The Appalachian State men's basketball team nearly blew a 15-point second-half lead and held on to beat Robert Morris 71-66 on Saturday afternoon at the Holmes Convocation Center.

Donald Sims led the Apps (4-4) with 23 points. Anthony Breeze made his ASU debut and chimed in with six points and eight rebounds.

"This was a very physical game," Sims said. "Robert Morris isn't real big, but they're very scrappy. They've played a tough schedule and they play hard. This was a good team win for us."

A three pointer by Jeremy Booth gave ASU what seemed like a commanding 59-43 lead with 6:23 to play. But the Colonials (4-6) kept chipping away and got within three with 26 seconds left. A bucket by Velton Jones made it 69-66. But ASU, which made 70% of its free throws on the day, got a pair of free throws from Andre Williamson and Omar Carter down the stretch to ice the game away.

"It's was definitely a hard-fought game," said ASU coach Jason Capel. "And give Robert Morris a lot of credit. Their kids never quit. That's the toughness in them. But I'd like to think that my kids are just as tough. We took a lot of offensive charges today and that shows a sign of toughness on our part."

The Apps had four players in double figures. Carter finished with 14 points, Williamson had ten points and eight boards. ASU outrebounded Robert Morris 39-29.

"Man, I'm sore," said Breeze following his ASU debut. "I didn't want to push it too hard, but it felt great to be out there again. We got a good challenge today from Robert Morris, but we pushed back. It's just a matter of getting the job done."

ASu had 17 second-chance points. The Mountaineers now travel to Cancun, Mexico for the Cancun Governor's Cup. ASU will play Colorado State in the opening round Wednesday night.

"It's a business trip," Sims said. "Our job is to win basketball games down there. And this win today is a huge confidence booster for us going into that tournament."

Our coverage Wednesday night from Cancun begins at 7:45 pm on AM 1450, WATA.

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ROBERT MORRIS	25	41	-	66
ASU	32	39	-	71

ROBERT MORRIS: YANN 7, RUSSELL 26, JONES 13, ABRAHAM 8, MYERS 3, THOMPSON 4, WALLACE 5. FG - 27-56, 3FG - 6-21, FT - 6-11, 29 REBOUNDS, 15 TURNOVERS.

ASU: CARTER 14, WILLIAMSON 10 (8 REBOUNDS), SIMS 23, WRIGHT 7, BOOTH 10, HEALY 1, BREEZE 6 (8 REBOUNDS). FG - 20-49, 3FG - 3-16, FT - 28-40, 39 REBOUNDS, 14 TURNOVERS.