



LOS ANGELES – LMU earned an 88-79 win over Cal State Fullerton in the first round of the 2012 CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament (CIT) on Wednesday night at Gersten Pavilion. The postseason win is their first since the 1989-90 Elite Eight team, and gives them their first 20-win season since that same year.

The Lions improve to 20-12 on the season as Anthony Ireland came a point shy of a career-high with 26 to lead four Lions in double figures. Drew Viney added 19 points and eight rebounds, while LaRon Armstead had 16 and Ashley Hamilton with 13 points and nine rebounds.

“We did a good job tonight in staying aggressive on both sides of the ball,” said Head Coach Max Good. “We did not rebound the ball as well as we should, but we did a good job forcing the action and keeping them on their heels.”

Cal State Fullerton (21-10) was led by a career-high 32 points from D.J. Seeley, who went 11-for-26 from the field. Kwame Vaughn added 21 points and Orane Chine 10 for the Titans.

LMU advances to the second round of the CIT, and will host Weber State on Sunday, March 18 at 3 p.m. Weber State defeated Utah Valley on Tuesday, 72-69, and improved to 25-6 on the season. The game can be heard live on KXLU 88.9 FM and will be streamed live through the CIT website.

LMU entered ranked 40th in the nation from the free throw line, and showed why by outscoring the Titans by 16 points from the charity stripe, hitting a season high 32-for-40 (80 percent). In the last two games at home, the Lions have hit 63 free throws (31 vs. Santa Clara).

“As I said, I thought we did a good job of being the aggressor tonight,” said Good. “We have been pretty good from the free throw line all season and tonight we did a good job of staying aggressive

After allowing four three-pointers in the first six minutes of the game, the Lions defense tightened and held the Titans to its second lowest field goal percentage of the season at 35.5 percent, 33.3 percent (9-for-27) from three. Lmu finished hitting 42.4 percent from the field.

The lead changed hands four times and was tied four times in the first eight minutes of the game, but a quick 5-0 run by the Lions, including four points from Viney, gave the Lions the lead for good.

The lead stretched to as many as six in the first half, thanks in part to Armstead hitting all eight of his free throw

attempts in the first half. The Lions would lead 45-41 at the break and would extend the lead to 47-41 with Armstead's jumper to start the half.

However, CSF cut the lead to one, 47-46 with 17:39 to play. The lead sat at three, 53-50, before the Lions went on a 9-1 run to take an 11-point lead, 62-51 with 11:30 to play.

Cal State Fullerton answered with a run of their own, 9-2, to cut the lead back down to four, 64-60, on a pair of Sedic Martin free throws. However, LMU answered with six quick points - two from Ireland, two from Armstead and the exclamation point on a dunk by Godwin Okonji - to go up 10.

The lead would not drop below five the rest of the way and the Lions would stretch it to as many as 12 by hitting 10 straight free throws in the final two minutes.