

Timberwolves Season Update

BY HAMZA ISMAIL

THE MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES started off well, but only for about two games. After winning their first two games, the Wolves dropped five games, but the teams that they fell to were amongst top playoff teams: the Lakers, Nuggets, and Clippers. Additionally, they lost to the Spurs and OKC, two teams that are expected to compete for a playoff berth this season, so it begs the question, are the Wolves in trouble?

On paper, the Timberwolves look solid, which proves that they aren't in trouble quite yet. However, there are circumstances that have forced the Wolves to lose players, the most impactful loss being Karl Anthony Towns (KAT). He has had a rough year as he lost his mother and six other family members to COVID-19. He has also been diagnosed with the virus, and Towns will be forced to miss several games. KAT is arguably a top-three center in the league. He can handle the ball well, he has a nice post game, and his amazing shot rounds out his solid skill set. Last season, he shot 37% from three and 96% from the free throw line. KAT's statline is similar to Steph Curry, but Towns stands at seven feet tall. His presence allows

the team to space the floor out, so his absence will be felt.

In addition to his absence, the Wolves have several issues that they need to work out. Anthony Edwards is a fearless scorer and he has collected a number of poster dunks on opposing players. However, his feel for the game needs some polish. In one of their losses, down by three with thirty seconds left, Edwards forced DeMar DeRozan (Spurs) into a tough miss. Ricky Rubio passed him the ball so he could drive in for the layup, but he turned it over as he was looking for an open teammate in the corner, which is a mistake that should not occur.

Speaking of problems, Rubio has not looked like himself at all. His assists went from eight to five, and his points were cut in half. He was brought in as a facilitator to help the offense, but he hasn't been doing his job well. D'angelo Russel has played well, but the coaching staff should consider not playing Russell and Rubio together. Russell gets his rhythm from handling the ball, and Rubio would be most helpful leading the bench.

Outside of Rubio, there are numerous other small problems with the Wolves; however, fans should not be

too worried. This is an 82 season, so there is time. The playoffs should not be a focus right now. The main goal should be to fix the problems that have plagued the Timberwolves team for years. What is the Timberwolves' identity? A team cannot survive if their identity is not established early. The Lakers play their high tempo and showtime style, the Warriors move the ball and generate threes, and the Boston Celtics are running through Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown, but what are the Wolves doing to establish their identity? They need time to gel and build chemistry. Team culture is built through small steps everyday, so the Wolves should not be worried, at least not yet.

CSP Women's Basketball Update

BY ISABELLA D'BURKE

THE WOMEN HAVE BEEN off to a strong start this season and are looking strong going into their upcoming games. The ladies have had their first 5-0 season start since 2009 and their first five game win streak since 2018. With a 5-1 record and 3-1 conference record, the women have clearly been working hard. They recently lost 70-80 to Augustana but previously won 74-60 to them. Prior to the Augustana games, the women won 93-86 and 96-60 against Wayne State, and 54-53 and 95-32 against Crookston.

Leading in points throughout the games have been seniors Riley Wheatcraft and Meghan DuBois and freshman Lindsey Becher. Becher has definitely been a standout player as the 2nd top scorer for the women (Wheatcraft leading with a current season total of 92 points). Recently, Becher was even named the NSIC South Player of the Week. The other freshman, Sarah Kuma has also been a valuable addition with a total of 36 points scored so far this season. Kuma was the second leading scorer during the women's most recent game against Augustana.

So far this season, the ladies have averaged 80.3 points per game compared to their opponents only scoring 61.8 points per game. Additionally, they've been averaging 39.3 rebounds per game, 16.2 assists, 16.8 turnovers, 8.3 steals, and 6.7 blocks per game.

In this year's preseason coaches' poll, the ladies were picked to finish 7th. They were one point behind Southwest Minnesota State and Wayne State and two points behind Sioux Falls, with 25 points in the poll. Based on their current record, it looks like they are well on their way to 7th, if not a higher place in the South Division.

Be sure to stay tuned to the women as they continue to battle every weekend. They will be playing Sioux Falls January 22nd and 23rd, Southwest Minnesota State January



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29th and 30th, Upper Iowa February 5th and 6th, Winona State February 12th and 13th, and Minnesota State February 19th and 20th. While the women have had a strong start to the season, their next game will be close as they face Sioux Falls at home. With the Cougars' 4-0 NSIC record and the Golden Bears' 3-1 NSIC, it will be a tough match-up. These games will all be live-streamed on the NSIC website.