

Apps Blast UNCG For Fifth-Straight Win

Written by Ryan Bower

Tuesday, 15 January 2013 09:42

Appalachian State University men's basketball held UNCG without a field goal for the first 7:28 of the second half, spurring an 18-2 run that propelled the

Mountaineers to an 83-70 triumph on Monday evening at the Holmes Center.

With its fifth-straight victory and sixth win in its last seven games, Appalachian State (7-8, 3-1 SoCon) drew within a half-game of Western Carolina for first place in the SoCon North Division standings. Losses by WCU and Davidson on Monday night left Appalachian among a group of five SoCon teams tied in the loss column with just one conference defeat apiece.

"We must learn not to let up," said ASU coach Jason Capel. "And we must learn to get off to better starts, especially with our next two games on the road. When we talk about this game, we have dominated these guys three times last season. And we did it by trust and execution. But they never let up. And what our guys have to learn is not to let up. We need to have a killer instinct. That's why we won tonight."

Much like Saturday's 10-point win over Elon, Appalachian never led in the first half and found itself down by seven at halftime when UNCG' took a 39-32 lead on Kevin McNeil's putback at the buzzer.

However, the Mountaineers needed less than three minutes after the break to erase the seven-point deficit and took their first lead of the evening at 41-39 on a Tab Hamilton three-pointer just 2:57 into the second half. Appalachian State went on to score the first 13 points of the second period before UNCG finally snapped its scoreless skid with a pair of free throws 4:34 into the half.

By the time the Spartans managed to sink their first field goal of the second half with 12:32 to go in the ballgame, Appalachian had extended its lead to 50-41 and never led by less than five points the rest of the way.

"Coach got on us at halftime," said point guard Mike Neal. "He told us that we had to come out and win the first four minutes of the second half and set the tone from there. And we got the first punch in."

"Mike Neal was the best player on the floor tonight, especially in the second half," Capel said.

"This team really gave him a hard time at the conference tournament (a loss in the semifinals) last year in Asheville. But Mike did so many good things tonight, and the rest of the guys fed off of him."

Nathan Healy matched a career high with 24 points and fell just one rebound short of his third-career double-double to lead Appalachian State. Mike Neal added 19 points, 16 of which came in the second half, while Tevin Baskin chipped in with 16 and Jay Canty scored 14 to pace four Mountaineers in double-figures.

UNCG was led by a team-best 22 points while Derrell Armstrong tallied 20 but no other Spartan scored more than seven points.

Appalachian shot 43.9 percent (25-for-57) on the night, including a blistering 62.5 percent in the second half, and connected on 28-of-34 free throws. UNCG shot 42.6 percent (23-for-54) but shot just 69.2 percent from the charity stripe and committed 14 turnovers.

"It was a total team effort tonight," Capel said. "We were unselfish, and we're doing a lot of good things. If we continue to do these things, we'll be successful. This is a confident team, and

Apps Blast UNCG For Fifth-Straight Win

Written by Ryan Bower

Tuesday, 15 January 2013 09:42

we're headed on the road, and to be a championship team, you must win on the road. Now, we it's time to go to Chattanooga and get a win."

The Mountaineers return to action at Chattanooga at 7 p.m. on Thursday before heading to Samford for an 8 p.m. showdown on Saturday.

GAME NOTES: Appalachian State improved to 21-18 all-time against UNCG... the Apps also improved to 12-8 when facing the Spartans in Boone... Monday's victory gives Appalachian its longest winning streak since the 2009-10 squad won six in a row... App State outscored UNCG 36-24 in the paint and 24-10 off turnovers.

ASU 83, UNCG 70

□

Score by periods □ □ 1st □ □ 2nd □ □ Total

UNC-GREENSBORO 39 31 - 70

Appalachian State 32 51 - 83

UNCG: WILLIAMS 3, LOCKE 6, PAULOS 7, PARKER 3, ARMSTRONG 20 (7 REBOUNDS), SIMPSON 22, POTTS 4, McNEIL 4, HOFFER 1. FG: 23-54, 3FG: 6-19, FT: 18-26. 34 REBOUNDS, 5 ASSISTS, 14 TURNOVERS.

THREE-POINTERS: ARMSTRONG 3, PAULOS, PARKER, SIMPSON.

ASU: OBACHA 4, HEALY 24 (9 REBOUNDS), CANTY 14 (9 REBOUNDS, 4 ASSISTS), HAMILTON 3, NEAL 19, BASKIN 16, BURGESS 3. FG: 25-57, 3FG: 5-15, FT: 28-34. 35 REBOUNDS, 9 ASSISTS, 9 REBOUNDS.

THREE-POINTERS: HEALY 2, CANTY, HAMILTON, BURGESS.

Apps Blast UNCG For Fifth-Straight Win

Written by Ryan Bower

Tuesday, 15 January 2013 09:42

Photo Courtesy: Nathan Healy, ASU Athletics