

2010 State Farm MVC Tournament – Game Notes

Game 7, Semifinals, 1:35 p.m., Sat., March 6, St. Louis, Mo. (Scottrade Center): #1 UNI 57, #5 Bradley 40

UNI: The Panthers' 57-40 win over the Braves moves UNI to 27-4 for the season and into Sunday's 1:30 p.m. championship game vs. the winner of #3 Illinois State and #2 Wichita State. Coach Ben Jacobson is 86-42 in his fourth year at UNI and overall as a college head coach. He is 6-2 in the MVC Tourney. UNI has won five of its last six vs. Bradley but still trails 26-17 all-time vs. the Braves. UNI is now 15-15 in the MVC tourney and 5-0 as the top seed. Today's win gives UNI a 2-1 season series record vs. Bradley this year. UNI has won its last three in a row and the Panthers beat the Braves in the tourney semifinals a second year in a row. UNI is in the title game for the fourth time in its MVC membership with a loss in 1994 and wins in the 2004 and 2009 final games. This is the eighth straight tourney win for the meet's top-seeded team.

Adam Koch today tied Eric Coleman's UNI career record for games played with 128. UNI's (UNI lowered its defensive average to 54.3 points allowed, second best in NCAA Div. I. Marc Sonnen made more than two shots only twice in 30 games this season before today. UNI allowed just nine FGs in its last two halves (2nd half Friday vs. Drake, 1st half today vs. Bradley) and allowed just two three-pointers in that span, and gave up just 33 total points from the mid-point of first half vs. Drake through first half vs. Bradley. Lucas O'Rear tied his career high in steals today with (3). Kwadzo Ahelegbe tied his career high in steals today with (3). Anthony James came off the bench to match his career scoring high at (5). UNI's 57-40 final margin is almost identical to 55-40 win over Drake Friday and the second straight UNI foe held under 50 is the 17th time it's happened in Ben Jacobson era. UNI is 16-1 when that happens. UNI bench outscored BU 25-9 today. UNI's nine steals were within one of team high for the season.

Bradley: The Braves are now 16-15 for the season and 28-29 all-time in the MVC tournament. Coach Jim Les is 142-120 in his eighth year at Bradley and overall as a college head coach. Bradley is now 1-7 all-time vs. the tourney's top seed.

Bradley's 19 first-half points equaled its lowest first half output of the season (19 vs. Northern Illinois 12/2 and vs. Iowa State 12/20). BU is 4-10 this season when trailing at the half. Sam Maniscalco was 4/4 from the line in the first half, extending his string of consecutive FTs made to 16. At the half he was 22/23 from the line in this tourney and 41/42 in five career MVC tourney games. BU was 27/28 at the line vs. Drake in Q-finals Friday and hit its first nine today before a miss. BU is 40/43 from the line in two tourney games. Bradley's 40 points today were seven fewer than the Braves' previous team scoring low this season (47 vs. Illinois State Jan. 30).

First Half: Ali Farokhmanesh got a layup off the opening tip and then a trey as UNI jumped to a 9-2 lead in the first three minutes of the game. The Panthers hit four treys in the first 6:30 to open a 17-6 lead. The Panthers substituted an entire five players at the first media time out. UNI started 7/ 12 from the field while BU was 3/11. Bradley got the UNI lead under 10 at 19-10, but UNI pushed the lead back into double digits the rest of the half and had its biggest margin at 36-19 at the half. UNI ended the half on a 6-0 run. Marc Sonnen hit 3/5 shots (2/3 from three) to score eight first-half points (plus two steals) for UNI after totaling two points in two earlier meetings vs. Braves. BU didn't score the last 4:11 and didn't get a FG the last 7:06 of the half after UNI held Drake without a bucket the last 7:59 of the first half Friday in the Q-finals. UNI shot .467 (14/30) including .455 (5/11) from threes in the half. BU was 0/5 shooting threes and hit just .286 (6/21) overall. The Braves were 7/7 from the foul line but committed 10 turnovers to two for UNI. UNI had a 12-4 edge in bench scoring the first half.

Second Half: Bradley got the first basket of the second half to end a string of 9:10 minutes without a goal. UNI missed its first eight shots of the second half over 5:11 minutes and made three TO's in that span after committing just two miscues the entire first half. Kerwin Dunham got a three-point play at the 14:49 mark for the first UNI scoring of the second half after BU got the first four points of the half. BU's four points cut UNI lead to 13 at 36-23 and that was the Panthers' smallest margin of the rest of the half. Adam Koch's trey at 10:45 moved UNI up 47-26 for the Panthers' first 20-point lead. Jake Eastman hit BU's first three of the game at 7:58 after the Braves had missed five trey tries.

Tournament Notes: This is the first game in this tournament in which the halftime margin was more than two points. It's the first time in three Bradley-UNI games this season the team leading at the half won the game. This is the first time in 34-year history of MVC tourney a team has held its first two foes to 40 or fewer points. Illinois State in 1982 was only previous tourney team to hold its first two foes under 50 points. These two games match the second lowest point totals for a team in the same meet in tourney history. The 97 combined points equals the fourth fewest total points in a game in tourney history. Three of the 10 lowest combined point totals in tourney history have come in the first seven games this year.