

No. 2 Jayhawks easily beat Holly Cross, 61-57 at home



LAWRENCE (AP) — It was just one more reason for Kansas fans to love storied old Allen Fieldhouse.

Known as one of the most difficult places to play in the country, the arena where Wilt Chamberlain got his start helped make the difference Tuesday night when No. 2 Kansas beat Holy Cross 61-57 in the Preseason NIT.

The Crusaders were putting up a good fight, just as they had done last March when they threw a scare into the top-seeded Jayhawks in the first round of the NCAA tournament.

But then Nick Collison and Kirk Hinrich triggered a 24-4 run at the end of the half and the sellout crowd of more than 16,000 found its voice.

"It is the loudest crowd I have ever heard," Holy Cross' Tim Szatko said. "When the noise got real loud, we just gave in. The last 11 minutes of the first half was the difference in the game."

Collison had 20 points and eight rebounds as Kansas coach Roy Williams raised his record in the Preseason NIT to 13-0. The Jayhawks will host North Carolina-Greensboro in the second round Friday, with the winner advancing to the semifinals in New York on Nov. 27.

In Tuesday night's other Preseason NIT games, No. 8 Florida beat Louisiana Tech 76-55 and North Carolina-Greensboro downed Wagner 84-65.

On Wednesday night, Rutgers is at North Carolina and No. 11 Xavier is at Stanford in second-round games, while Eastern Illinois is at Florida on

Thursday night.

Williams led the Jayhawks to Preseason NIT titles in 1989, '93 and '97.

"I thought the whole game really was our defense, particularly in the first half," Williams said. "We came out early in the second half and we were awful offensively. Give their defense some credit. They got back to a nine- or 10-point game and then after that we settled down and got back into a groove defensively."

Williams was not particularly happy with how Collison played.

"I'll grant you, 20 points and eight rebounds, just about anybody in the country would take that and call it a good night," he said. "But Nick just didn't play well."

The 6-foot-10 senior missed his first four shots before connecting early in a 24-4 run that closed out the first half and put the Big 12 preseason favorites firmly in command of the team favored in the Patriot League.

"Six-of-15 (from the field)," Col-

lison said. "I didn't shoot the ball as well as I'd like to. But I felt like I stayed aggressive."

Collison and Kirk Hinrich, seniors being counted on to make up for the loss of All-American Drew Gooden, also fueled a run in the second half as the Jayhawks won their 30th straight home opener.

Williams had cautioned his team not to forget that Holy Cross gave them a game last March.

"Sometimes you get into that mode, 'Well, we'll show them this time,'" he said. "I cautioned them not to think that. Holy Cross is a good team."

Keith Langford finished with 15 points, while Hinrich, a 6-3 guard and preseason All-American, and Wayne Simien each had 13.

No. 8 Florida 76, Louisiana Tech 55

Freshman Matt Walsh had 26 points, five assists, three rebounds and four steals to lead the Gators, who improved to 7-0 in openers under coach Billy Donovan.

Florida played without senior guard Brett Nelson, junior forward Bonell Colas and freshman Christian Drejer of Denmark, but the Gators didn't miss them as sophomore David Lee had 10 rebounds, five assists and three blocked shots, while senior Justin Hamilton finished with 21 points.

The Bulldogs kept it close for about 15 minutes, then Lee, Walsh and Hamilton combined for an 11-2 run to give the Gators a 40-26 halftime lead.

Cowgirls begin practice for winter season



Practice opened Monday for the winter sports, and Tuesday Cowgirls Coach Connie Livengood was taking her team through a series of defensive drills and having the girls practice doing a pick-and-roll. The Cowgirls open season play on Friday, Dec. 6, when they host Imperial, Neb.

Photo by Tom Betz / The Goodland Daily News

Rockies trade Larry Walker to Arizona

IRVING, Texas (AP) — The Colorado Rockies put together their second big trade within a week, agreeing Tuesday to a tentative deal that would send Larry Walker to Arizona for Matt Williams and three other players.

Arizona also would send first baseman Erubiel Durazo, outfielder David Dellucci and reliever Bret Prinz to Colorado for the 1997 National League MVP.

Walker and Williams, both five-time All-Stars, must waive no-trade clauses for the deal to be completed. Diamond-

backs owner Jerry Colangelo said the teams were granted a 72-hour window Tuesday to finalize the swap.

"I met with Matt this morning. I'm going to speak with Larry tonight," Colangelo said after arriving at the baseball owners' meetings. "Colorado is going to meet with Matt tomorrow in Phoenix."

Arizona, which won the World Series in its fourth season in 2001, won the NL West again this year but was swept by St. Louis in the first round of

the playoffs.

The Rockies finished fourth in the NL West this year at 73-89, 25 games behind the Diamondbacks. Colorado chairman Jerry McMorris said it was difficult to part with Walker, an outfielder who has won three National League batting titles.

"He's our most popular player," McMorris said. "I think our baseball people felt we had a lot of holes and this gives us four players for one. And Larry's 36 years old."

Chiefs face Seahawks Sunday

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — This week's trip to Seattle represents a first for the Kansas City Chiefs.

The Seahawks (3-7) will be the only team the Chiefs have played all season with a losing record. Everyone else has been .500 or better.

Might a letdown be in the offing? The Chiefs (5-5) are coming off a tough stretch of close, hard-fought games against a succession of playoff contenders in San Diego, Denver, Oakland, San Francisco and Buffalo.

"NFL players, specifically Kansas City Chiefs football players, are human. They are susceptible to letdowns," coach Dick Vermeil said Tuesday.

"I don't expect it. I think I know the character and quality of kids on this football team. And I think they feel a sense of urgency. They recognize the

opportunity as well as everyone else in our organization does. They know if we're going to end up being playoff-competitive in December, we'd better keep winning games."

A victory would be just the second time all season the Chiefs were able to

win two in a row.

"I think we can go up there and win," Vermeil said. "Any football team is susceptible to an emotional letdown. I think this team is less susceptible, though I'm not naive enough to believe it couldn't happen."

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