Lady Braves destroy Lady Saints

By Matt Smith
Sport Editor

A team-high 20 points from forward Taja Tyra Kemp helped propel the Lady Braves past the November Lady Saints 71-59 in a conference win Jan. 10 at the English Furr Center.

Kemp pulled in nine rebounds to go along with 20 points to lead the way statistically for the Lady Braves.

“I thought we played very well the first half of the game both offensively and defensively,” said head coach John Haskins. “It was a very fast-paced game where we outscored opponents 26-17 in the first half, but we had 11 turnovers that kept us from continuing to play at a high level.”

The Lady Saints outscored the Lady Braves 35-24 in the second half, but 12 second-half points by forward Lavantay Johnson helped to keep Newberry’s lead.

“Newberry pulled with seven in four minutes left in the first half, but they went on a 17-2 run in the second half that put us behind. We must focus on not giving up those runs in the second half,” said Haskins.

Jamill Williams, a 5-6 freshman who scored 10 points in the game, earned the Offensive Freshman of the Year honor, and sophomore Caymann Hearn earned first team all-conference defensive back and second team honors.

Hearn made his team the national leaders in interceptions this season with seven.

Shimmick earned the association’s Coach of the Year award, second honor this postseason, earning the same honor from the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) honors Dec. 30, adding to the many accolades already garnered around the region.

Six Braves earned first team All-ICAA honors, while eight players were named to the second team.

The Lady Braves held a 25-9 lead over the Lady Saints after 10 minutes.

“With the damage the Lady Saints had on defense, we’re happy to get the win and we’re going to get ready for a tough one against Francis Marion on Wednesday.”

Kemp has voraciously taken the Lady Braves in their last two conference wins, scoring 44 points and grabbing 21 rebounds over the past two contests.

Kemp later poured out of the game with three minutes left, but her 16 points in the first half superseded the Lady Saints first period of action.

The Lady Braves set a new record at the 16 minute mark the Black and Gold 60-51 lead against Peach Belt Conference opponent Florida Tech.

The Lady Saints would continue to score, but the early Black and Gold lead was enough to hold off North Georgia as the Lady Saints held 12 points into the 20th minute.

Along with Kemp, Delk scored 11 points to round off the double-digit scoring for the Lady Braves.

Defensively, the Lady Saints held over 50 percent in the second half.

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