junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** scored all 18 of his points in the second half, sinking six of eight field goals. Junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** shared game-high scoring totals with Shepard. Two starters did not score in the first half for Eastern, which got only 15 first-half points from its starting five.

Keene State got 17 points and six rebounds from senior guard Derek Swenson and 13 points and six rebounds from senior forward Kyle Purinton. The Owls outscored Eastern 19-6 from the foul line. The Warriors did not shoot a free throw in the first half. Keene missed 13 of 16 three-point field goals and shot just 39.3 per cent from the floor in the game but turned the ball over only ten times.

Eastern visits Westfield State College Thursday at 7 p.m.

little east conference

Saturday, January 18, 2003

ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL USES SECOND-HALF SPURT IN WIN

Freshman Kokoszka sinks three three-pointers in 14-point run in LEC victory

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. -- Freshman guard **Martin Kokoszka (MERIDEN)** hit three consecutive three-point field goals late in the game to fuel a 14-point run that carried the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team to a 72-65 Little East Conference victory over the University of Southern Maine Saturday afternoon at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

The Warriors (5-9, 3-2 little east) moved out to a 12-point lead, 54-42 with five minutes left by scoring 14 straight points. Eastern hit five straight field goals in the run while the Huskies (1-12, 0-5 little east) missed two field goals and turned the ball over twice. Kokosza sank three three-pointers, junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** hit one and junior post player **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** added a two-pointer in the 14-point spurt.

Kokosza, coming off a collegiate-high-14-point effort Thursday at Springfield, scored 11 of his total of 13 points in the second half. He was also 4-for-4 from the foul line in the game.

Ranked fifth in the eight-team conference in free throw percentage, Eastern converted 24 of 34 from the stripe. Shepard was 8-for-10 and Kipphut 6-for-8. Shepard led Eastern with 16 points, Kipphut following Kokosza with 12.

Sophomore guard Jason Levecque of Southern Maine, ranked second in the conference with a 22.6 scoring average, led all players with 22 points while sophomore guard Mike Francoeur added 14 before fouling out with 3:14 left and the Huskies down 58-45. Levecque (10) and Francoeur (6) combined for their team's first 16 points in the second half, with Levecque's bucket with seven minutes left giving Southern Maine its last lead, 42-40 prior to the Warriors' 14-point run.

The Warriors are 3-0 in conference games at home while the Huskies lost their sixth road game this year in seven attempts. Eastern has beaten the Huskies seven straight times and 14 of the last 16.

Eastern hosts Keene State College Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in a Little East Conference game.

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Thursday, January 16, 2003

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE FRESHMAN SINKS ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL 91-73
Six-foot-three inch swingman scores 38 points (7-for-10 from "three") as Pride rout Warriors

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. -- Springfield College freshman forward Derek Yvon scored a career-high 38 points to lead the Pride to a 91-73 victory over Eastern Connecticut State University Thursday evening at Blake Arena.

Yvon's 38 points included 10-for-13 shooting from the floor, 7-for-10 from behind the three-point arc and 11-for-12 from the foul line. He did not commit a turnover in 32 minutes. This was the most points scored by a SC freshman in 11 years. Hassan Robinson had 33 points as a freshman against Bentley on Feb. 15, 1992.

The road loss is the seventh straight for Eastern (4-9), which had snapped a six-game losing streak Tuesday in a 76-75 Little East Conference win over Massachusetts Dartmouth. Eastern has now lost all five meetings against Springfield, dating back to 1975-76. The Pride improved to 6-1 at home with its seventh victory in its last nine outings.

Springfield (8-5) sophomore forward Andrew Anderson netted 14 points and junior guard Gary Greaves chipped in with 11 points. Eastern, which trailed 45-33 at halftime, closed to within five points (58-53) on a basket by junior forward Steven Bartunek (DURHAM) with 11:21 left in the game. Yvon responded with a three pointer at 11:05 keying an 8-0 SC run over the next 1:10.

Freshman guard Martin Kokoszka (MERIDEN) led the Warriors with a collegiate-high 14 points, breaking his previous high of nine, set Dec. 27 and equalled Tuesday. Junior center Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN) added 11 points on 5-of-6 shooting. Kipphut was fresh off Tuesday's career-high 25-point performance when he canned 12 of 19 field goals. Junior forward Melvin King (MIDDLETOWN, NY) came off the bench to score ten points while sophomore center Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN) finished in double figures in rebounding (10) for the second time in three games.

