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Appalachian State University women's basketball reeled off an early first-half run en route to a dominant 77-46 win over Southern Conference rival Western Carolina on Saturday at the Holmes Center. The Mountaineers (9-3, 3-1 SoCon) took

control of the contest early and never looked back as they picked up their eighth win in a row over the Catamounts (4-9, 2-3).

After falling behind in the first minute when WCU connected on a layup, App State seized all the momentum by scoring the next seven points to jump out to a 7-2 lead with 17:08 left in the first. The Catamounts converted a pair of free throws to draw within three (7-4) seconds later, but it would be all Appalachian from that point on as the Mountaineers reeled off a 30-4 run to grab a commanding 37-8 lead with 7:10 remaining in the half.

Appalachian State led by as many as 31 points on four different occasions in the final six minutes of the half as Courtney Freeman and Maryah Sydnor led the charge with a combined 23 first-half points.

The Mountaineers limited Western to just 24.0 percent (6-of-25) from the floor in the first half, including 0-of-11 from beyond the arc. Appalachian countered by shooting 43.8 percent (14-of-32) through the first 20 minutes including 14-of-20 from the charity stripe.

A slow start to the first half for the Mountaineers would allow Western Carolina to cut the deficit to 21 points (44-23), but it was all the closer the Catamounts could get as Appalachian never led by less than 29 points after Michelle Taylor's layup at the 15:49 mark made it 53-23.

C. Freeman led all players in scoring with 19 points while Anna Freeman poured in 17 and grabbed nine rebounds. Sydnor tallied 16 points and eight rebounds to go along with four assists.

Lindsay Simpson paced the Catamounts with 15 points off the bench, but was the only WCU player to score more than six points in the game.

As a squad, Appalachian shot 46.7 percent (28-of-60) from the floor including 19-of-25 from the free throw line. Western shot just 26.7 percent (16-of-60) on the afternoon and was just 2-of-21 from long range.

The Mountaineers pulled down 46 rebounds to WCU's 33 and forced the Catamounts into 22 turnovers, which the team converted into 33 points.

Game Notes: After pulling three steals against the Catamounts, Kelsey Sharkey joins Appalachian's All-Time steals leaders. With six field-goals tonight, Anna Freeman moves to App's third all0time field-goals leader. Western's 22 turnovers, marks the 113th straight contest, which Appalachian has forced 20 or more turnovers.

ASU 77, WCU 46

Score by periods	**1st**	**2nd**	**Total**
Western Carolina	19	27	46
Appalachian State	44	33	77

WCU: HUNNICUTT 6, ABRAHAM 2, McKINNEY 3 (4 REBOUNDS), SIMPSON 15 (4 REBOUNDS), JOSEPH 6, CAMPBELL 4, LYON 4, TERRY 4 (4 REBOUNDS), STEWART 2. FG: 16-60, 3FG: 2-21, FT: 12-16. 33 REBOUNDS, 3 ASSISTS, 22 TURNOVERS.

THREE-POINTERS: SIMPSON 2.

ASU: SYDNOR 16 (8 REBOUNDS, 4 ASSISTS), A. FREEMAN 17 (9 REBOUNDS, 5 ASSISTS), GARY 3, MALLOW 9, C. FREEMAN 19, SHARKEY 5, TAYLOR 4, GATEWOOD 4. FG: 28-60, 3FG: 2-10, FT: 19-25. 46 REBOUNDS, 19 ASSISTS, 18 TURNOVERS.

THREE-POINTERS: GARY, MALLOW.

Photo Courtesy; Michelle Taylor, ASU Athletics