



NKU uses 3-point barrage to bury Olivet Nazarene

Norse knock down 11 treys in first half, settle for 75-57 win in John L. Griffin Lions Club Classic

HIGHLAND HEIGHTS, Ky. – At halftime of Friday night's game between Northern Kentucky University and Olivet Nazarene, the talk in the media room centered on 3-point shooting records for the Norse.

That is what happens when a team shoots 11-for-16 from long range in just 20 minutes of action.

By the end of the evening, NKU's 3-point barrage was still impressive - 13-for-25 - but a long way from the school record of 19 treys that was set last season against Indiana-East. The Norse, however, cruised to a 75-57 victory over Olivet Nazarene in the first round of the John L. Griffin/Lions Club Classic in The Bank of Kentucky Center.

Dustin Maguire knocked down five 3-pointers in the first half and finished 7-for-9 from long range to account for his game-high 21 points. Dennis Gagai made a trio of 3-point shots during the first half as NKU took a 46-20 lead into the locker room.

"We shot the ball extremely well in the first half, and Maguire was making everything," NKU head coach Dave Bezold said. "In the second half, Olivet Nazarene played very hard and did not quit. They're tough and mean. They simply do not quit. They are a well-coached team and very tough-minded kids, and we need to have some of that before we can be a very good basketball team."



Dustin Maguire (5) defends against Olivet Nazarene's Kris Irish.

Olivet Nazarene (2-4) won the rebounding battle by a 39-32 margin and chased down 14 offensive rebounds. But NKU's balance - 11 players scored - and first-half 3-point barrage added up to a 2-0 start for the Norse, who are ranked No. 6 nationally in the NCAA Division II poll.

"We were talking in the pregame, patting ourselves on the back that we had turned the corner when it comes to rebounding, but then those guys are just shoving us all over the place," Bezold said. "We have to be able to match that intensity. In order for us to get better, we got to play well for 40 minutes, and then match whatever intensity the other team turns up on us."

Scott Bibbins added nine points and four assists for the Norse, while teammate DeAaron Williams finished with eight points and two steals. A'Daeron Duncan scored six points, grabbed four rebounds and blocked two shots, while Billy Finnell dished out a game-high five assists.



Leslie Malone soars in for a breakaway dunk during the first half of NKU's 75-57 win against Olivet Nazarene on Friday. Malone finished with seven points.

Photos by Tim Downer, Jeff McCurry & Tom Miller
NKU Sports Information

- A complete photo gallery of the NKU/Olivet Nazarene game can be found later at www.nkunorse.com.
- NKU meets UC-Clermont at 7:45 p.m. Saturday night.