

Men's Basketball to Face High Point in ESPNU BracketBuster

Written by Charles Cochrum
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Appalachian State University men's basketball will travel to face High Point on February 19 in the ESPNU BracketBuster event, the network announced on Monday evening. Tipoff for the contest is set for 7 p.m.

The in-state rivals have met 90 times as Conference Carolinas members, but not since 1977-78, when ASU (8-13) took a 72-56 decision at Varsity Gym.

The Panthers are 7-13 on the season and 4-7 in Big South play. HPU fell at Wofford, 79-65, in mid-December to set off an eight-game losing streak before snapping out of the skid on January 20 with an overtime win at Presbyterian. In addition to the Terriers, High Point and ASU share one other common opponent this season. HPU fell at The Citadel, 71-63, in November.

Though the teams have not squared off in more than 30 years, members of each coaching staff have experience facing each other. ASU associate head coach Rick Scruggs battled High Point in Big South competition over the last few seasons at Gardner-Webb. Meanwhile, HPU assistant coach Kevin Easley served on the UNC Greensboro staff for three seasons prior to joining Scott Cherry's staff in 2009.

ASU is 2-2 in four seasons in the BracketBuster event, including 1-1 on the road. The Apps defeated Wichita State, 60-58, in ASU's first year with the event 2007. The Mountaineers then dropped an equally close 65-63 heartbreaker at Winthrop in '09. Appalachian handily defeated Tennessee Tech, 81-68, last season at the Holmes Center.

Following ASU's current three-game swing, the squad plays its final five Southern Conference contests at home. Appalachian's next home tilt is slated for February 10 at 7 p.m. against Samford on "Celebrate Watauga Night."