

Lobos start 3-0 after 75-51 win over Loyola-Chicago

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ALBUQUERQUE – The (-/RV) University of New Mexico men’s basketball team (3-0) snapped the Loyola-Chicago Rambler’s (2-1) seven-game winning streak in a 75-51 victory in WisePies Arena Nov. 18.

“I’m really proud of my guys,” stated Craig Neal. “I thought they played really, really hard. I have a lot of respect for Porter, I think he’s a great coach. They have a really good, veteran team. I didn’t think the score was going to be like it was, but we just played well and with a lot of energy. I’m just really proud of my guys for doing everything I’ve asked them to do. They’ve really been able to take scouting reports and do some things that were impressive. They’re making great progress, I’m really proud of them.”

Tim Williams became the third different leading scorer in as many games, with 22 points on 10-for-14 shooting, the most he’s scored as a Lobo. He also brought down seven rebounds and a game-high tying four assists. Sam Logwood scored 12 points on a perfect 5-for-5 shooting, including two 3-pointers. Obij Aget had a season-high eight rebounds to go with eight points on 4-for-5 shooting.

The win came on an emotional day for the Lobos, who learned prior to the game that forward Devon Williams was advised by his doctors to end his basketball career after suffering a neck injury in the previous game. The Lobos dedicated their effort Wednesday to Williams, with all of the players writing “DWill” on their shoes.

The first half featured a strong defensive display by the Lobos, who stifled the road team in front of a ruckus fanbase. The Lobos held the Rambler’s to 7-for-28 shooting before halftime and 1-for-9 from the 3-point range. On the other end, New Mexico went right to the paint for efficient shots. They scored eight of their first 10 points in the paint, immediately building a lead they never gave up. Within the first 10 minutes, the Lobos went on an 11-0 run to build a gap on the

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scoreboard.

The Ramblers started to find their shot late in the half, but the Lobos found other ways to stop the opposition. New Mexico forced five turnovers in the final five minutes of the first period and entered the break leading 38-19.

In the second half, the Lobos continued to push the ball to the paint and contest on every possession. The Lobos earned a 25 point lead with around 15 minutes left and never allowed the Ramblers to make a run. New Mexico hit five of its last six field goal attempts to end the game, pushing the lead to as much as 29 points with a minute remaining.

The Lobos hit their highest shooting mark this season at 61.7 percent (29-for-47). They held Loyola-Chicago to 31.7 percent (19-for-60) and forced 12 missed 3-pointers. New Mexico won the rebounding battle by a wide margin, 38-25.

“The guys are getting used to each other, we’re getting more comfortable,” said Tim Williams. “Since this summer, we’ve clicked off the court, we are so close and now we’re bringing that onto the court.”

The starting back court of Cullen Neal and Elijah Brown logged nine and six points, respectively, Wednesday. Neal also had a team-high four assists to go with four boards. Brown had five boards and three assists. Xavier Adams was the leader off the bench with seven points and three rebounds. Three Lobos, Adam Cumber, Conner Joy and Michael Nesbitt, all saw action for the first time this year. Joy, a manager for the last three years, hit a 3-pointer from the corner in his first play of the regular season.

The victory gives head coach Craig Neal his second 3-0 start in three years as head coach of the Lobos.

“It’s awesome, just because you’re giving a guy a chance that just a true Lobo, through and through,” said Neal. “It’s just great to see it, and you can tell by the way our bench reacted, what we think of him.”

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The Lobos return to the road Nov. 21 to face the USC Trojans at 8:30 MT. ***Stay up to date on www.golobos.com***