Thanks in part to 12 three-point field goals on 35 attempts (seven players contributing at least one), Eastern was outscored by just two points from the floor but Springfield held a 27-11 advantage from the foul line. The Pride also scored 29 points off 20 Eastern turnovers.

The Warriors return to Little East Conference play Saturday, hosting the University of Southern Maine at 3 p.m.

The Springfield College Sports Information Office contributed to this story.

Springfield College 91, Eastern Conn. 73

EASTERN CONN. (4-9): Christopher Morgan 1-8 0-1 3; Jeroy Smith 2-3 2-3 6; Michael Kipphut 5-6 1-2 11; Gordon Shepard 1-3 2-2 5; Martin Kokoszka 5-10 0-0 14; Jay Weltman 0-1 0-0 0; Steven Bartunek 3-8 0-0 8; Brendan Phelps 1-1 0-0 2; Melvin King 3-5 2-4 10; Frank Williams 2-7 2-2 7; Kelvin Harris 0-2 0-0 0; Tim Kinel 0-0 0-0 0; Jason Gunn 2-6 2-3 7; TOTAL: 25-50 11-17 73.

SPRINGFIELD (8-5): Andrew Anderson 4-8 6-7 14; Derck Yvon 10-13 11-12 38; Kyle Marian 1-3 0-0 2; Gary Greaves 3-6 5-6 11; Jonathan Trant 1-5 1-2 4; Ryan Wilde 1-1 0-0 3; Glenn Pape 1-2 2-2 5; Joel Aponte 0-1 0-2 0; Matt Zeneri 1-4 0-0 2; Mike Decesar 2-5 0-1 4; Brian Riley 0-2 0-0 0; Adetokunbo Adewuyi 3-9 2-3 8; TOTAL: 27-59 27-35 91.

Score at halftime: WC 45-33.

Three-point goals: E 12-35 (Kokoszka 4-7, Bartunek 2-6, King 2-4, Morgan 1-7, Shepard 1-2; Williams 1-3, Gunn 1-3, Weltman 0-1, Harris 0-2); SC 10-21 (Yvon 7-10, Trant 1-3, Wilde 1-1, Pape 1-1, Anderson 0-2, Greaves 0-1, Zeneri 0-3); Rebounds: E 36 (Smith 10, Bartunek 6); SC 39 (Anderson 8); Assists: E 14 (Kokoszka 3); SC 11 (Trant 2, Aponte 2).

little east conference

Tuesday, January 14, 2003

ECSU M-BASKETBALL HOLDS OFF UMASS DARTMOUTH 76-75

Warriors survive late Corsair run to end six-game skid and post Little East Conference victory

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. -- Junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** scored a career-high 25 points as the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team snapped a six-game losing streak with a 76-75 Little East Conference victory over the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Tuesday at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

Eastern (4-8, 2-2 little east) led by 11 points with six minutes left and by nine with under four minutes left but needed to survive two missed UMass (5-7, 1-3) shots in the closing seconds. Leading 76-75, the Warriors missed two shots in the paint on their final possessions but the Corsairs could not capitalize. UMass freshman guard Devon Marianno missed a three-point field goal from the top of the key in the closing seconds and the tipped rebound bounced off the rim as time expired.

A winner of three straight over UMass, Eastern never trailed, racing to a 12-point lead in the first half and taking a nine-point 43-34 advantage into the lockerroom. Kipphut's bucket pushed the lead to 11, 68-57 with six minutes left but the Corsairs converted seven of their next 11 shots, pulling to within one, 76-75 on a basket by Cagle with 42 seconds left. Cagle swished two three-pointers from the top of the key 23 seconds apart to cut six quick points off a nine-point deficit with 1:37 left.

Kipphut, who played with four personal fouls over the final 9:40, hit a key basket and was fouled with 1:30 left. Sophomore guard **Frank Williams (BRANFORD)** came off the bench to complete the three-point play by sinking a free throw after Kipphut left the court momentarily due to the blood rule. Williams' free throw made it 76-70.

Kipphut hit 12 of 19 field goals en route to his team-high total while sophomore center **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** had 13 points and eight rebounds. Junior forward **Steven Bartunek (DURHAM)** led Eastern with a career-high ten rebounds as the smaller Warriors held a 36-32 rebounding advantage.

The 6-foot-4 inch Cagle led all players with 28 points (10-for-19 from the floor) and matched Bartunek with ten rebounds. Six-foot-inch senior center Sean Walsh added 20 points for the Corsairs.

