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## CSUN men's basketball rallies to win opener

By Roman Veytsman, Special to the Daily News

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With 11 newcomers, Cal State Northridge men's basketball coach Bobby Braswell didn't know exactly what he had coming into his 12th season.

"It puts a little knot in your stomach," he said.

What he did know was that his two leading scorers from last season, Jonathan Heard and Calvin Chitwood, would be the constants. Heard scored a career-high 29 points and Chitwood pulled down a career high 18 rebounds to go along with 22 points as the Matadors pulled away from Chicago State in the second half Saturday, winning their season opener 96-85 at the Matadome.

The Matadors finished 14-17 last season and haven't made the NCAA Tournament since 2001, but Braswell said a culture change has occurred. This was the largest player turnover the program has had during his tenure.

Braswell said he wanted to bring in "warriors and fighters."

"I couldn't think of a better first game," Braswell said. "(Chicago State) was very, very competitive and very good and they punched us in the first half and we came in at halftime and said, 'Fellas we're in for a fight.'"

In the early going, Chicago State's David Holston had the hot hand. The 5-foot-8 guard scored 23 points in the first 10 minutes, including 6 of 7 3-pointers. But he spent the rest of the first half on the bench with three fouls.

CSUN trailed 52-44 at halftime.

"We had to find out what type of team we were," Heard said. "We haven't been that strong coming back in the past, but I feel like we've got some competitors on our team."

With Holston on the bench saddled with foul trouble (he played only eight second-half minutes), CSUN continued its up-tempo scheme. The Matadors took a 63-62 lead with 11:30 to go on a layup by Heard, who scored 19 points in the second half, and they didn't trail again.

Holston didn't make a field goal in the second half and finished with 29 points.

Junior college transfer Paul Wayne played well at point guard for CSUN, scoring 13 points and dishing out six assists. He went 11 of 12 from the free-throw line.

Another JC transfer, Josh Jenkins, scored seven points and had five assists in 13 minutes for the Matadors.

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"You always wonder how we're gonna do when you get a bunch of new guys," Chitwood said. "But the great thing about as many players as we have and the talent that the coaches have recruited, we have a lot of depth and that works to our advantage."

CSUN forced Chicago State into 21 turnovers, 13 of which came in the second half.

CSUN had 26 fastbreak points.

"This was not a full indication of what this team is like," Chitwood said, "but a preview of what's to come."