UMaine women grind out NH win | Charles steps in,

BY PETE WARNER BDN STAFF

VESTAL, New York -The offense was often spinning its wheels and there were some uncharacteristic turnovers.

WOMEN'S good thing **BASKETBALL**

University of Maine brought its usual gritty defense for Saturday's America East women's basketball quarterfinal against the University of New Hampshire.

The second-seeded Black Bears held the No. 7 Wildcats to 20 second-half points, punching their ticket to the semifinals with a 58-47 victory at Binghamton University's Events Center.

"We had the chances to really put this game away said UMaine coach Richard Barron. "We missed people who were open.

"Maybe that's either a reflection of poor coaching on my part of it's a reflection of their not being in the moment: Thinking about the game, thinking about the repercussions of the game," he

UMaine (26-7) went on to beat No. 3 Stony Brook 51-48 Sunday's semifinal

It was the Black Bears' third win of the season over New Hampshire, which ends its season at 12-18.

UMaine was able to overcome its shortcomings at the offensive end by taking care of business at the other end.

"I felt like we lost focus on execution on a number of occasions, but we defended well enough and rebounded particularly well today and

the win," Barron said.

All-America East firstteam selections Sigi Koizar of UMaine and Elizabeth Belanger of New Hampshire dueled offensively for their respective teams with 23 points each, but the Black Bears' supporting cast was more effective.

Liz Wood posted a doubledouble with 13 points, 10 rebounds, four steals and two assists and Mikaela Gustafsson tallied nine points and six rebounds. Fellow senior Chantel Charles chipped in with seven points, four assists, three rebounds and three steals.

UMaine shot only 38 percent (19-for-50) and committed 13 turnovers that led to 18 points by the Wildcats. The Bears also hit only three 3-pointers (3-for-15), but out-scored UNH 17-5 from the foul line.

UMaine dominated the rebounding 37-22.

"I think we were collectively really good in the second half on defense," offered Wood, a member of the AE All-Defensive Team.

Carlie Pogue comple-11 points and six rebounds, but nine of those points came in the first half.

The Black Bears built a lead of as many as nine points in the second quarter as Koizar scored five points and Wood knocked down a 3-pointer during an 8-2 burst that made it 29-20 with 6:02 left in the first half.

However, UMaine committed five turnovers in the quarter after that and the crafty Belanger scored seven points to keep UNH close.

Belanger, "Elizabeth that was enough to give us she's hitting some unreal tough shots.'



Sigi Koizar of the University of Maine tries to maneuver around New Hampshire's Elizabeth Belanger during Saturday's America East quarterfinal at Vestal, New York. The Black Bears won 58-47 behind 23 points from Koizar.

mented Belanger's play with shots," Wood said. "You thought you were there and next thing you know, she scores on you.'

The teams combined for only 15 third-quarter points as the Black Bears struggled with turnovers amidst a stretch of 11 minutes during which they made only one field goal.

"I think defensively we did a good job on them," Belanger said. "We let them get a little too many easy looks, but overall I thought we stood our ground and we forced them into a lot of

However, the Wildcats could not find any consistent offensive help for Belanger as Wood played a key role in limiting the 6-foot-2 Pogue to two points over the last 28-plus minutes.

UMaine wasn't able to put the game away until the final minute.

Belanger banked in a sixfooter, but missed the ensuing free throw, leaving UMaine clinging to a 51-47 lead. The Black Bears countered when Charles fed Wood in the post with a nifty wrap-around pass for a key basket with 46 seconds left.

UMaine shot 55 percent, hitting four 3-pointers, but it

However, the foul trouble encountered by Gustafsson

around sore ankle, to play key role

BY PETE WARNER **BDN STAFF**

VESTAL, New York -Chantel Charles jogged gingerly on the court at the Events Center on Saturday afternoon. **TOURNEY**

The Uni-NOTEBOOK versity of Maine se-

nior, who had reaggravated a left ankle injury in the regular-season finale against Binghamton a week earlier, persevered to have a big hand in the Black Bears' quarterfinal win over New Hampshire.

"I'm a bit conscious of my foot, but I'm just trying to play through it," Charles said of her injury. "I've got the ankle tap on, I've got my ankle braces on.

Charles just tries to keep on smiling.

"I know it's a tense moment, but I've just got to smile," said said

Charles, who posted seven points, four assists, three steals and three rebounds in a noteworthy, 23-minute performance. The 5-foot-10 guard from

Charles

London provided intensity and quick hands on defense helped facilitate UMaine's spotty offense in a 58-47 victory. 'She's a great defender,"

said UMaine coach Richard Barron, who had Charles spend time guarding New Hampshire standout Elizabeth Belanger.

'[Bella Swan] wasn't really locked in and 'Chance' seemed to be more engaged, so we went with Chance in that situation," he added.

Charles has seldom been a big scorer, although she excels as both a scorer and passer in transition opportuni-

"[Coach Barron] said play with energy and everything else will happen and I felt like that was a big thing for today," said Charles, who is averaging 3.5 points and 2.2 rebounds in 16.4 minutes per game this season.

Her forte is playing hardnosed defense and taking care of all the little things like rebounding, setting screens and making good

"My favorite thing about her is her basketball IQ is amazing," said Black Bears senior Liz Wood. "She's so smart. I love talking to her about the game.