Eastern visits Springfield College Thursday at 7 p.m.

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little east conference

Saturday, January 11, 2003

ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL DROPS SIXTH STRAIGHT DECISION

Warriors limited to 16 first-half points in 60-43 conference loss at Massachusetts Boston

BOSTON, Mass. -- The University of Massachusetts Boston men's basketball team snapped an early tie with nine straight points en route to a 60-43 Little East Conference victory over Eastern Connecticut State University Saturday afternoon at the Clark Athletic Center.

The loss is the sixth straight for Eastern (3-8, 1-2 little east), all of the setbacks coming on the road. The Warriors had last scored less than 43 points in a game Jan. 24, 1995 in a 90-41 home loss to Massachusetts Dartmouth -- a span of 201 games. The Beacons (6-6, 1-2 little east) have won three of their last five.

The Warriors, whose only lead was by a point in the opening minutes, gave up nine straight points to fall back 22-13 with four minutes left in the first half. Sophomore guard Roger Perry hit both of his three-point field goals to cap the run which found Eastern scoreless for over six minutes.

Trailing by 20, 36-16 at halftime, Eastern chipped away, cutting eight points off the lead to get to within 12, 46-34 with five minutes left. At that point, sophomore guard Roderic Joseph completed a conventional three-point play with a free throw, then sank both ends of a one-and-one try 22 seconds later to push the UMass lead to 17, 51-34 with 3:33 left.

Led by Joseph (15 points, four rebounds) and Perry (12 points, four rebounds), five UMass players came off the bench to score 35 points and grab 17 rebounds. Five Eastern reserves combined for just 12 points. Those five players combined for 19 rebounds, with sophomore post player **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** accounting for a career-high 13. UMass sophomore center Billy Allen had 13 points and a team-high 12 rebounds.

Eastern, which missed ten of 12 three-pointers and six of 13 free throws, got 15 points from junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)**, who was the only Eastern player in double figures.

Eastern hosts Massachusetts Dartmouth Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

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UMass Boston 60, Eastern Conn. 43

EASTERN CONN. (3-8, 1-2): Jason Gunn 1-3 0-0 2; Michael Kipphut 3-9 3-6 9; Martin Kokoszka 1-4 0-0 2; Gordon Shepard 6-12 3-5 15; Christopher Morgan 1-3 0-0 3; Steven Bartunek 0-6 0-0 0; Melvin King 0-2 1-2 1; Frank Williams 3-7 0-0 7; Kelvin Harris 0-0 0-0 0; Jeroy Smith 2-9 0-0 4. **TOTAL: 17-55 7-13 43.**

UMASS BOSTON (6-6, 1-2): Geoff Ponitz 2-8 0-0 4; Paul Kemp 2-3 0-0 4; Billy Allen 4-7 5-7 13; Olvao Billy Gomes 1-3 2-2 4; Lester Robinson 0-4 0-0 0; Roderic J. Joseph 5-10 4-6 15; Roger Perry 5-10 0-1 10; Yassin Osman 0-4 0-0 0; Eric Summerville 2-9 1-1 6; P.J. Thompson 1-3 0-0 2. **TOTAL: 22-61 12-17 60.**

Score at halftime: MB, 36-16.

Three-point field goals: E 2-12 (Morgan 1-3, Williams 1-2, Kipphut 0-2, Bartunek 0-4, King 0-1); MB 4-16 (Perry 2-6, Summerville 1-2, Joseph 1-3, Ponitz 0-2, Gomes 0-1); Rebounds: E 42 (Smith 13), MB 42 (Allen 12); Assists: E 10 (Smith 3); MB 14 (Gomes 5).

little east conference

Thursday, January 9, 2003

CURRIER LIFTS ENDICOTT PAST ECSU M-BASKETBALL

Warriors miss 11 of 13 free throws in dropping fifth straight

BEVERLY, Mass. -- Junior guard Jeremy Currier scored 17 of his game-high 23 points in the second half to spark the Endicott College basketball team to a 74-64 win over Eastern Connecticut State University Thursday.

The loss is the fifth straight for Eastern (3-7), playing its first game after a 12-day layoff. Endicott (3-5), coming off a 32-point loss to Bates Tuesday, snapped a two-game losing streak.

Endicott scored the first seven points of the second half to build an eight-point, 37-29 lead and later scored 11 straight points -- six coming on a pair of three-pointers by Currier -- to move out to a 12-point 59-47 lead with seven minutes left.

