



Elizabeth Schneider/Old Gold and Black

Sophomore Slam

Sophomore forward Josh Howard slams home two points in the Deacons' 66-55 victory over South Carolina State. Howard led the Deacons by scoring 14 points against the Bulldogs.

Men

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press, a change of pace that gave the Deacs problems.

Down by 19 at 57-38, the Bulldogs forced a pair of turnovers with full-court pressure, and Dexter Hall's two free throws cut the Demon Deacon lead to 10 with less than five minutes in regulation.

The Deacs were able to hold off the feisty Bulldogs down the stretch, though, and when Whitt fouled out with 51.9 seconds left, it took the wind out of the Bulldogs'

sails.

Howard converted both free throws in the double bonus, and the Deacons killed the rest of the clock, escaping with 66-55 victory.

Leading the Deacons in scoring were Songaila and Howard, who each tallied 14 points on the evening.

Songaila came through with a double-double on the evening, leading the Deacs with a dozen rebounds.

Dawson, the team's leading scorer at this point in the season, added 13, including two three pointers from long range.

Whitt scored a game-high 21 for the Bulldogs, with Mapp also

reaching double digits with 13.

Despite the narrow victory, the Deacons were promoted from 12th to 11th in both of the nation's major polls, by virtue of North Carolina's 17-point defeat at the hands of Kentucky in Chapel Hill Dec. 2.

But Odom knows that his team will have to play much better against Kansas tonight if the Deacs expect to run their record to 7-0.

"They present some problems that we have not seen," Odom said.

"They're very big, they're very deep, they're very well-coached, and they're very capable of winning the rest of the games on their schedule."

Pressbox

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Michigan's lead climbed as high as 11 with just over 16 minutes to go, as the Deacs failed to score in the first four minutes of the second half. However, as he has done so many times before, senior guard Robert O'Kelley salvaged a victory from the jaws of defeat. The Memphis, Tenn., native led the way with 19 points, including draining a three pointer to give the Deacs a 47-46 lead they would never surrender.

The Deacons, who have certainly had their struggles on the road the past few seasons, also have struggled at home this season, when they played arguably their worst game of the season against South Carolina State.

The Deacs won 66-55, but committed a season-high 24 turnovers. After struggling to separate themselves from the pesky Bulldogs for much of the night, the Deacons took a 52-31 lead with over seven minutes left in the game.

However, S.C. State resorted to a full-court press and Odom's club responded by turning the ball over four straight times, which resulted in an 11-0 Bulldog run.

But as easy as it is to harp on the negatives, the Deacons are still undefeated. And that is more than several teams ranked ahead of them can say.

Tonight's stakes are so high because the Jayhawks will provide the Deacons with their first real test of the season. Kansas is ranked third nationally and is also undefeated.

But more important than the records is that the game allows the Deacs to see where they match up with one of the top teams in America.

Kansas is not only defeating teams, they are destroying them. The Jayhawks have won their seven games by an average of 24 points.

Head Coach Roy Williams' team is not only talented, but is also deep. He has six players who average in double figures. Forward Kenny Gregory leads the way at 17.9 points per game, and is followed closely by super sophomore Drew Gooden, who is averaging just over 16 points per game.

Williams employs a high-pressure defensive scheme in which the Jayhawks force their opponent into mistakes which lead to dunks on the other end. Kansas' opponents have committed 109 turnovers in seven games this season.

This is the same type of style that Duke, Mary-

land and Virginia employ and the Deacons have struggled over the past few seasons against teams that pressure the basketball.

In addition to their tough defense, the Jayhawks are also dominating on the glass. Kansas' frontline boasts six players over 6-foot-9, including Eric Chenoweth, Nick Collison and Gooden. That trio has helped the Jayhawks to average over 47 rebounds per game and to out-rebound their opponents by an average of 16.2 rebounds per game.

The task appears daunting for the Deacons. Without senior center Rafael Vidauretta, the Deacons will be hard-pressed to compete on the glass inside with Gooden and company. The Deacons are also going to need a dominating performance from their big three, junior Craig Dawson, junior Darius Songaila and senior Robert O'Kelley, to offset the Jayhawks' advantage on the glass.

Songaila will most likely draw Collison and Gooden, and will have to be very careful if he is to avoid foul trouble. O'Kelley and Dawson, who have both proven to be very streaky shooters, will need to bring their A games if the Deacs are to win.

In addition, the Deacons will probably need a Willis Reed-type performance from junior guard Ervin Murray. The Deacon offense is much more effective when Murray is directing it as opposed to when O'Kelley or junior Broderick Hicks takes the reigns.

While the ball seems to float around the perimeter without even an investigative look into the post when Murray is on the bench, it seems to mysteriously find its way into the hands of Songaila and company when Murray is running the show.

In a not-totally-unrelated matter, the lengthy scoring droughts that have been a characteristic of the Deacons over the past few seasons seem to mysteriously disappear when Murray is playing the point.

Murray's play has been limited all season because he is still recovering from mononucleosis. The most Murray has played all season was 23 minutes against South Carolina State, but he will probably need to play at least 30 if the Deacs are to win.

The 24-turnover performance against South Carolina State is an indication of how bad things can go when Murray is not on the court. While the rest of the team was struggling to hold onto the ball, Murray dished out six assists against only one turnover.

If the Deacons can get that type of performance over an extended period from Murray tonight, they very well could upset the Jayhawks.

And if they do, Odom's club will have shown the nation that they are indeed, Must See TV.

Women

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could get no closer than 16 points the remainder of the game as the Deacs outscored Richmond 46-25 in the half.

"These early successes have

helped us tremendously. We schedule good quality teams in the pre-conference season because good opponents prepare us.

"The best preparation is learning how to win against good solid opponents," Curtis said.

ACC play begins at 2 p.m. on Dec. 9 for the Deacs at Joel Coli-

seum against the Virginia Cavaliers.

The Cavs hold a 5-3 record so far this season and defeated the Deacons three times last season.

The final victory for the Cavaliers over the Deacons was in the first round of the 2000 ACC Tournament.

Intramural Basketball



REGISTRATION DEADLINE-December 8th

DIVISIONS:

Men

Women

Corec

Register in Reynolds Gym Room 214 by December 8th. Games will be played Monday thru Thursday 4pm-11pm. Mandatory: Every team must have a captain at our meeting Wednesday, January 24th at 5pm in Pugh. Officiating opportunities available!!

FOR MORE INFO CALL 758-5838.