

sports

18

The number of consecutive free throws Cam Long made before having the streak snapped in the Mason/VCU game on Saturday.

Go West, Young Man

MLS Team Colorado Rapids Draft Mason's Adjeman-Pamboe in the Second Round

BRENDAN MURPHY
Staff Writer

The excitement did not have to end for Kwame Adjeman-Pamboe after a tough second round loss in this past season's NCAA tournament. The senior forward will embark on a new journey after being drafted in the second round, 28th overall out of 60, in the 2009 Major League Soccer Super Draft held in St. Louis on Jan. 15.

"I sat back and was like, 'wow.' My name popped up and I was really excited. My legs were shaking for almost an hour. I just thanked the Lord, I was so happy," said Adjeman-Pamboe.

Adjeman-Pamboe was the first of six selections by the Colorado Rapids, who finished fourth in the MLS Western Conference with an 11-14-5 record.

"My phone was blowing up, I missed my head coach's call and I had, like, five voicemails and so many text messages coming through. My phone died after 30 minutes and I had to charge it back up," said Adjeman-Pamboe.

Adjeman-Pamboe was one of 65 college seniors invited to participate in the 2009 pre-draft Major League Soccer Adidas Player Combine held at Lockhart Stadium in Fort

Lauderdale, Fla. from Jan. 9-13.

"I expected to go late second round, after my first day my new agent told me I may have bought my ticket into the early second round. They projected me to go as the 30th pick and I ended up going two spots higher than that," said Adjeman-Pamboe.

He was joined by two fellow CAA members including midfielder Nick Zimmerman of James Madison University, who went 44th overall, and Trevor Banks of Old Dominion University.

"It was fun and I wasn't in awe of the other players. I felt I belonged and I was smiling all the time. The other guys didn't seem like they were much better

than me. I felt I was equal and proved myself on the second day," said Adjeman-Pamboe. "The combine definitely helped a lot because I was not one of the big names there and [Mason] didn't get looked at as much."

Adjeman-Pamboe became the seventh player in Mason history to be selected in the MLS draft. He led the Patriots

to their first CAA tournament championship in 19 years, a first round 1-0 win over University of Pennsylvania in the NCAA tournament and a close 2-0 loss in the second round to the eventual national champion University of Maryland Terrapins.

"It meant a lot because it was the first time in 19 years

Patriots and tied for second in the CAA with nine goals. He was awarded First Team All-CAA honors, named Most Outstanding Performer at the CAA Soccer Championship after contributing four goals and an assist in the three wins, and was named NSCAA First-Team All-South Atlantic Region honors.

"It means a lot to me. I

didn't know I was going to get all of these awards for playing well. I wasn't expecting it because I was just trying to win day in and day out trying to keep the season going one more game," said Adjeman-Pamboe, "But it is a great accomplishment what I achieved this season. I credit it to my coaches and teammates for keeping me honest and I worked hard which lead the individual accomplishments."

Adjeman-Pamboe is set to move to Colorado Jan. 26 to begin preseason and his fight to make the 24-man roster, which currently has 36 players.

"Going in I can't see myself as a rookie. Even though I am, I cannot be scared of anyone. I have to play my game and sooner or later adapt," said Adjeman-Pamboe.

His first game is scheduled for Saturday, Mar. 21 at 8:30 p.m. against Chivas USA, who drafted local product Michael Lahoud ninth overall from Wake Forest University. For Adjeman-Pamboe, there is still unfinished business along his road to success.



Kwame Adjeman-Pamboe was selected by the Colorado Rapids at the Major League Soccer Super Draft.

SPORTS IN A MINUTE

MEN'S BASKETBALL

George Mason University (14-4, 7-1) fell for the first time in conference play after a 58-57 loss to the Northeastern University Huskies (12-6, 7-1) last Wednesday. The team suffered a devastating blow when senior guard John Vaughan collapsed on the court during a free throw attempt. Prior to the injury, Vaughan led the team with 19 points on 7-of-10 shooting, five of which came from three-pointers. Mason rallied from a 10-point deficit to take their first and only lead with 56 seconds left in regulation. Forward Manny Adako's layup helped Northeastern regain the lead with 25 seconds left. Mason's perfect conference record came to an end after the Patriots were unable to get a last shot off. The team fell to 5-4 on the road. Despite committing 14 turnovers, Northeastern out-shot Mason 54.8-to-47.9 percent from the field. Northeastern, winners of six of the last seven games, was led by guard Matt Janning's 20 points and snapped Mason's six-game winning streak.

After falling behind 55-40 early in the second half, Mason's rally fell short as the Virginia Commonwealth University Rams (15-5, 8-1) pulled away 76-71 in Richmond on Saturday. For the first time in nearly two years, the Patriots (14-5, 7-2) were without Vaughan. VCU guard Eric Maynor led all scorers with 28 points, shooting 9-of-17 from the field with three three-pointers. Maynor's free throws put the Patriots away as Mason fell for the second consecutive time in conference play after starting 7-0. Sophomore guard Cam Long led Mason with a career-high 24 points, and added five rebounds and four assists. Fellow sophomore guard Isaiah Tate started in place of Vaughan, and scored two three-pointers for a total of seven points. After scoring 10 points in the first half, freshman forward Ryan Pearson cooled down in the second half with only two points, and fouled out late in the game. The Patriots return to Fairfax to defend their perfect home record on Tuesday night against the University of Delaware Blue Hens, and will be without Vaughan again. His return on Saturday against the Old Dominion University Monarchs remains questionable.

