Donald Sims (Gaffney, S.C./ Fork Union) averaged 26.5 points and 4.5 assists in four games and Sam Ramirez (Fayetteville, N.C./Southview) led Appalachian State University women's basketball to a 5-1 mark to open the season. For their efforts, the pair was named the Southern Conference Men's and Women's Basketball Players of the Month, respectively, the league office announced on Wednesday. Sims led the Mountaineer men to a 2-2 record to start the season with 18 points and seven assists in the season opening win at Tulsa and followed with 21 points, six rebounds, four assists and two steals against Montreat in ASU's home opener.

Sims then turned in his top performance of the season at Mississippi State with 40 points, five assists and three steals in the near-upset in Starkville. He became the fifth ASU player to surpass the career 1,600-point plateau in the game and was named the league's player of the week for his efforts. The Gaffney, S.C. native added 27 points and four three-pointers at Vanderbilt the following week.

His 40-point outburst is the third-highest total in a game in NCAA Division I this season and the guard ranks third nationally with 27.0 points per game for the season. At 1,695 career points, he ranks fourth in program history.

Sims shot 44.8 percent from the field and 39 percent from downtown while sinking 30-of-32 attempts from the line. He also averaged 3.5 rebounds and 2.0 steals per contest while playing 35.0 minutes per game.

Ramirez scored in double-figures in five of six games during the month of November, helping ASU's women to a 5-1 mark in the month, totaling the most wins in the month for the program dating back to the 1981-82 season.

She began the season with a bang at the Longwood Tournament, as she poured in 20 points in the Black and Gold's season-opening win against Marshall, and then matched that performance by pouring in a career-high 28 points, including 23 in the first half, in Appalachian's rout of Campbell. For those performances she was named the conference's player of the week.

Finding her hot shooting hand once again the lone senior for the Apps scored 12 points in ASU's first win at ETSU since 2003, 20 points in Appalachian's first-ever win against Gardner-Webb and capped off the month with 19 points in the Mountaineers' 100-67 drumming of Elon.

She has totaled an impressive 51.9 percent shooting percentage, and ended the month averaging a team-best 17.3 points per game. Her efforts have helped ASU extend its home winning streak, defeat two defending conference champions (ETSU- Atlantic Sun/Gardner-Webb- Big South) and win its conference-opening game for the first time since the 2006-07 season.

The honors are a repeat of sorts for both players, as they each won February Player of the Month honors from the SoCon to cap off the 2009-10 season.

The Mountaineer men travel to Georgetown on Sunday, December 12 for a nationally televised noon contest on ESPNU. The women's squad returns to Southern Conference action when it travels to Furman on Dec. 18 for a 2 p.m. contest.