

Lady Knights Finish Off Season

by Melissa Collins

The time came for the Lady Knights basketball team to put its talents on display. With three straight home victories, homecourt advantage is to become a reality.

The upswing began on January 27 against the Falcons of Pfeiffer. Michelle Branam opened the scoring with a three pointer. The teamwork under

the boards early put the Lady Knights in control. Cristie Patterson rebounded well and followed up shots to insure the SA score. Kristi Ballard showed her hustle late in the half, but the scoreboard was unkind, showing the Falcons ahead 31-28. However, the team continued to work hard. Ballard's hustle to keep the ball inbounds resulted in at least

one score. She also caused a turnover with help from Beth Larson which resulted in SA points. Farah Allen added her followup on a shot to put the ball in and gained the foul shot in the process. Key defensive plays were added by Allen, Ballard, Jodi Devereux, and Jessica Dudek. These plays created a stifling atmosphere which began to wear away at

the Falcons. That atmosphere allowed for the Lady Knights to come away with a victory, 61-58.

Two nights later, the Queens Royals arrived to take their shot at the Lady Knights. From the start, the Lady Knights showed their skills. Patterson started the game with a steal and a basket. Branam followed that with a magnificent three point arch. Stephanie Hight hit a strong defensive stance while Jennifer Franklin seemed at home behind the three point arch. Branam showed good hustle, allowing a beautiful conversion by Patterson. These varying efforts paid dividends, with the halftime score being 34-19 in favor of the Lady Knights. The second half saw more of the same domination. Patterson showed good hustle and followed it immediately with a fancy beneath the basket shot. After several more displays of

SA skill, the game ended with the Lady Knights winning 64-51.

The Lees-McRae Bobcats posed a more serious threat to the streak of victories at home. While Patterson won the jump and Allen opened the scoring, the domination was far from total. Allen, Ballard, Branam, and LaTonya Holley added steals in an effort to keep the game under SA control. There were several forced turnovers and fouls in this seesawing battle. The effort did see SA ahead at the half, 46-38. However, the team continued to have to fight. Efforts came from everywhere, with Devereux coming out of nowhere on several plays to steal the ball. She also had nice offensive plays, driving to the hoop and drawing the foul. Dudek made similar plays as a means of important late game contribution. The Lady Knights worked the boards to gain key

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photo by Rooney Coffman

Through the hoop...

by Melissa Collins

The close games at the end of the year wore down the men's basketball team, especially at home. The team has fought hard but the results have not been helpful in the standings.

On January 27, the Knights faced the Pfeiffer Falcons. Deon Wingfield pulled in a rebound and Joe Jessen opened the scoring for SA. Wingfield then dazzled the crowd with a dunk. Ken Evans added a nothing-but-net three pointer to add to the excitement. Wingfield and Brian McCollum forced turnovers to help the SA cause. The defense continued to turn up the heat as Omar Cooper, Jessen and Wingfield cut off Pfeiffer's passing lanes to gain possession. But the second half started with a general lack of focus by the team, allowing a three point deficit to balloon to a twenty point deficit. A fire

was lit by a McCollum steal and drive to the hoop. Shane Karlon added three, and Jessen put in a drive of his own before McCollum's three forced a Pfeiffer timeout. McCollum, Wingfield, and Evans each added two more three pointers to further shrink the deficit. Defensive pressure once again led to steals by Jessen and Karlon. The combination of scoring and defense brought SA to a 92-all tie as regulation expired. The overtime jump ball was won by Wingfield. The tie score was broken seconds later on foul shots by Karlon. The five minute overtime was filled with tough defense and hard fought shots. However, a Karlon three point attempt as the final seconds ticked away fell short, allowing Pfeiffer a victory 102-99.

January 30 saw the

Knights battle the Queens Royals. Wingfield dominated the early going, opening the scoring, adding a three, and forcing a turnover. The rest of the team turned up their playing quickly. John Walker, Ryan Alexander and Jessen added threes to start the scoreboard comeback. Karlon and Nick Mitchell each drew fouls to add to the SA total. With the start of the second half, SA made its move. McCollum added six, allowing Mitchell's free throws to put SA ahead. Mitchell then ignited the defense with a steal and the offense with a fancy move to the hoop. Team focus was high on the rebounding, increasing possession time and scoring opportunities. However, a hobbling McCollum suffered the same fate as Karlon in the final seconds. His usual certain three point shot failed, giving

Queens the 73-70 victory.

February 6 was a game of redemption against the Bobcats of Lees-McRae. Karlon and Mitchell started off with a block and a rebound respectively. Jessen threaded the needle on a pass to Karlon who opened the SA scoring. Mitchell showed heads-up play by calling time out as he flew out of bounds to gain possession. The momentum shifted with a team substitution, including Omar Cooper who added a basket and foul shot to help the cause. The starting five returned and picked things up again. Ballhandling, shooting and defense came together as the Knights created a lead. A scary moment came when Evans went down and remained down on the court for a few minutes while being examined. He left the court on his own

and returned to the game in the second half. With a ten point lead to start the second half, the Knights came out with an eye on increasing that lead. Wingfield and McCollum added threes, while hustle and defense by Walker, Jessen and Karlon put the pressure on the Bobcats. With the game well in hand, the bench players saw an increase in minutes. Ben Beshears scored on a spinning drive to the hoop while Dan Oedy and George Hajiefremides added points on freethrows.

The end result was an 86-58 victory, restoring faith in the homecourt advantage theory.

The Coker Cobras came in on the 13 bent on ending the SA win streak. The Knights had no intention of let-

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