Currier connected on eight of 11 field goals (4-for-5 from three-point range) en route to his game-high point total. Only five Power Gull players scored points, but Currier was followed in scoring by sophomore post player James Leveque and sophomore guard Josh Oxtan, who had 16 points each. Leveque was 6-for-8 from the floor and grabbed nine rebounds while Oxtan was 10-for-10 from the line -- all tries coming in the second half -- and handed out six assists. Senior forward Chris Lacasse was scoreless but led all players with 11 rebounds.

The Warriors outscored Endicott by five points from the floor but were outscored by 15 from the free throw line. Eastern missed its first 11 free throws -- failing to score from the stripe until just three minutes remained -- and was just 2-for-13 from the line.

First-year sophomore post player **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** came off the bench to sink all nine of his field goals and finish with a collegiate-high 18 points. Junior post player **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** followed Smith with 15 points. Each had eight rebounds.

Eastern returns to Little East Conference play Saturday when it visits Massachusetts Boston at 3 p.m.

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Endicott College 74, Eastern Conn. 64

EASTERN CONN. (3-7): Gordon Shepard 3-13 0-0 8; Steven Bartunek 1-2 0-0 2; Martin Kokoszka 1-4 0-0 2; Melvin King 2-7 0-0 6; Christopher Morgan 3-9 0-0 9; Jason Gunn 2-5 0-4 4; Michael Kipphut 6-13 2-4 15; Jeroy Smith 9-9 0-5 18; **TOTAL: 27-62 2-13 64.**

ENDICOTT (3-5): Carlos Nunez 0-2 0-0 0; Zach Ellis 0-0 0-0 0; Chris Lacasse 0-5 0-0 0; Jeremy Currier 8-11 3-4 23; Evan McDermott 0-1 0-0 0; Matt George 5-6 0-1 10; Tom Foster 4-8 0-0 9; James Leveque 6-8 4-7 16; Josh Oxtan 3-9 10-10 16. **TOTAL: 26-50 17-22 74.**

Score at halftime: En, 30-29.

Three-point field goals: EC 8-22 (Morgan 3-7, Shepard 2-4, King 2-4, Kipphut 1-3, Bartunek 0-1, Kokoszka 0-2, Gunn 0-1); En 5-10 (Currier 4-5, Foster 1-3, Nunez 0-1, Oxtan 0-2); Rebounds: EC 33 (Kipphut 8, Smith 8, Shepard 6); En 38 (Lacasse 11, Leveque 9). Assists: EC 12 (Shepard 6); En 17 (Oxtan 6).

Friday, December 27, 2002

MONTCLAIR STATE DRUBS ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL 73-47
Red Hawks score 15 straight points in first half of MSU tournament opener

UPPER MONTCLAIR, NJ -- The Montclair State University men's basketball team scored 15 straight points and 19 of the final 23 points of the first half in routing Eastern Connecticut State University 73-47 Friday in the opening round of the Montclair State University Holiday Tournament at Panzer Gymnasium.

Montclair (8-0) meets Baruch College (9-0) in Saturday's championship game at 3 p.m. while Eastern (3-5) meets Susquehanna University (3-4) at 1 p.m. in the consolation game. Baruch pulled away for a 79-68 win over Susquehanna earlier Friday. Montclair and Baruch met in the opening round of last year's ECAC regional tournament.

Eastern, a loser of three straight, trailed by one, 16-15 before the Red Hawks reeled off 15 straight points -- the Warriors turning the ball over eight times in that stretch -- and outscored Eastern over the final nine minutes of the half to move out to a 16-point, 35-19 halftime lead.

The Warriors committed 25 turnovers and missed 11 of 13 three-point field goals and managed only six offensive rebounds.

Eastern junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** led Eastern with ten points, sinking half of his ten field goal attempts. Freshman guard **Martin Kokoszka (MERIDEN)** had a career-high nine points on 4-of-7 shooting and first-year sophomore center **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** pulled down a team-high nine rebounds.

Six-foot-ten-inch junior Jerome Trawick of Montclair led both teams with 17 points on 8-for-10 shooting from the floor in 13 minutes. Tawick, a first-year transfer, scored his team's first eight points -- staking his team to a quick 6-0 lead. He hit his first four field goals in the first four minutes and sat out the rest of the half.

