



# LIONS & BEARS

Missouri Southern faces its second Division I rival with pride.



Green, gold and maroon fill Leggett & Platt Athletic Center as the Lions play the MSU Bears on November 5, 2011. — Photo by Mike Gullett

Six days after playing Division I Mizou, Missouri Southern basketball teams were up against another Division I rival: Missouri State University.

The games took place on November 5, 2011 as a fundraiser for the Missouri Southern Foundation Tornado Relief Fund. The event raised nearly \$50,000 and attracted almost 3,000 fans.

“Knowing that it was the second such event we had in six days and we still had that much support from the community let us know how the community felt,” said Kevin Greim, associate athletic director for external operations at Southern.

After hearing about the devastation of the May 22 tornado, Missouri State wanted to do what it could to help Joplin.

“We were very excited that MSU agreed to play a game here in Joplin. Paul Lusk (MSU men’s head coach) was my assistant here at Joplin, so when the tornado happened, he wanted to know what he could

do to help,” said Robert Corn, ’78, MSSU head coach.

The universities got together and decided to promote a doubleheader event. Wendy’s, who was working on renewing its yearly contract with Southern, asked if there was anything else it could do.

Greim asked if Wendy’s would be interested in hosting the Missouri State versus Missouri Southern game, and that’s how the “I-44 Hoops Classic Presented by Wendy’s” games began.

“The game with Missouri State signifies just another example of the outpouring of support from people outside the Joplin community,” said Maryann Mitts, women’s head coach.

For Mitts, this event held great meaning for the athletic department.

“The game in itself was the epitome of what college athletics should represent,” said Mitts. “Our program was honored to compete on the floor that evening. It was a

way for us to be able to show our commitment to the tornado relief effort.”

Greim also mentioned the support of the American Red Cross for the event.

“Red Cross is just one shining example of how much an organization can do, and we were honored to have them there,” he said.

Southern sends a special thanks out to Kyle Moats, director of athletics for Missouri State, and Missouri State basketball coaches Nyla Milleson and Paul Lusk for allowing the event to happen and bringing their teams.

In the end, both Missouri State teams won: the men 84-48, and the women 91-58. Regardless, the game was about more than winning or losing for the Southern teams.

“It was a great experience for our players to play against a good D-I team, and it will be something they can talk about for a long time,” said Corn. **E**

— Joanna Lee, '11



Top left, John Fisher, a senior and member of the Sound Dimension show choir at Joplin High School, sings the national anthem before the game between Missouri Southern and Missouri State University on November 5, 2011, in Leggett & Platt Athletic Center. Top right, Lion sophomore guard Marquis Addison battles for a rebound with MSU junior forward Corbin Thomas. Above left, sophomore guard Shatara Stone watches the men's game. Above right, MSU men's head coach and former Southern assistant coach Paul Lusk follows the action during the men's game. — Photos by Mike Gullett

