


Tip-In-Club



March 2008

Greetings again from the Men's Basketball Staff and players. Spring is upon us and we have slowed down just enough to catch our breath! It's been a very successful season for the Jacks as our 26-6 record is the best for Stephen F. Austin University since the Jacks began N.C.A.A. Division One competition in 1985. The 2007-2008 Lumberjack Basketball Team claimed its' first conference championship in Division I since the great Lumberjack Team of 1986-87 went 22-8.

The Jacks started the month of March with a 75-65 loss to U.T. Arlington. It was a tough loss at home, the only one the Jacks had this season. Josh Alexander had 25 points while Eddie Williams, a 6'0" guard, led all rebounders with 7. The loss would test the limits of our toughness. In order to have a chance to win the conference championship, the Jacks would have to bounce back quick.

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi came to Nacogdoches for another home contest. The Jacks played inspired basketball from the beginning to the end in a 71-56 victory. Josh Alexander had a great game scoring 20 points and grabbing 8 rebounds. The Jacks returned to what had brought them many victories earlier in the season; great defense.

In our final regular season game, the Jacks traveled to U.T. San Antonio. We needed to win as Lamar, the team ahead of us in the race for the conference crown, was playing at S.E. Louisiana. I knew it would be a tough game for them and I let our players know of the consequences of a victory for us in this final game. The Jacks played tough despite an injury to Josh Alexander in pre-game warm-ups. Josh strained his hip muscle and it noticeably affected him. The Jacks struggled with the Roadrunners but fought hard in a 56-50 victory. Matt Kingsley had 17 points and 8 rebounds to lead the Jacks. This win, coupled with a Lamar loss to S.E. Louisiana that same day, gave the Lumberjacks a conference co-championship. It was a great day for the purple and white.

The Jacks would enter the Southland Conference Post-Season Tournament as the #1 seed based on our win over Lamar during the regular season. I was very concerned going into the tournament with our injury situation. Josh's hip injury was affecting him to where he could not practice for two days. Eric Bell injured his calf muscle against U.T.S.A. and was held out of practice for one day. The Jacks had an injury problem for the first time all year and the Southland Conference Post Season tournament was upon us!

The first game of the tournament was a rematch against U.T. San Antonio. The Roadrunners jumped on us quickly and opened up an 11 point lead in the first half. The Jacks battled back hard and took a 71-60 victory behind a great game by Matt Kingsley. Matt had 26 points and 11 rebounds in an outstanding performance.

The semi-final game would be against Northwestern State. The Jacks jumped out to a 15 point lead in the first half and led at halftime by 13. However, twelve second-half turnovers and a cold-shooting performance led to a 69-66 defeat. Our team and coaching staff was devastated by the loss. A great season had come to a crashing halt. Again, Matt Kingsley led the way with another outstanding performance (22 points, 8 rebounds).

Our season was not over however, as we were invited to the National Invitational Tournament. The NIT people sent us to play the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Mass. We learned of our opponent, game time, and site of competition at 9:00 pm on Sunday. Our game was scheduled for the following Tuesday at 5:00 pm

C.S.T. The Jacks had 44 hours to prepare for a very good team over 1500 miles away. The Jacks played the Minutemen tough for about 27 minutes before succumbing 80-60 to fatigue and a talented team. Josh Alexander led the team with 20 points while Nick Shaw had 9 rebounds. It was not the ending I envisioned for this team. They worked very hard to achieve almost all of our goals and deserved better.

The 2007-2008 Lumberjack Basketball Team will go down as one of the greatest in the history of the school. Their accomplishments include:

- A) 26-6 record
- B) Conference Co-Championship
- C) N.I.T. Berth
- D) #14 ranking in Final Mid-Major Top 25 Poll
- E) Votes in both the Associated Press and CNN-USA Today Top 25 poll during the regular season
- F) Josh Alexander – Voted Most Valuable Player of the Southland Conference
- G) Matt Kingsley – Voted Second Team All-Conference
- H) Eric Bell – Voted Honorable Mention All-Conference
- I) Danny Kaspar – Voted Conference Coach of the Year

Our success can be traced to the hard work and character of our players. Team chemistry was very good and seniors Gerald Fonzie, Scott Weaver, and Kyle Jacobs provided great leadership. Our 26-6 record included road wins over Oklahoma, S.M.U., San Diego, Northern Illinois, and Jackson State. Oklahoma and San Diego were N.C.A.A. Tournament participants that advanced to the second round. I was very proud of this team. Scott Weaver and Gerald Fonzie will graduate in May 2008 while Kyle Jacobs is scheduled to graduate in December, 2008.

I want to thank each of you for your support of Lumberjack Basketball. You are also very responsible for our successful season with your financial and moral backing. Without fans and friends like you, no program can achieve the success/goals it strives for.

Our featured players for March are freshmen Eddie Williams and Preston Davis. Eddie had an outstanding freshman year serving as a 6th man for us. Preston served as our backup point guard but will be moved to the shooting guard next year. Both players show a lot of promise for the future and both are outstanding individuals. I look forward to working with them in the future.

Enclosed is a flyer about our spring raffle. Please consider buying tickets from us as we can use the proceeds to help defray the cost of summer school expenses for our players. The tickets sell for \$5.00 each or a book of six for \$25.00.

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Finally, if you received a third page giving information about our Tip-In Club and membership benefits, our records show you as not yet renewing your membership for the 2007-2008 season. Please consider doing so and sending us your donation at your earliest convenience. Your contributions and donations have helped us tremendously.

I will send each of you a final Tip-In Club newsletter to cover April signings. Until then, may safety, good health, and happiness accompany you and your loved ones!

Sincerely,

Danny Kaspar
Men's Basketball Coach