Saturday, December 28, 2002

EASTERN MEN'S BASKETBALL FOURTH AT MONTCLAIR

Warriors shoot 35.4 per cent from floor in 74-60 consolation-round loss

UPPERMONTCLAIR, NJ – A four-minute Eastern Connecticut State University scoring drought in the first half helped Susquehanna University run off ten straight points on the way to a 74-60 victory over the Warriors Saturday afternoon in the consolation round of the Montclair State University Holiday Tournament at Panzer Gymnasium.

Leading 11-10, Eastern (3-6) turned the ball over three times and was held scoreless over a four-minute stretch as the Crusaders (4-4) built a nine-point, 20-11 lead. Eastern never re-gained the lead, trailing by as many as 19 with six minutes left. In the second half, Eastern never got closer than its eight-point halftime deficit.

In a 73-47 loss to Montclair in the opening round Friday, Eastern went six minutes without a point while the host Red Hawks scored 15 straight en route to the rout.

Against Susquehanna, Eastern shot just 35.4 per cent from the floor and missed 17 of 23 three-point tries. In the tournament, the Warriors shot just 35.9 per cent from the floor, 22.2 per cent on 36 three-point attempts. A loser of four straight, Eastern has averaged only 54 points in that stretch, failing to clear the 60-point mark each time.

Junior forward **Melvin King** (MIDDLETOWN, NY) represented Eastern on the all-tournament team after coming off the bench to record career-highs in points (a team-high 16) and rebounds (seven) against Susquehanna. The 6-foot-4 inch King scored 14 of his points in the second half, when he was 4-for-7 from the floor. Junior forward **Jason Gunn** (BLOOMFIELD) added ten points and four rebounds and junior guard **Gordon Shepard** (WATERBURY) contributed nine points, four rebounds and four assists. The team's other three starters managed just 13 points on 5-for-20 shooting from the floor.

A basket in the paint by King eight minutes into the game gave Eastern its last lead, 11-10. At that point, all-tournament selection Walter Fowler, a 6-foot-9 inch freshman, scored four of his 16 points to spark a run of ten straight Susquehanna points that powered the Crusaders to a nine-point, 20-11 lead with eight minutes left in the half.

Montclair State (9-0) won the battle of unbeaten in the final, downing Baruch College (9-1) 75-66. Joining King and Fowler on the all-tournament team were junior center Jerome Trawick (MVP) and senior guard Ben Martinez of Montclair State and junior guard Joe Longobardi and senior guard John Alesi of Baruch College.

Eastern visits Endicott College Jan. 9 at 7 p.m.

little east conference

Saturday, December 14, 2002

SECOND-HALF RUN LIFTS PLYMOUTH OVER EASTERN 75-60
20-8 burst sparks Panthers past Warriors in Little East men's basketball

PLYMOUTH, NH -- Six different players contributed points in a 20-8 run that carried the Plymouth State College men's basketball team to a 75-60 victory over Eastern Connecticut State University in Little East Conference action Saturday afternoon at Foley Gymnasium.

Eastern (3-4, 1-1 little east) led by as many as ten in the first half and by one, 42-41 six minutes into the second half before Plymouth (7-1, 2-0 little east) scored nine straight point on the way to a 20-8 run which netted the Panthers an 11-point, 61-50 advantage with seven minutes left. Eastern could get no closer than six the rest of the way as Plymouth won for the fifth straight time over Eastern.

Newcomers scored ten of the 20 points in the 20-8 run for Plymouth, which shot 57.1 per cent from the floor in the second half, 50.0 in the game. In the 20-8 run, freshman Peter Hutchins sank a three-point field goal, first-year sophomore Matt Budrow added three points, first-year sophomore Anthony Oglesby and freshman Kevin Boutilier a bucket each. Senior Kenny Stewart had six of the points in that stretch and junior Ryan Chicoine four.

In the first half, Eastern outscored Plymouth 12-2 to break from a tie and build a 26-16 lead with six minutes left in the half. Senior guard **Christopher Morgan (HIGGANUM)** began and ended the run with three-point field goals and first-year junior forward **Steven Bartunek (DURHAM)** added four points with a basket in the paint and two free throws.

Sophomore Nick Pelotte and Stewart had 16 points each for Plymouth, an ECAC New England Division III Tournament finalist last year. Stewart was 6-for-9 from the floor and hit all four of his free throw tries. He also had six assists. Morgan had 13 points and Bartunek a collegiate-high 12. Junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** added ten points and six rebounds before fouling out with Eastern trailing 61-55 with 5:38 left. First-year sophomore center **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** led both teams with ten rebounds. Junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)**, Eastern's leading scorer with a 16.5 average, was limited to a season-lw six points.

