



NKU men prepare for road showdown at No. 8 USI

Top 25 battle set for Thursday night as 19th-ranked Norse meet Screaming Eagles at 8:30 p.m.

HIGHLAND HEIGHTS, Ky. – Northern Kentucky University will meet Southern Indiana this Thursday night at 8:30 p.m. in Evansville, Ind., in a battle of teams ranked in the NCAA Division II national poll.

NKU is 9-3 overall, 2-1 in the Great Lakes Valley Conference. The Norse are ranked 19th in the national poll.

Southern Indiana enters Thursday with a 14-2 overall mark and is No. 8 in the national poll. The Screaming Eagles are 4-0 in the GLVC and have won 13 straight games.

NKU returns home Saturday to meet Missouri-St. Louis in The Bank of Kentucky Center at 3:15 p.m. It will be NKU's first home game since Dec. 22.

NATIONAL TRIP: Southern Indiana will be the third consecutive nationally ranked opponent NKU has faced on the road. The Norse lost to then-No.

13 Bellarmine last Friday, 77-60. NKU bounced back to defeat then-No. 11 Kentucky Wesleyan, 72-60, on Sunday.

PERFECT 10 VS. PANTHERS: NKU head coach Dave Bezold improved to 10-0 all-time against Kentucky Wesleyan last Sunday when the Norse posted a 72-60 win against the Panthers. The Panthers have not defeated the Norse



NKU's A'Daeron Duncan drives to the basket against Bellarmine.

since Feb. 28, 2004.

NO. 1 IN DEFENSE: NKU leads the GLVC in scoring defense at 60.7 points per game. The Norse are No. 3 in field-goal percentage defense, allowing foes to shoot just .413.

THE LAST TIME AGAINST SOUTHERN INDIANA: On Jan. 17, 2008, Dennis Gagai scored 29 points to lead NKU to a 78-62 win against Southern Indiana in Regents Hall. Gagai was 7-for-8 from 3-point range to set an NKU single-game record at 87.5 percent.

Scott Bibbins added 18 points and four assists for NKU, while Harrison Morton scored 10. DeAaron Williams added eight points off the bench, including a pair of first-half dunks that helped the Norse build a 41-27 lead at intermission.

TOUGH VENUE FOR VISITORS: NKU has lost nine straight games in the PAC Arena against Southern Indiana. The Norse have not defeated the Screaming Eagles on the road since a 99-87 victory in the 1996 NCAA II Great Lakes Region championship game.



DeAaron Williams soars past the Bellarmine defense for a dunk last Friday night. Williams and his NKU teammates meet No. 8 Southern Indiana this Thursday.

NKU has not won a regular-season game in the PAC Arena since the 1994-95 season, when the Norse rallied for a 96-90 victory over then-No. 1 Southern Indiana.

THE LAST TIME AGAINST MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS: On Jan. 24, 2008, Tim Green scored 17 points to lead Missouri-St. Louis to a 71-63 upset over No. 25 NKU in the Mark Twain Building in St. Louis, Mo. The Tritons built a 32-20 halftime lead by shooting 51.9 percent from the field and holding NKU to 29.4 percent accuracy.

Mark Hawkins scored 10 points to lead NKU, which played as a nationally ranked team for the first time since March 11, 2003. Dennis Gagai added nine points for the Norse.