

Cleveland State 81, Detroit 69: Harmon, Cole carry CSU to victory

Written by {ga=tommieskoski}

Friday, January 21 2011 1:30 AM - Last Updated Saturday, January 22 2011 4:16 AM



Cleveland State kept their chances of hosting the Horizon League Tournament alive with a 81-69 victory over Detroit on Thursday night at the Wolstein Center.

With the win, CSU improves to 17-3 and 6-2 in the Horizon League.

The Vikings are tied for second-place with Wright State (13-7, 6-2 Horizon League), who defeated Youngstown State, 66-62, on Thursday, both trail first-place Valparaiso (14-5, 6-1) by a 1/2 game.

Butler (13-6, 5-2) could join both CSU and WSU in second-place with a win over UW-Green Bay on Friday. Valpo host UW-Milwaukee on Friday.

CSU was led by Trevon Harmon with 22 points, 18 of them coming in the first half as the Vikings took a 39-32 lead at the half.

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It was Norris Cole who carried CSU's offense in the second half, scoring 11 of his 18 points in the final 20 minutes. Cole also had a career-high tying 11 assists for his fifth career double-double.

"Norris took over the game (in the second half)," said Waters. "When you have a guard who can take over (the game) that's how you win those kind of games."

Detroit got 16 a piece from junior center Eli Holman and junior forward Nick Minnerath.

After five ties and eight lead changes, CSU finally took the game over late in the second half.

With Detroit leading 60-59, CSU went on a 9-0 run to take a 68-60 lead on a lay-up by Tim Kamczyc and extended it to 74-61 on Kamczyc's 3-pointer with 3:03 remaining.

Kamczyc finished with 10 points.

CSU would seal the game at the free throw line, confidently making 7-of-8 free throws in the final two minutes to preserve the victory.

Free throws played a key role in the game as CSU made 20-of-30 (66.7 percent) from the line in the second half, while Detroit went 7-of-16 (43.8 percent).

"Down the stretch you got to make your free throws," said Detroit coach Ray McCallum. "That's such an emotional let down when you don't come through (at the line). CSU did a nice job of closing it out on the line."

CSU had to overcome Detroit's advantages in rebounding (39-27), points in the paint (40-30), second chance points (26-12) and fast break points (12-4).

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The Vikings overcame them by doing what they do best, which is causing turnovers. CSU's pressure defense caused Detroit to turn the ball over 19 times, which led to a 27-16 advantage in points off turnovers for the Vikings.

"We turned them over 19 times," said Waters. "When you turn them over 19 times, that's us getting back to Cleveland State basketball."

The Vikings also got a spark from their bench. After being outscored, 46-4, in their three previous games, CSU's bench came through with 23 points and 14 rebounds.

"Our bench really came through today," said Waters. "They needed (a game like this) to start feeling good for themselves."

The bench got eight points a piece from sophomore forward Charlie Woods and sophomore guard Josh McCoy. Junior center Joe Latas added five points and four rebounds.

"Coach told us we needed to step up," said McCoy. "And I think we took it amongst ourselves to get better in practice. So we came out with energy first on the defensive end and let the offense take care of itself."

WSU visits the Wolstein Center Saturday at 2 p.m. The game will be televised by SportsTime Ohio as part of the Horizon League's TV Game of the Week package.