Eastern faces Montclair State University Dec. 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the opening round of the Montclair State Holiday Tournament.

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little east conference

Thursday, December 12, 2002

OUTTEN'S 35 SECOND-HALF POINTS DROP EASTERN

Senior guard scores 29 straight Worcester State points in 64-48 men's basketball win

WORCESTER, Mass. - Senior guard Isaac Outten scored 35 of his 37 points in the second half to power the Worcester State College men's basketball team to a 64-48 non-conference victory over Eastern Connecticut State University Thursday at Lancer Gymnasium.

Outten, who did not start the game, started the second half and scored 35 points - including 29 straight Worcester State points - to rally the Lancers (3-4) from a 21-14 halftime deficit and break a two-game losing streak. Worcester outscored Eastern 15-8 to open the second half and tied the game 29-all and took the lead for good 34-32 when Outten hit the first of five second-half three-point field goals. The 6-foot-2 inch Outten, who joined the team at semester break last year after an All-America junior college career, outscored Eastern 35-27 in the second half, mostly scoring on perimeter jumpers. He converted 11 of 22 tries from the floor in the game, including five of seven from three-point range.

Worcester had twice as many turnovers as Eastern (3-3) but shot 46.8 per cent from the floor, outscored Eastern 15-3 from the foul line and outrebounded the Warriors 45-33. Eastern shot just 28.6 per cent from the floor, including 5-for-29 from three-point range.

Eastern led after the first minutes of the first half, taking a seven-point lead into the lockerroom after scoring seven of the final nine points of the stanza. Eastern led by nine after the opening bucket of the second half but Worcester State outscored Eastern 8-2 to pull to within three, 25-22 before Outten took over by scoring 29 straight Lancer points and 31 of 33 as Worcester rolled up a 14-point, 58-44 lead with 4:44 left.

Junior guard Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY) led Eastern with 17 points and junior center Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN) added ten. Eastern's other three starters combined for only 15 points on 5-for-26 shooting from the floor.

Eastern visits Plymouth State College Saturday at 3 p.m. in Little East Conference action in the final game of the first semester.

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little east conference

Saturday, December 7, 2002

ECSU M-BASKETBALL DOWNS ANCHORMEN IN LEC OPENER
Shepard, Kipphut total career-highs in points in 86-81 victory

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. -- Junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** and junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** each totalled career-highs in points to spark the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team to an 86-81 victory over Rhode Island College Saturday in the Little East Conference opener for both schools at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium.

Eastern (3-2, 1-0 little east) never trailed after the opening minutes, using a 19-6 run over a 12-minute span of the first half to open up a 13-point, 23-10 lead with 6:34 left in the first half. Eastern pushed the lead to as many as 20 in the second half. Rhode Island (2-3, 0-1 little east) cut the gap to five with just over a minute left but Eastern sank eight straight free throws -- six straight by Shepard -- to push the lead back to 11, 82-71 with 39 seconds left.

Shepard exceeded his previous career high of 23 with a game-high 27 points. Shepard hit seven of eight field goals (4-for-5 from three-point range) and nine of ten free throws. He had 19 of his points in the second half when Eastern converted 57.1 per cent of its field goal attempts. With 20 points, Kipphut exceeded his previous career best by one. Kipphut also pulled down a career-high 14 rebounds.

Senior guard **Christopher Morgan (HIGGANUM)** matched Shepard with four three-point field goals and finished with 14 points and four assists. Junior forward **Jason Gunn (BLOOMFIELD)** had ten points in 20 minutes before fouling out with Eastern leading 63-52 with 6:53 left.

Rhode Island, which won just one game last year, had five players in double figures and outrebounded Eastern 48-40. The Anchormen, who started four newcomers, got 16 points and eight rebounds from 6-foot-7 inch junior forward Johnafer White and 12 points and 13 rebounds from sophomore forward Jason Harris.

Rhode Island shot just 24.2 per cent from the floor in the first half and (1-for-11 from "three") and committed 13 turnovers as the Warriors raced to a 14-point, 34-20 advantage. Kipphut had 12 points and seven rebounds in the first half.

Eastern visits Worcester State Thursday at 8 p.m.

