Louisville ends Pitt’s run at No. 1

The Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Pittsburgh’s perfect season unraveled in a perfect storm of missed shots, missed opportunities and one exquisitely timed birthday party by Louisville’s Earl Clark.

The junior forward scored 16 points — including the clinching jumper with 45 seconds remaining — and grabbed 11 rebounds on his 21st birthday, lifting the 20th-ranked Cardinals over the No. 1 Panthers, 69-63 on Saturday night.

“This game will help.” Pittsburgh guard Levance Fields said, “Nobody wants to lose, but it’s always good to get a loss on yourself so you know you’re not unbeaten — so you know somebody can beat you.”

Clark and the surging Cardinals (13-3, 4-0) left no doubt.

Louisville smothered the Panthers (16-1, 4-1) over the game’s final eight minutes, holding Pittsburgh to 1-of-16 shooting down the stretch and ending Pitt’s first run at the top of the poll. The loss left No. 2 Wake Forest as the only unbeaten team in Division I.

“Give them credit, they beat us,” said Pittsburgh coach Jamie Dixon, after his team turned the ball over a season-high 20 times against Louisville’s fullcourt pressure. “We played well; they played well. They made shots down the stretch.”

The biggest of them coming from Clark, who shrugged off a sluggish first half to lead Louisville on a 24-8 burst over the final 8:55. That lifted the Cardinals to their first win over a No. 1 team since beating Florida on Dec. 13, 2003.

3:09 left.

After struggling earlier in the game, Santa Clara center John Bryant finished with 15 points and 22 rebounds, which tied his career high.

Clark men, women fall at Highline

The Columbian

The Clark College men’s basketball team enjoyed a 10-point halftime lead Saturday at Highline. Unfortunately for the Penguins, Highline enjoyed the better half as the Thunderbirds recovered for an 84-74 NWAC West Division victory at Des Moines.

Clark (8-8, 2-3) finished a difficult 0-3 week, playing three games in six days including two road trips.

Brandon Jones had 14 points, seven rebounds and six assists for Clark. Garrick Ashenfelter led the Penguins with 15 points. Highline’s Coby Giber led all scorers with 19 points.

Clark travels to South Puget Sound for an 8 p.m. game Monday.

Women

Highline 61, Clark 58 — Linh Nguyen and Yordanos Kasahun each scored 14 points, but Clark could not get past the host Thunderbirds.

Jessica Crawley added 11 points, six rebounds and five steals for the Penguins (2-10, 2-3), and Mandy Wall had a team-high 10 rebounds. Clark was whistled for 41 personal fouls, compared to 26 for Highline.

“Makes a big difference said Clark coach Nandy Boone, who said the loss was one of the team’s better performances of the year. “We stepped up and we played better defensively, and we’re starting to click in terms of learning to make the extra pass and when to make the extra pass. We still have some hiccups, some things we need to improve. It was a huge learning curve for everybody.”

Clark visits South Puget Sound at 6 p.m. Monday.

Blazers:

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the free throw to put Charlotte ahead 81-77.

The Bobcats still had work to do, as the Blazers rallied from an 88-83 deficit with just over a minute left in regulation, tying it when Roy tipped in his own miss with 9.1 seconds left.

Felton, whose jumper with 0.7 seconds left gave the Bobcats a win in Detroit on Tuesday night, missed a fadeaway 20-footer at the buzzer.

But Felton’s driving layup with 49 seconds left in OT put Charlotte ahead to stay. After Roy missed a shot in the lane, Felton’s miss was rebounded by Okafor, and Felton hit one of two free throws with 5.7 seconds left to make it 100-97.

Short-handed Portland then failed to get a high percentage shot, with Rudy Fernandez’s 3-point attempt failing to hit iron.