"I think sometimes people get focused on the points and I'm really glad that she's seeing other ways she can con-

tribute," she added.
Ultimately, Charles just wants to do her part as one of eight seniors on a successful team that is pursuing the America East champion-

'You've just got to fight for what you've worked for," she said. "We've trained all year for this and it's crunch

Koizar climbs the charts

UMaine guard Sigi Koizar's 23-point effort in Saturday's win

helped her climb two spots on the program's career scoring The junior

guard from Vienna, Aus-

Koizar now ranks 11th in Black Bears history with 1,182 points. On Saturday she passed two Maine natives, Bracey Barker of Bar

Koizar needs only 13 points to surpass No. 11 Tracey Frenette (1,194) and 16 to overtake No. 10 Ashley Underwood (1,195).

Harbor (1,166) and Heather

Briggs (1,176) of Biddeford.

Women

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period on a 14-5 surge and extended their lead to 42-37 on a scoop shot by Kori Bayne-Walker two minutes into the fourth.

"I thought we were executing well, got some great looks to start the third quarter and didn't hit them, and [Stony Brook] really attacked the rim," Barron said. "They put their heads down and just got to the basket about four possessions in the game.

UMaine responded as range off a high-post pass from Gustafsson, Koizar drove in for a scoop shot, and Bodine answered an Aaliyah Worley hoop with a 3-pointer that tied it 44-44 with 6:09 to play.

The Black Bears finally went back on top when Koizar buried a 24-footer from the top at the 3:47 mark.

"I saw the shot clock wind

down and [the defender] had but it was saved in by her hands down. I had a lot of time to shoot that shot, Koizar said.

Neither team scored again until Swan snipped a short jumper from the baseline off a pass from Sheraton Jones to give UMaine a 51-48 advantage with 2:01 left.

Stony Brook missed its last nine field-goal attempts over the last 4:18 as UMaine played tough player-to-player defense. Jones, a junior backup post player, snatched two pivotal rebounds in the last 2½ minutes.

"When Liz fouled out, in a row and really got back Sheraton came off the bench fensive lethargy with some — but she didn't feel Swan scored from close her way through the game, she was ready, and she was getting the important boards for us toward the end of the game," Koizar said.

The Seawolves had the ball last after a timeout with 17.9 to play, but Christa Scognamiglio failed to connect on two 3-pointers from the right corner. The second rebound was batted around and was going out of bounds, urday.

Bodine.

The ball was recovered by Stony Brook and fired back out to Bayne-Walker, whose 3-pointer from the top

missed as the horn sounded. "That was when I was just about [to say], well, it's got to go in. The basketball gods shouldn't reward us for making a dumb play like that," Barron said, "and somehow they missed a third or fourth [3-pointer] in that possession, and we did win.

The Black Bears broke the bonds of Saturday's of- she hadn't played much well-oiled execution early in Sunday's game. The result was a big injection of confidence as UMaine spread the scoring load among six different players and built a 28-20 halftime lead.

"This game especially was a game for us where everybody stepped up. Everybody scored, everybody rebounded," said Koizar, on whom much of the offensive pressure had fallen on Satcommitted 10 turnovers.

and Wood did seem to hamper UMaine's offensive production in the second half. Koizar and Swan helped pick up the slack with some clutch baskets.

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Carter

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"It's that confidence thing," said the coach, who has seen Carter's potential. "You're just kind of like, 'OK, have a good game T-Jo, and she goes out there and she's like a beast.'

Carter admitted she isn't always able to get into beast

"If I miss something or I mess up, I usually get down on myself," she explained, "so I'm definitely working on it and I'm getting better but I've got a ways to go."

Carter is Albany's fourth- moves and how she just Sunday's win.

leading scorer this season at 8.2 points per game and she is second in rebounding, with 4.2 rebounds per game. She is shooting 54 percent from the field and has notched 1.3 blocked shots per contest in 22.6 minutes per game.

Carter credits her continued growth, both on and off the court, to her teammates. None has been more influential than Richards.

"She's just a phenomenal player all around," Carter said. "She's definitely taught me about leadership and just being a great teammate. I learn and watch her every day in the post and I see her

takes her time and focuses and finishes.

Carter registered more than 1,000 points and 1,000 rebounds at Lake Region, where she was a two-time BDN All-Maine first-team selection.

Carter said it is fun being part of such a successful program.

'We were ready to come out this year and we're staying on top," she said.

That occurred again on Sunday when Albany beat No. 5 Binghamton 79-43 in the semifinal round to advance to Friday's league final against Maine in Alba-Carter recorded 11 points and six rebounds in

Hornets sting UMFK in semifinal 73-57

UNIONTOWN, Pennsylvania — The No. 1 Concordia-Alabama Hornets re-established a double-digit lead

the **WOMEN'S** start the third **BASKETBALL** quarter

and went on to beat the No. 5 University of Maine Fort Kent Bengals 73-57 in the semifinal round of the United States Collegiate Athletic Association's Division I women's basketball tourney Friday.

Concordia (24-3) went on

in Saturday's champion-

Concordia's Lashanique Youngblood and Rayshell Harris each hit layups coming out of the halftime break and Concordia took a double-digit lead that it wouldn't relinquish.

The Bengals had used a used a 13-2 run near the end of the second quarter to cut it to 34-29 with 1:42 left in the half, but that was the closest

they would get. Erica Ousley paced Con- assists.

to beat Iowa Weslevan 72-65 cordia with 31 points. Shuntavia Harris chipped in with ship. UMFK finished at 20-6. 11 points and nine rebounds to help the Hornets gain a 47-38 team rebounding advantage.

Danielle Carrillo scored 17 points to lead UMFK while Ericka Saucier and Samantha Carapellucci each recorded a double-double as Saucier had 16 points and 10 rebounds while Carapellucci had 14 points and 15 rebounds. Romanalyn Inocencio added 10 points and five

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