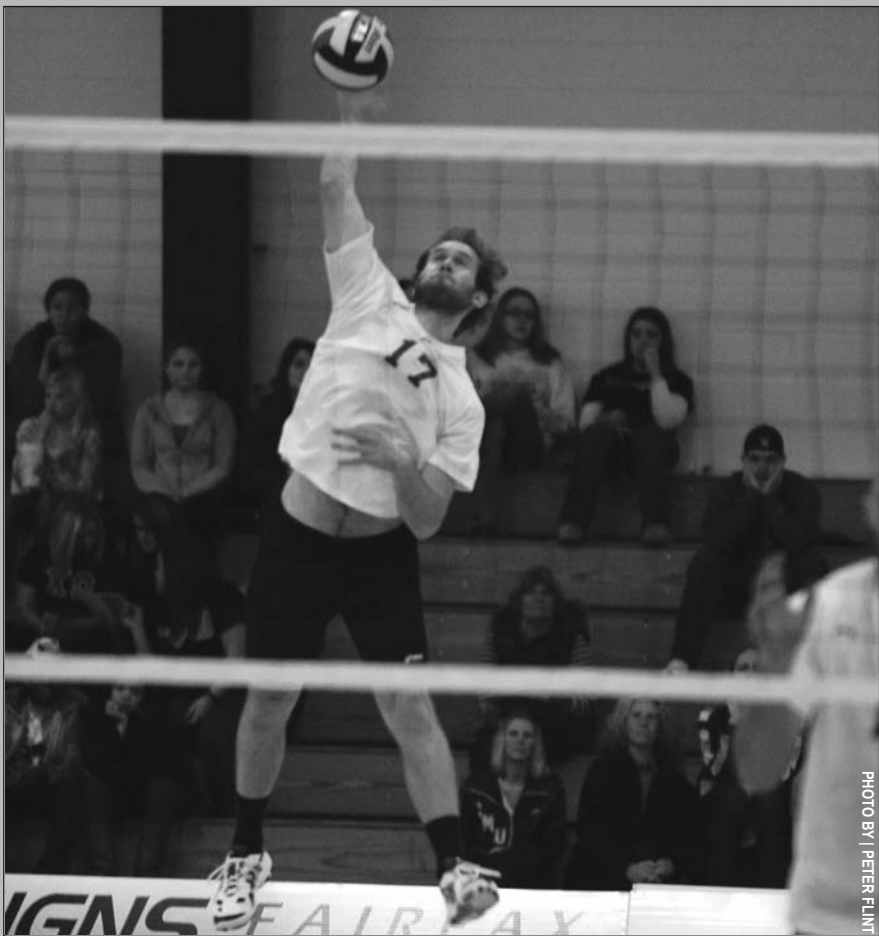
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Sophomore Brittany Poindexter led all scorers with 19 points, freshman Becky Cox matched her career-high of 12 points, and Mason (2-15, 0-6) out-shot their opponents 43.1-to-40.8 percent, but the James Madison University Dukes (12-5, 5-1) held on in the 70-65 win and completed the season sweep over Mason. Poindexter, Mason's leading scorer this season, shot 8-of-13 from the field and added four steals on the defensive side. The sophomore guard also turned the ball over five times out of the team's 15 turnovers. Freshman forward Rachel Robinson scored eight points to go along with her seven rebounds. Mason prevented the game from getting out of hand, especially with the Dukes struggling to find their range from behind the arc on 4-of-26 shooting. Mason's CAA counterpart was led by guard Dawn Evans' 18 points and career-high 11 assists. Forward Jalissa Taylor also registered a double-double with 16 points and 11 boards for the Dukes. The Dukes won for the ninth time in their last 10 games as Mason lost their seventh straight and still look for their first conference win of the season.

WRESTLING

Mason dominated Virginia Military Institute 31-12 last Thursday to improve their record to 4-5-1. Sophomore Frankie McLaughlin IV led off with an 18-6 major decision against VMI's Matthew Brock in the match at 157 pounds. Fellow sophomore Jimmy Kaden defeated Jayme Gordon with a 7-6 decision at 165 pounds. Mason added to their lead with pins from freshman Mendbagana Tovuujav and sophomore Zach Ulm. Ranked eighth nationally, sophomore Cayle Byers defeated his opponent Ronnie Ellsworth 5-2. Mason was able to rebound from losses at 125 pounds and heavyweight with a win from freshman Denny Herndon at 133 pounds. Byers, Herndon, and Tovuujav each improved their dual match records to 9-1. Sophomore Brandon Bucher wrapped up the day with an 18-2 technical fall in 5:20. Bucher earned his first win this season. Mason will challenge University of Virginia in Richmond on Friday at 7 p.m.

Snap Shot



Libero, Luke Maloney serves the ball during Mason's loss to Loyola Chicago.

Snap Shot



Setter, Brian Joyner passes to Shaun Sibley during their game against IPFW.



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