

Snider leads Louisville over Bryant

By Steve Bittenbender

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — Interim Louisville coach David Padgett kept telling Quentin Snider it was only a matter of time before he broke out of his shooting slump. That time ended up being Monday night.

The senior guard scored a season-high 17 points to lead the Cardinals past Bryant 102-59 in a Houzz Gotham Classic presented by TicketIQ matchup.

The Louisville native entered the game shooting just 35.1 percent for the season and just 9 of 38 from beyond the 3-point arc. He found his stroke against the Bulldogs as he made 6 of 8 shots, including 4 of 6 3-pointers.

He sank three of those in a 94-second stretch to help turn a 51-39 game into a 23-point lead with 16:52 left.

"He just kept shooting the ball," said teammate Deng Adel. "He's a great shooter. He just kept shooting the ball with confidence. I'm glad to see them fall."

Padgett said he's had a couple conversations over the last three weeks with his four-year starting point guard. The message has always been the same.

"It's just a matter of keep shooting the ball, don't lose your confidence," Padgett said.

Adel and Anas Mahmoud also scored 17 for the Cardinals (7-2), who shot a season-best 55.7 percent. Mahmoud matched a career high and scored all his points in the first half.

In losing their sixth straight, the Bulldogs (1-10) never led after the opening minute. Still, they managed to keep it close, and cut the Cardinals' advantage to 31-30 after Sabastian Townes' layup with 5:09 left in the first half.

Mahmoud's putback on Louisville's next possession started a 15-2 run. Louisville ended the half making their last eight shots to lead by 16 at the break.

Bryant played without leading scorer Adam Grant, who missed his second straight game because of a sprained ankle. Ikenna Ndugba led the Bulldogs with 17 points.

BIG PICTURE

Bryant: The Bulldogs, who played no one taller than 6-7, entered the game ranked No. 333 in the country in field goal percentage (39.7 percent). They had success early on against the much-taller Cardinals, making 12 of their first 21 shots to keep it close.

They made just eight of their last 37 shots, as coach Tim O'Shea said Louisville's athleticism just took over.

"They just kind of wear you down," he said.

Louisville: The Cardinals, who played six players 6-7 or taller, eventually used their size to their advantage and notched their biggest margin of victory of the season. They enjoyed a 46-29 rebounding edge, blocked seven shots and outscored the Bulldogs 50-26 in the paint.

FRESHMAN WATCH

Lance Thomas played for just the fifth time this season, yet he made the most of his time. He scored 10 points in as many minutes and grabbed seven rebounds, all personal bests.

Because of Louisville's frontcourt, Thomas' opportunities have been limited. However, Padgett said he's liked what he's seen so far from the 6-8 forward and that it could lead to more playing time.

"He just continues to work every single day and get better," Padgett said. "The improvement he's made from the first day he got here in the summer has been remarkable."

THEY SAID IT

Despite the mismatch between the two schools, O'Shea said games like this can be lucrative for smaller schools because of the exposure they provide. There's also a financial incentive as well. He recalled a conversation with Kansas coach Bill Self where, before a game, he joked they should have a cardboard check ceremony before the opening tip.

"That's the reality of scheduling sometimes," the 17-year head coach said. "There is a revenue component to these games."