Written by Jennifer Clark
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Despite three scorers in double figures, Appalachian State women's basketball was unable to hang on for a win Friday. The Mountaineers (7-2, 1-0 SoCon) had a second close call this season in their 72-67 loss to West Virginia University (8-3) at

WVU Coliseum. Anna Freeman showed a strong effort in Appalachian's first match up against Big XII standout West Virginia. She recorded 25 points for the Mountaineers, along with four assists, five rebounds, and seven steals.

She was joined by fellow double-digit scorers Maryah Sydnor and Katie Mallow, who netted 19 and 13 points, respectively.

The Mountaineers entered halftime trailing the Mountaineers of West Virginia by 13 (37-24), thanks in part to a WVU run. Following a jumper from forward Averee Fields at the 5:35 mark, West Virginia took control and scored nine unanswered points, giving the Big XII Mountaineers a 34-22 advantage. Courtney Freeman capped the run with a layup with just over a minute remaining in the half.

Appalachian looked promising after the break when Maryah Sydnor nailed a free throw and followed with a layup on the App's first possession of the second half. But, WVU continued to pester the Mountaineers, and managed to control the lead throughout the second half. A combined effort from Anna Freeman andCourtney Freeman kept Appalachian in the game, while a Maryah Sydnor jumper pulled the Mountaineers within eight (58-50) with 8:17 remaining in the contest.

Kelsey Sharkey laid in a basket to knot the game at 65 with 2:37 left, but WVU responded on the next possession when Christal Caldwell swished a three to give the lead to West Virginia once more. After a Taylor Palmer foul sent Maryah Sydnor to the line again, the Mountaineers climbed back within one (68-67). App hoped to connect on the last possession of the game and seal the deal, but missed on four scoring opportunities. Following a timeout, Kelsey Sharkey would foul, sending Ayanna Dunning to the line, where she nailed both of her free throws to increase WVU's lead by three (70-67) with 22 ticks on the clock. Averee Fields approached the line following a foul from Anna Freeman to record West Virginia's final two points and close the contest at 72-67.

Up next, Appalachian returns to conference play, traveling to Davidson on January 5, followed by Furman on January 7.

Game Notes: Appalachian's Anna Freeman (25), Maryah Sydnor (19), and Katie Mallow (13) recorded double figures against West Virginia. Sydnor led the Mountaineers in rebounding with 6 boards, four of which came on defense. Kelsey Sharkey and Anna Freeman each contributed five for the night. The Apps shot 42.4 percent against the Mountaineers, while shooting 38.5 percent from three-point land. The loss marks the third time this season, the Mountaineers trailed at the half (37-24), and were out-shot (.471-.424) and out-rebounded (39-27) by an opponent.

**WEST VIRGINIA 72, ASU 67**

| **Score by periods** | **1st** | **2nd** | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Appalachian State | 24 | 43 - | 67 |
| West Virginia | 37 | 35 - | 72 |

**ASU:** SHARKEY 6 (5 REBOUNDS, 4 ASSISTS), C. FREEMAN 4 (6 REBOUNDS, 4 ASSISTS), A. FREEMAN 25 (5 REBOUNDS, 4 ASSISTS), SYDNOR 19 (6 REBOUNDS), MALLOW 13, TAYLOR (5 ASSISTS). FG: 25-59, 3FG: 5-13, FT: 12-15. 27 REBOUNDS, 18 ASSISTS, 20 TURNOVERS.
THREE-POINTERS: MALLOW 3, A. FREEMAN 2.

**WVU:** FIELDS 18 (7 REBOUNDS), DUNNING 14 (7 REBOUNDS), CALDWELL 22 (6 REBOUNDS), PALMER 6, STEPNEY (10 ASSISTS), FAULK 2, HARLEE 7, HOLMES 2, LEARY 1. FG: 24-51, 3FG: 4-10, FT: 20-26. 39 REBOUNDS, 19 ASSISTS, 26 TURNOVERS.
THREE-POINTERS: CALDWELL 3, PALMER.

**Photo Courtesy: Anna Freeman, ASU Athletics**