



Michigan State stuffs UMass 106-68 in Legends Classic third-place game

By Staff reports

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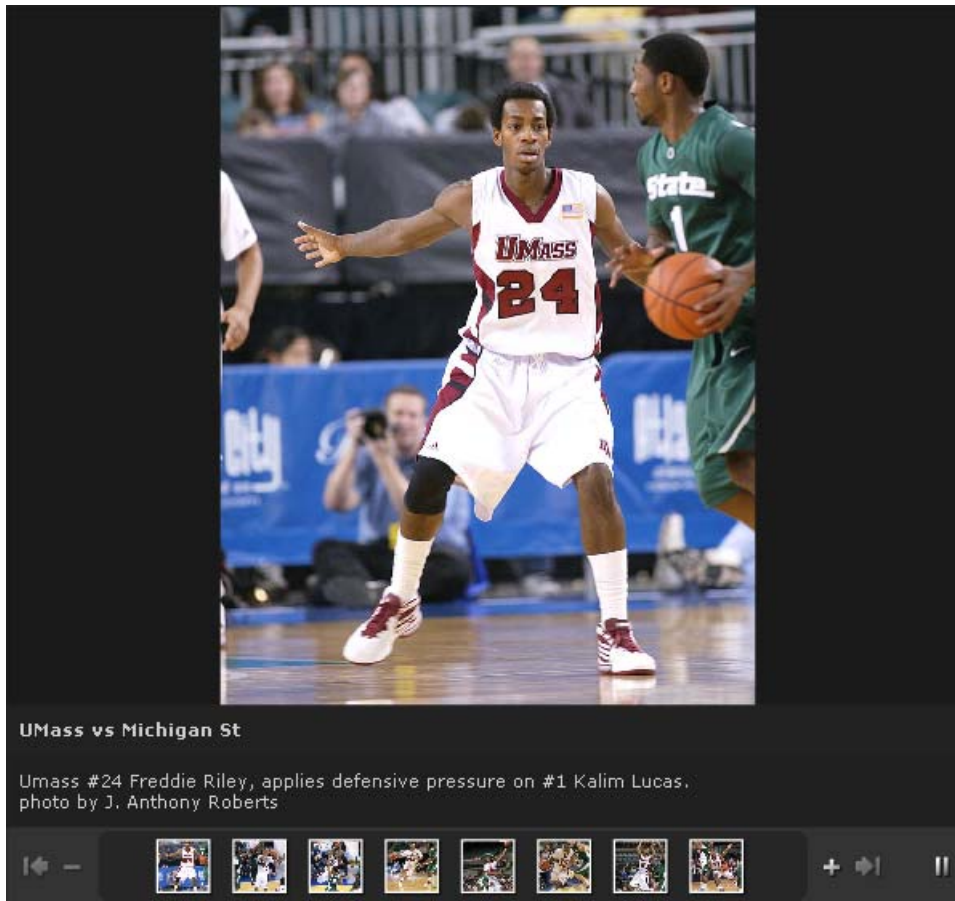
UMass' Ricky Harris drives to the basket against Michigan State's Korie Lucious Saturday at Atlantic City, N.J.

By SEAN FALLON

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. – University of Massachusetts men's basketball coach Derek Kellogg saw the type of program he hopes his squad to become Saturday night.

Unfortunately for Kellogg, that team was the Minutemen's opponent.

UMass ran into a program in a completely different class in Michigan State in the consolation game of the Legends Classic. The No. 2-ranked Spartans, behind a smothering defense and strong shooting, easily defeated the Minutemen, 106-68, at Boardwalk Hall.



"That's a team and program I aspire for this one to become," Kellogg said of last year's national runners-up. "The way they look and play on the court is what I want us to be. There were two levels of teams in different spots of success out there tonight."

The Minutemen (2-4) hoped to catch the Spartans (5-1) after being upset by Florida in the semifinal Friday night, jumped out to an 8-2 lead behind four points each by Ricky Harris and Anthony Gurley.

However, Michigan State responded to the early knockout attempt by going on a 16-0 run, led by a pair of 3-pointers apiece by Kalin Lucas and Chris Allen.

"I thought we played with them physically the first eight-and-a-half minutes or so," Kellogg said. "They just wore us down."

The Spartans built a 21-point lead midway through the first half before the Minutemen, behind Harris and Gurley, again tried to chip away at the deficit, getting as close as 47-36 late in the half.

However, Michigan State closed out the half with an 8-2 run to take a 55-38 into the locker room. The

Spartans shot 57.1 percent from the field, including 53.3 percent (8-for-15) of their 3-point attempts.

Gurley scored 18 – half of the Minutemen's points in the first half.

UMass never threatened in the second half as Michigan State pulled away with a combination of aggressive defense and solid outside shooting. The Spartans led by as many as 46 points late before both teams emptied the benches.

"That was an elite eight, final four team we played tonight," Harris said. "It's a good test to see where we are. All we can do is work to get better."

Michigan State, which finished the game shooting 58.6 percent – including 14-for-22 from 3-point range – had five players score in double figures, led by 18 points by Chris Allen. Raymar Morgan added 17 and Kalin Lucas had 16 for the Spartans.

Gurley led all scorers with 24 points. Harris finished with 15 for UMass.

"We were not ready for a team that good," Kellogg said. "It was the second night of back-to-back games, and I thought they were a little quicker than we were at every position."

"It's still early in the year," Gurley said. "This game lets us know where we stand and what we need to do to get better. We have another game Wednesday (at home against Quinnipiac), so it starts Monday at practice."

NOTES: The 106 points given up by UMass was the most since January 5, 1989, when the Minutemen gave up 107 points in a 107-79 loss to Penn State. . . . The win was the 341st career victory for Michigan State coach Tom Izzo, surpassing his mentor and former boss, Jud Heathcote, to become the school's all-time winningest coach. . . . Michigan State took the previous meeting between the two schools, winning 93-45 on Dec. 27, 1985 in a game played in Albuquerque, N.M. . . . The Minutemen continue to find Boardwalk Hall unfriendly, losing for the fifth straight time here, a winless streak dating back to January 7, 1995, when UMass, led by Atlantic City native Lou Roe, defeated La Salle, 87-64 – its lone victory in this seaside resort city.

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