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little east conference

Tuesday, December 3, 2002

WESLEYAN DEFEATS EASTERN CONN. IN OT
Johnson leads Cardinals with 30 points, Morgan has 22 for Warriors

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. -- Junior forward **Kanem Johnson (NEW HAVEN)** had a game-high 30 points as Wesleyan University rallied to defeat Eastern Connecticut State University, 96-92 in overtime, in a non-conference game at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium Tuesday.

The Cardinals (4-2) have won four straight games since losing two in the season-opening Lopata Classic and are 6-1 against the Warriors in their last seven meetings.

Junior guard **Keala Mills (LENOX, MA)** made an acrobatic three-point field goal with 22 seconds left in the second half to tie the score at 80-80. He was fouled on the play and missed the free throw. The Warriors called timeout and set up a play that resulted in a missed three-pointer by junior forward **Steve Bartunek (DURHAM)** with one second left.

Eastern (2-2) led 90-88 with 1:57 left in the first overtime on Bartunek's third three-point field goal. The Cardinals proceeded to turn a two-point deficit (90-88) into a four-point victory (96-92) using an 8-2 closing run over the final 1:23. Johnson had two points and two rebounds during that final sequence.

Senior guard **Kahree Brown (BRONX, NY)** had a double-double with 23 points and a game-high 10 rebounds. Mills, the team's leading scorer through the first five games (24.0 ppg), was held scoreless by ECSU senior guard **Chris Morgan (HIGGANUM)** for the first 39:38. Mills went on to score nine of Wesleyan's final 19 points, including six in overtime.

The Warriors went on a 9-0 run over a three-minute span to turn a two-point deficit (63-61) into a seven-point advantage, 70-63, with 4:37 left in the second half. Junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** had six of his 10 points during the spurt. This is the third straight game Kipphut has scored in double-figures. Morgan had three of his season-high 22 points during the run. He went 8-for-13 from the field, including 3-for-8 from behind the three-point arc, and 3-for-3 from the line in 43 minutes.

Morgan was followed in scoring by junior forward **Jason Gunn (BLOOMFIELD)** with 14 points and junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** and Bartunek with 11 each. Sophomore center **Jeroy Smith (NEW HAVEN)** had 10 points and six rebounds in 25 minutes off the bench.

Eastern outrebounded Wesleyan, 40-39. The Cardinals outshot the Warriors, 52.2 percent to 44.0 percent.

ECSU hosts Rhode Island College in its Little East Conference opener at 3 p.m. Saturday.

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little east conference

Tuesday, November 26, 2002

ECSU MEN'S BASKETBALL UPENDS TRINITY 72-68

Warriors score final seven points to win first road game under Geitner

HARTFORD, Conn. – The Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team scored the final seven points of the game to upend Trinity College 72-68 Tuesday at Ray Oosting Gymnasium.

Trailing 68-65, Eastern (2-1) held the Bantams (1-2) scoreless over the final 3:15 to defeat the Bantams on their home court for the first time after five road losses in the series. The Warriors scored their final eight points of the game from the foul line on 14 tries.

Trailing throughout, Trinity scored ten straight points to assume a 68-65 lead but missed five shots and turned the ball over once on its final six possessions as Eastern won its first road game in its first try under new head coach Bill Geitner.

With Eastern trailing 68-65, junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** hit both ends of a two-shot foul to pull Eastern to within one. Freshman guard **Martin Kokoszka (MERIDEN)** then came up with Eastern's first steal of the half and junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)** tied the game with 1:41 left when he sank the second of two shots after being fouled while driving the baseline.

The teams then exchanged missed shots before Kokoszka put Eastern ahead for good 69-68 when he hit the first of two free throws with 41.8 seconds left after Kipphut had grabbed an offensive rebound of a missed Eastern three-point field goal attempt with 50 seconds left. Senior guard **Christopher Morgan (HIGGANUM)** sealed the win when he swished both ends of a two-shot foul with 5.7 seconds left, providing the final four-point margin. Eastern free throw shooters enjoyed the 1-and-1 bonus over the final nine minutes as Trinity was whistled for 14 fouls in the half. Trinity did not reach the bonus situation in either half.

Morgan was just 3-for-12 from the floor but sank all six of his free throws and his man-to-man defense helped limit Trinity senior forward Ryan Uszenski to just 11 points on 5-for-16 shooting from the floor. Uszenski had scored 37 points in his team's first two games.

