

THREE VILLAGE TIMES

SPORTS

Adelphi Men's Basketball Back On Track

By Leslie Feffer

It wasn't exactly a gut check, but it was a step in the right direction. After two consecutive losses, the Adelphi University men's basketball team (4-2 overall, 2-0 New York Collegiate Athletic Conference) thrashed NYCAC rivals New York Institute of Technology (0-3 overall, 0-1 NYCAC) by a margin of 103-84 on Wednesday, Dec. 4.

It was a lopsided contest all the way, as the only times that the home team trailed were two brief moments during the first 3:45 of the game. After that, Adelphi never looked back, finishing the period with a score of 58-30. Point guard Danny Gimpel (27 points, game-high six assists, five rebounds, two steals), who led the way in the first half with 20 points, scored his 1,000th career point 16 min-

utes into the game.

The Panthers thoroughly dominated the second half of the game, leading by as much as 49 points fairly early in the period. Adelphi went on an 11-0 run during the first 4:06 of the second half, essentially sealing the victory. "We were mentally focused and we set the tone for taking control from the beginning of the game," Gimpel said.

With 5:10 left in the game, Panthers Head Coach Steve Clifford emptied his bench, giving reserves Brenden Floyd, David Antoine and Todd Jackson some playing time. They joined Ryan Fortier and Dennison Martin, who were put in the game minutes earlier.

Speaking of players coming off the bench, Coach Clifford unveiled a new starting lineup that he plans to use for the

rest of the season. Freshman swingman Yaacov Williams (10 points, five rebounds, two assists, one steal) and sophomore forward Justin Mallis (game-high 28 points, five assists, three rebounds, two steals) replaced Jeff Donato (who missed this game due to injury) and Andrew Bridges (18 points, eight rebounds, three assists, two steals). However, the coach is adamant that both Bridges, who played 26 minutes in this contest, and Donato will see plenty of playing time.

"This is the lineup that we're gonna go with now. I think Yac is such a talented kid, that we need to throw him in there and let him play," said Coach Clifford. "Justin Mallis might be, by the end of the season, the premier forward in the league. It's crazy not to have him on the floor as much as possible."

Revamping the starting lineup when a team is just beginning to find its identity is a risky move, but the Panthers reaped the rewards in their first game after the shake-up. Even though Williams and Mallis saw their playing time increase slightly, their stat lines tell a different story. In the first five games of the season, Mallis averaged 16.3 points per game and Williams 6.0.

Although this was a morale-boosting win for Adelphi, it wasn't a true test of their newfound chemistry and intensity. In the preseason NYCAC poll, the Panthers were ranked in second place and New York Tech eighth in the 12-team league. However, they will have the chance to prove themselves soon, when they host conference rivals LIU - CW Post (ranked fourth in the preseason) on Wednesday, Dec. 11.