

UI makes No. 9 Baylor work for win



Associated Press

Ali Forde of Idaho drives on Khadijah Cave of No. 9 Baylor.

Lewiston Tribune and wire reports

WACO, Texas - There are no moral victories, Idaho coach Jon Newlee emphasized.

"But I am really proud of how we came in here and represented the Vandals," added the Idaho women's basketball coach, whose Vandals fell to No. 9 Baylor 88-70 on Wednesday night despite Stacey Barr's 31 points.

"We came in here and we played hard," said Newlee, whose school is 0-20 in its history against Top 25 teams, including an 82-37 loss in Waco five years ago. "But we showed what we are capable of as a team."

Within the first five minutes, the Palouse visitors led by four before Baylor responded with an 8-0 surge and with the score tied at 17 midway through the first-half, the hosts seized control with a 22-13 run to carry a nine-point edge into halftime.

"That was as closed a zone as I've ever played," said Baylor coach Kim Mulkey, whose team made just one of its first seven shots against Idaho's packed defense.

"Most people don't just stay in the paint. They at least come out and guard the ball, or have a hand up on your shooters. And they didn't."

Which eventually hurt the visitors when Baylor freshman Kristy Wallace, returning to action after missing the last five games training with Australia's U-19 national team, caught fire from behind the three-point line. Wallace hit six of her nine attempts and finished with 24 points off the bench to lead the Lady Bears.

"For her to go off like she did tonight was unusual," Newlee said of Wallace, who he added has not been a stellar outside shooter this season.

"If she does not play (that well) tonight, without a doubt, we would have had a whole different game."

Though the Vandals have now dropped two of their last three games, both of those setbacks came to ranked opponents and the Vandals' 70 points was the most allowed by the Bears this season, as was Barr's 31 points. The last player to exceed 30 against the Bears was Notre Dame's Jewel Loyd, who dropped 30 against Baylor during last year's Elite Eight.

Barr finished 5-of-12 from long range and "she loves playing against big time people," Newlee said of Barr, who he added savors competing in marquee atmospheres.

"She is a big time player and she proves it every time we go against teams of this caliber."

Midway through the second-half, Barr capped a 13-5 Idaho surge by nailing a 3 to cut the Vandals' deficit to nine points, but that was the Vandals' final run at the Bears.

Idaho remains on the road this week as it travels to Toledo on Saturday for an 11:30 a.m. PT contest against the Rockets in the opening game of the Glass City tournament.

"If they make shots, so be it," Newlee said of the Bears, "and obviously Wallace out there really burned us."

"She's a great player," said Barr, who hadn't previously met Wallace, though both are from Australia. "She made a lot of 3s and kind of hurt us big-time.

"It's always good to play against Australians. It's fun, whether you know them or not, and it's enjoyable, but she had a great game."

IDAHO (4-4)

Salvatore 3-14 2-2 11, Barr 11-24 4-4 31, Forde 4-11 6-10 14, Austgulen 0-1 0-0 0, Ballestero 4-7 0-0 10, Wilson 1-2 0-0 2, Corrigan 0-1 0-0 0, McCorkell 1-2 0-0 2. Totals 24-62 12-16 70.

BAYLOR (7-1)

Johnson 6-15 3-4 15, Prince 3-7 0-0 6, Davis 7-12 7-9 21, Wright 3-9 0-1 7, Higgins 0-1 0-0 0, Cohen 1-2 1-3 3, Fuqua' 1-2 0-0 2, Wallace 9-18 0-0 24, Agbuke 2-2 2-2 6, Small 2-7 0-0 4, Cave 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 34-75 13-19 88.

Halftime-Baylor 39-30. 3-Point Goals-Idaho 10-26 (Barr 5-12, Salvatore 3-11, Ballestero 2-3), Baylor 7-17 (Wallace 6-9, Wright 1-6, Prince 0-2). Fouled Out-None. Rebounds-Idaho 37 (Forde 9), Baylor 50 (Agbuke 8). Assists-Idaho 17 (Ballestero 4), Baylor 30 (Johnson 9). Total Fouls-Idaho 17, Baylor 15. A-5,437.