Appalachian State University men's basketball will open its 2012-13 exhibition slate when it plays host to Lees-McRae on Friday at 7:30 p.m. at the Holmes

Center. The Mountaineers, who will also play an exhibition against Carson-Newman on Monday, return six players, including one redshirt, from last year's squad.
App State gave fans a glimpse of what is to come in last week's Black & Gold Scrimmage. Junior forward Tevin Baskin showed promise with a game-high 23 points in the contest while Jay Canty, who sat out last season per NCAA transfer rules, scored 17 points in a dominant first half.
In addition to the performances of Baskin and Canty, returners Mike Neal (17), Nathan Healy (16), Tab Hamilton (13) and Brian Okam (10) each scored in double figures.
Neal will miss the first nine games of the regular season, including ASU's exhibition games with Lees-McRae on Friday and Carson-Newman on Monday because of academic reasons. He started 21 games last season and averaged eight points and led the team with 92 assists. Neal will be eligible to return on December 19 when ASU travels to South Carolina.

ALL ABOUT THE APPS

• Appalachian State returns six players, including one redshirt, from last year's squad while welcoming nine newcomers to the team.
• The Apps return three starters from a year ago in Neal, Hamilton and senior Jamaal Trice. Healy saw playing time in 30 contests last year and made 11 starts while Okam came off the bench in 14 games and picked up the start at North Carolina.
• Of the nine newcomers this season, seven are expected to see playing time. Sophomore Dustin Clarke will redshirt this season after transferring from Hartford while the playing status of Jonathan Frye has yet to be determined. Frye played at Tulane in 2010-11 and sat out last season due to a head injury suffered in the first month of his freshman campaign.
• Tommy Spagnolo, a product of West Jefferson, is eligible to play immediately after transferring from Radford, where he played in 2010-11.
• App State will once again be led by Jason Capel, who is entering his third year at the helm of the program. Capel has led the Apps to postseason victories in each of his first two seasons.
• The Mountaineers will field an extremely young team this season as the roster is comprised of two seniors, three juniors, three sophomores and six freshman.

SCOUTING THE BOBCATS

• Lees-McRae will field a highly-experienced team this season as it features six seniors on its roster. The Bobcats also have four juniors on their roster along with three sophomores and one freshman. The team will redshirt a total of five freshman this season.
• The Bobcats return nearly all their scoring output from a year ago as they bring back their top three scorers from 2011-12. Seniors Daniel Sepokas (11.2 points per game) and Jeremiah Henry (10.6) join sophomore Asad Lamot (10.2) to form a dangerous scoring trio.
• Lees-McRae returns all but one starter from a year ago, including junior DeAndre Tillman, who averaged 6.7 points and 4.9 rebounds for the Bobcats.
• The Bobcats finished last year with a 9-17 record and a 8-8 record in Conference Carolinas.

THE SERIES

• Appalachian State and Lees-McRae have met four times in the regular season, with the Apps holding a 4-0 advantage in the series. The teams last met on Nov. 11, 2011 as the Mountaineers came away with a 90-61 victory in the season-opener.
• Two of this year's Mountaineers, Tab Hamilton and Jamaal Trice, each scored 10 points in the contest while departed seniors Isaac Butts, Omar Carter and Andre Williamson also scored in double figures.
• Appalachian held a 46-21 edge at halftime thanks and outscored the Bobcats 44-40 in the second hald of the game.
• When the teams last met in an exhibition game on Nov. 4, 2010, Appalachian picked up a 103-69 victory thanks to a game-high 25 points from Donald Sims.

Photo Courtesy: Nathan Healy, ASU Athletics