

Mountaineers Race Past Milligan

Written by Ryan Bower

Monday, 31 December 2012 09:38

Nathan Healy's career day helped lead Appalachian State University men's basketball to a 71-51 win over visiting Milligan on Sunday at the Holmes

Center. Healy, who grabbed a career-high 15 rebounds and scored 17 points, was one of four players to notch at least 10 points for the Mountaineers (4-8) as the squad easily handled the Buffaloes (8-6) to close out 2012.

"I'm disappointed I had to continue to challenge guys for energy and to do things the right way," said ASU coach Jason Capel. "Look at the final stat sheet. We win by 20, But we shoot 38 percent and miss 12 free throws. It was a bad day at the office."

After Milligan led by two points early in the first half, Appalachian used an 8-0 run to take a 10-4 lead and never trailed the rest of the way as it picked up its second-straight victory.

Healy's layup at the 7:32 mark of the first half gave the Apps their first double-digit lead (23-13) of the contest as the Mountaineers would lead by as many as 13 points (28-15) in the opening period of play.

A layup by Milligan's Tyler DeVault in the closing seconds of the first half would cut Milligan's deficit to just nine points, but the Apps took a 30-21 lead into the half.

The Mountaineers began the second half in dominating fashion, scoring the first six points to take a 36-21 lead with 18:34 left to play, but the Buffaloes reeled off a 19-9 run to draw within five points (45-40) with just over 10 minutes remaining.

Appalachian would clamp down defensively from there as it made several key defensive stops and scored 11-straight points to jump back out to a 56-40 lead on Tevin Baskin's layup with 6:51 on the clock.

The Mountaineers would eventually extend their lead to as many as 22 points (69-47) in the final two minutes en route to their second-straight win.

Healy led all players in scoring and rebounding while Baskin added 15 points off the bench. Jay Canty and Tab Hamilton each added 10 points and Chris Burgess dished out a game-high seven assists.

"First game back from Christmas break with a few days off, and we were a little rusty," Healy said. "It showed. But a win is a win. (Milligan) did some really good things, not to take anything away from them. But we've got to play better with (Southern) conference games coming up on the schedule."

Milligan was paced by DeVault's 12 points and seven rebounds while Mickey Woods scored six points, grabbed five rebounds and dished out five assists.

Appalachian shot 38.4 percent (28-of-73) on the day but connected on 45.7 percent in the second half while limiting Milligan to just 32.2 percent (21-of-65) from the floor. The Mountaineers finished with a 54-44 edge in rebounds and recorded a season-best nine blocks while forcing Milligan into 19 turnovers.

"We're going to be all right," Capel said. "Our focus now is go down to Wofford and win that game. We haven't beaten Wofford in a while. The last time we beat them was three years ago down at their place. But we're going to work hard, and we're confident."

Appalachian State returns to action when it travels to Southern Conference rival Wofford on Jan. 8 and returns home for two-straight against Elon (Jan. 12) and UNCG (Jan. 14).

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GAME NOTES: The Mountaineers improved to 18-9 all-time against Milligan... Appalachian also moved to 23-30 in the final game of the calendar year... the Apps are 21-10 in home games under head coach Jason Capel and 10-3 in non-conference home games... the victory marked Appalachian's first two-game winning streak since knocking off Chattanooga and Winthrop on Feb. 15 & 18, 2012... the Mountaineers finished with a 36-22 edge in the paint and a 22-7 advantage in second-chance points.

ASU 71, MILLIGAN 51

Score by periods 1st 2nd Total

Milligan	21	30	-	51
Appalachian State	30	41	-	71

MILLIGAN: DeVAULT 12 (7 REBOUNDS), PALAIMA 2, PETTIS 4, WOODS 6 (5 ASSISTS), SITTON 4, CARPENTER 2, BROOKS 5, BLAKE 8, CROWE 2, ELLIS 2, McLEOD 4. FG: 21-65, 3FG: 4-8, FT: 5-8. 44 REBOUNDS, 11 ASSISTS, 19 TURNOVERS. THREE-POINTERS: BLAKE 2, McLEOD, BROOKS.

ASU: HEALY 17 (15 REBOUNDS, 4 STEALS, 2 BLOCKED SHOTS), CANTY 10 (7 REBOUNDS) OKAM 3 (7 REBOUNDS), HAMILTON 10, BURGESS 6 (7 ASSISTS), BASKIN 15, TRICE 7, EAVES 3. FG: 28-73, 3FG: 5-20, FT: 10-22. 54 REBOUNDS, 14 ASSISTS, 12 TURNOVERS.

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THREE-POINTERS: HAMILTON 2, HEALY, TRICE, EAVES.

Photo Courtesy: Nathan Healy, ASU Athletics