(more)

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Eastern outscored Trinity 25-2 from the foul line. The Warriors were awarded 32 attempts, the Bantams only seven. Shepard led Eastern with 14 points, Kipphut and Morgan adding 13 each. Shepard, the team's No. 1 free throw shooter the past two years, was 8-for-11 from the stripe -- sinking the second of two attempts with 23.1 seconds left that gave Eastern a 70-68 lead. Shepard also contributed two defensive rebounds in the closing seconds.

Trinity, which returned only one starter from last year's NCAA tournament qualifier, got 16 points from freshman forward Tyler Rhoten. Rhoten managed only four after the half, however. Sophomore forward Darren Baker added 14 points for Trinity, 12 coming in the second half. Baker fueled the comeback for Trinity, which had trailed by nine with eight minutes left. Baker scored three baskets in a span of 1:34, capitalizing on consecutive Eastern turnovers and an Eastern missed field goal. His basket from in close with 4:10 left gave the Bantams their first lead (66-65) since the third minute of the game.

Eastern hosts Wesleyan University December 3 at Geissler Gymnasium at 6 p.m.

little east conference

Saturday, November 23, 2002

SALEM STATE DEFEATS ECSU FOR SULINSKI TITLE

King records a career-high 13 points, Shepard named all-tournament

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. - Junior forward **Bobby Michalczyk (LOWELL, MA)** had game-highs of 23 points and 10 rebounds as the Salem State College men's basketball team defeated Eastern Connecticut State University, 78-66, in the Nancy K. Sulinski '76 Memorial Basketball Tournament championship game at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium Saturday.

The Vikings, 2-0 on the season, have won all four of their appearances in the tournament final (1990, 1994, 1996, 2002). The Warriors (1-1) finished second for the 13th time.

Michalczyk, the 2002 Sulinski tournament Most Valuable Player, had 43 points and 18 rebounds over the two-day event. Junior guard **Ryan Connor (WORCESTER, MA)** and sophomore forward **Tom Sullivan (AUBURN, MA)** joined Michalczyk as the Salem State all-tournament team representatives.

ECSU led for the final time, 40-39, on a made free throw by junior forward **Steve Bartunek (DURHAM)**. Salem State proceeded to go on a 17-2 run over the next six minutes to build a 56-42 lead. Michalczyk had seven points during the spurt.

The Warriors cut the lead to seven, 71-64, on a three-point field goal by junior forward **Melvin King (MIDDLETOWN, NY)** with 1:16 left. King had a team- and career-high 13 points. Salem State closed out the game scoring seven of the final nine points from the foul line.

Eastern went on a 15-5 first-half run turning a 10-point deficit into the fourth tie of the half, 25-25. King had seven of his 10 first-half points in the run, including a three-pointer to tie the score. The 6-foot-4 King tied the score at 27-27 with a field goal, blocked a shot seconds later and converted a free throw with 14 seconds left in the first half to give the Warriors a 28-27 lead. The Vikings went into the half with a 29-28 lead as Michalczyk made a basket with two seconds left.

Sullivan (15 points), Connor (13), junior guard **Ray Williams (MIDDLETOWN)** (11) and freshman guard **Willie Phillips (BOSTON, MA)** (10) joined Michalczyk in double-figure scoring.

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Junior guard **Gordon Shepard (WATERBURY)**, the Eastern representative on the all-tournament team, totaled nine points and five assists. Junior center **Michael Kipphut (MERIDEN)** nearly had a double-double with 11 points and nine rebounds.

The Warriors outshot the Vikings, 48.1 to 43.3 percent. Salem State outrebounded Eastern, 38-27, and made 10 more free throws (19-9).

Eastern will travel to Hartford for a 7:30 p.m. Tuesday game against Trinity College.

Elms Wins Third-Place Game

Junior guard Chellvonto Little (DANBURY) had 18 points and senior forward Richard Doppman (CONWAY, MA) totaled 17 points and 11 rebounds as Elms College defeated Fitchburg State College, 69-64, in the third-place game of the Nancy Sulinski '76 Memorial Basketball Tournament Saturday.

Fitchburg (0-2) held its last lead at 40-39 with 17:50 left in the second half. Elms (1-1) went on a 9-1 run over the next three minutes to build a seven-point lead, 48-41. Doppman had five points during the spurt.

The Falcons cut the lead to one at 48-47 and 61-60. The Blazers answered with runs of 7-0 (55-47) and 5-0 (66-60).

Fitchburg senior guard Hakim Johnson (BOSTON, MA) had a team-high 13 points. Johnson and Doppman were named to the all-tournament team.