Cambridge vs. Bedforshire (59-29)
6 Nov 2019

The CUWBbC Blues started their season off strong with a 59-29 win against Bedforshire. After being granted a “win” in last week’s game due to forfeiture, the Blues were eager to put their hard work and training to the test on home court. Bedforshire, ranked first in the league, arrived at the Blue’s home court with just seven players, while Cambridge had a full bench of twelve. Coach Laura Wright, confident with the fitness and skills of her team, instructed Cambridge to run quick but thorough plays in attempt to tire out Bedforshire. Dawson was the first Cambridge player on the scoreboard, but Bedforshire soon caught up via. two free throws by Dimande and an easy basket by Mohamed. With Cambridge down 2-4, Florez scored a three-pointer, putting Cambridge back in the lead. The Blues, eager to increase their lead, executed solid team defense making it difficult for Bedforshire to score. Baskets by Captain Monti, Illingworth, Wright, Pohran, and Wong brought the Blues up to 19 by the end of the first quarter, while Bedforshire had only 7 points.

In the second quarter, the Blues fell into an even more comfortable team rhythm: they adjusted seamlessly to both man-on-man and zone defenses, and drew upon their diverse plays to find and exploit the gaps in Bedforshire’s defense. Cambridge has historically struggled when playing against a zone defense, but in this match they executed their offensive style admirably: confidently attacking the seams, quickly swinging the ball around the perimeter, and skillfully cutting through the key to find those open spaces for a short jump shot. Solid rebounds by Pohran, Duran-Camacho, Illingworth, and Dawson on both defense and offense made it so that the Blues got second chances on any shots they missed, while Bedforshire rarely had a second chance to score. For Bedforshire, Dimande and Hale both proved to have good outside shots as well an ability to attack the basket, and so Coach Wright quickly instructed the Blues team to adapt their defense in effort to shut down Bedforshire’s star players. Excellent play-making and passing by the entire Blues squad, resulting in baskets by Marin-Dawid, Wright, Illingworth, Pohran, Duran-Camacho, and Wong, brought the Blues up to 39-12 at the end of the first half.

In the third quarter, the Blues shone in their defensive game. Both in 1:1 scenarios and team-help defense, Cambridge refused to let Bedforshire score any easy baskets. Ratican brought a solid presence to the Blues’ defensive court, and she shut down a couple of Bedforshire’s drive attempts with her signature blocks. Despite the Blues getting into foul trouble and sending Bedforshire to the line repeatedly, one jump shot by Bedforshire’s Ojunde, and a single free throw by Hale were the only points that Bedforshire added to their game this quarter. Meanwhile, the Blues continued to run their offensive game, and the team moved the ball nicely and kept their cool. Hard-fought post ups at the block by Galimberti forced the defense to drop low, enabling Duran-Camacho and Illingworth to strut their stuff in the high post, and sink a number of baskets. The third quarter finished with the Blues up 49-15.

In the fourth quarter, Bedforshire still showed a remarkable amount of energy and passion for the game. They were determined to close the gap on the scoreboard, and gave everything they had on the court. Shots by Hale and Dimande added another 14 points to Bedforshire, nearly doubling their score. Meanwhile, two back-to-back three-pointers by Suansing, along with a couple of fierce and confident drives by Duran-Camacho, gave the Blues another 10 points. The match finished at 59-29.

In the post-victory huddle, Coach Wright beamed proudly, and wryly asked the team if all of the sprints, skills, and drills that she’s put them through during the last 4 weeks has been worth it. Indeed, the Blues agreed, it has!