

LADY LANCER BASKETBALL



By: Steven Stock

A new basketball season always brings the emotions of hopefulness, excitement, and the pursuit of finishing the season on top. With a few weeks in and eight games played, there are two statements true so far about Lady Lancer basketball: they're improved and they have so much more to improve. Belleville East lost impactful seniors last year and lost some very good players due to transfers. But they have shown they can compete. Numerous players have stepped up like Daja Smith, Aury Brierton, India Vincent, and more. As the season goes on, it is all about improving as the Lancers have potential to make some "noise". Through the first eight games, the Lancers hold a 2-6 record. Now, a fan would have to dive deeper into the box scores or watch the games to see the real story because 2-6 does not do the team justice. They've played so much

LADY LANCER BASKETBALL



better and look like a team that is working hard to improve. Let's break down the first weeks of the season.

The Lady Lancers started in the Columbia Tip-Off Tournament with a record of 1-2. They lost on opening night to a solid Father McGivney team, 47-37. "We had a lot of nerves and an insane amount of turnovers. First game and just feeling ourselves out. We like to play quick combined with the first game, which led to a lot of turnovers and a tough loss", Head Coach Amanda Kemezys discussed. Belleville East would bounce back with a dominating win over Alton Marquette 63-27 where freshman Abi Monroe led the team in scoring with 18 points and shooting 8-14 from the field. Monroe would continue her dominance into the next game versus Triad where she would put up 25 points, a freshman single-game record, in a narrow 40-36 loss. "She's been just incredible. I've been watching her for a few years and have just been waiting for the day for her to be a Lancer. She's a great player who has really improved her game" Coach

LADY LANCER BASKETBALL



Kemezys on Abi Monroe. Monroe still has only played eight games as a Lancer, but it looks like she's been on the team for a while. There's still so much to learn and improve in your freshman year, but she is off to a great start eight games through as she is averaging 11.5 PPG (leading the team) on 42% from the field, 30% from 3, and 4 rebounds per game.

It's not just Abi Monroe who's putting the ball in the basket, numerous players are. "Our scoring is much more balanced this year. We really have some girls who have stepped up and have got smarter basketball IQ-wise. We have players who have bought in. We had 22 made baskets on 18 assists in the Alton Marquette game which really shows we got unselfish players. We got girls who want to pass the basketball. It's great to have a night where any player can be the leading scorer" Coach Kemezys said.

The Lancers got back in the win column against Granite City, 66-34 where junior Taylor Smith had a big game dropping 21 points. The Lady Lancers would then run into

LADY LANCER BASKETBALL



very tough competition and some close games. Francis Howell out of Missouri came to town on a Tuesday night and it was a battle. Both teams of girls just go back and forth, none of them ever backing down. In a 32-minute battle, the Francis Howell Vikings got it done but just barely, winning 55-54. This will serve as another learning experience for Belleville East, going head-to-toe with a very similar competitive team this early in the season. The Lancers would then take on Collinsville at home, to open up conference play. After holding a one-point lead going into the fourth quarter, Belleville East's offense went ice cold, only scoring one point and not making a single field goal in the final eight minutes.

The Lancers have since lost a close one in Edwardsville where the Lancers were down by 12 in the third quarter and cut it to five going into the fourth quarter. However, the Tigers responded with an 8-0 run to open up the 4th and held on by 11. The Lady Lancers also lost to Althoff, 58-37. The young season is still very bright for the Lady

LADY LANCER BASKETBALL



Lancers. They've already shown so much improvement and that they will do anything it takes to get to the next level. It will be fun and exciting to see what the girls can do and how much they get better. After all, it's still December and we have over two months of basketball left to play.