

## Lakers spoil Racers' home debut

By Scott Miller  
SPECIAL TO THE COURIER NEWS

ELGIN — Professional basketball made its debut in Elgin Friday night and hit the ground running.

The newly formed Elgin Racers of the International Basketball League opened its regular season in front of a near-capacity crowd of more than 800 fans at Judson College.

"The turnout was great," Racers co-owner Bob Fischer said. "We were hoping for maybe 400, so this far exceeded our expectations. It looks like it's going to be a hot ticket."

The event was well-organized and the energetic crowd was entertained by plenty of fast-paced action. The night was nearly a complete success for the Racers, except for one minor detail — a late rally lifted the visiting Lake County Lakers past Elgin to a 144-140 win.

Elgin had trailed by as many as 18 points late in the third quarter but came back to take a 123-122 lead on a Nick Zachary 3-pointer with 5:26 left to play. Moments later, Marcus Jackson — who had a team-high 31 points — gave the Racers their largest lead of the night at 130-125 with a pair of free throws.

However, the Lakers answered back with 13-0 run to take a 138-130 lead. Elgin could get no closer than three points the rest of the way.

"I know we put up a lot of points," Racers head coach Jim Condill said, "but we still don't have enough offense. We just made some poor decisions at the end of the game."

Former Larkin standout Sherick Simpson scored 17 points in his return home, including a crowd-pleasing slam dunk in the fourth quarter.

"It feels good to be back," Simpson said.

"Who wouldn't want to play professional ball in their hometown? I was so excited I could hardly sleep last night."

Lake County 144, Elgin 140



Elgin's Morgan Thompson (right) drives to the basket Friday at Judson College. Visiting Lake County knocked off the Racers in their International Basketball League season opener 144-140.