

2018 State Farm MVC Tournament – Game Notes

Game 3 ... 12 p.m., Friday, March 2 ... St. Louis, Mo. (Scottrade Center) ... #1 Loyola (54), #9 UNI (50)

Loyola: After two seven-game winning streaks earlier in the year, the Ramblers topped a new milestone by making it eight wins in a row with today's win. Loyola reaches MVC semifinals for the second time, having gotten there previously in 2015. LUC improves to 26-5 for the season and 4-4 in the MVC tourney. They finish with a 3-0 sweep of UNI this season. The 54 points today is Loyola's lowest total in a win this year and their second lowest point total in a game overall.

The Ramblers' Clayton Custer, MVC Larry Bird Player of the Year, was coming off his worst shooting effort of the season, a 1-of-10 game from the floor vs. Illinois State in the regular season finale. Custer missed his first five shots today by the mid-point of the second half and got his only points of the game on a layup with 5:41 to play. It was his season scoring low. Ben Richardson is the MVC tourney active leader in assists and his six today gives him a total of 20. Donte Ingram is the active leader in MVC tourney scoring and his 13 today pushed his total to 61. Richardson's 4 steals today is a season high and ties him for second in an MVC tourney game.

UNI: The UNI Panthers had a two-game winning streak snapped and fall to 16-16. UNI, who had an MVC team low four turnovers vs. Evansville Thursday night, had seven today in the first half. Klint Carlson had 21 rebounds in six MVC tourney games before this year and has topped that in two games this year with 10 Thursday night vs. Evansville and a career-high 15 today. Held to a season-low four treys in last game vs. LUC, UNI was 1-of-5 from long range in the first half today but extended its string to an MVC-leading 593 games with at least one trey. Bennett Koch had 20 points for UNI, his sixth 20-point game of the year. UNI's all-time tourney record is 23-21.

First Half: LU got the game's first basket from Marques Townes with 18:49 left in the half and then was scoreless six minutes as UNI built a 6-2 lead. The Ramblers came back for a 6-6 tie on back-to-back buckets by Townes at 12:25 and 11:37. UNI quickly added two baskets by Bennett Koch and one from Wyatt Lohaus to move in front 12-6 with 9:40 left in the half. The defensive early pace of the game was similar to the two earlier meetings where the team ahead at the half had just scored 26 points. Koch's fifth basket of the game (in 6 tries) pushed the UNI lead to 16-11 with six minutes left. Cameron Krutwig took a pass from Custer for a 16-16 tie with 3:40 left and then scored on a fast break layup at 3:20 to give LUC its first lead at 18-16. UNI got quickly back in front 21-20 but Aundre Jackson scored and then Donte Ingram hit a trey with four seconds left to give LUC a 25-21 halftime advantage. Loyola is 17-0 when leading at halftime.

Second Half: The defensive second half was just as bruising. UNI pulled into a 27-27 tie two minutes into the second half but Ben Richardson had a three and a two and Krutwig scored to push LUC up 31-27. UNI went up 35-33 on two baskets by Hunter Rhodes around the 12-minute mark and Koch scored again to give UNI an 8-0 run and 37-33 lead with 11:20 to play. Richardson pulled LUC into a 37-37 tie with eight minutes left. Ingram buried a trey with 3:30 left to push LUC into its biggest lead of the game at 47-39. UNI closed to within 51-48 and had a shot for a tie but missed and Lucas Williamson hit two free throws with 10 seconds left to make it 53-48. Tywhon Pickford's tipin made it 53-50 with 3 seconds left.

Records and Tournament Notes: Today's game included six lead changes and six ties.