

Mountaineers Turn Back Spartans

Written by Staff Reports

Sunday, 02 October 2011 21:15

Appalachian State volleyball picked up a 3-1 victory over UNCG on Sunday, Oct. 2 in a battle of the top two teams in the SoCon North. The four-set victory (22-25, 25-23, 25-20, 25-20) gave the Mountaineers (11-7, 3-1) sole possession of first place in the SoCon North while the Spartans (9-10, 2-2) fell back into a three-way tie for second place with Elon and Western Carolina.

UNCG fell behind 15-11 in the first set before rallying to make it 21-20 and force an ASU timeout. After collecting themselves following the stoppage of play, the Apps score to take a 22-20 advantage and knock the Spartans back on the ropes.

The home team would answer with five-straight points to take a 25-22 win in the first set and give the Mountaineers just their second first-set loss in their last seven matches.

Appalachian fought back to take a 9-8 lead in the second set, but the Spartans used a 4-0 run to retake the lead at 12-9 midway through the second stanza. The Mountaineers rallied to tie the set at 13-13 as the teams traded blows the rest of the way.

The second set featured 16 ties and four lead changes and was tied at 23-23 before the Apps put the set away with back-to-back kills from Kasey Sauls (Prairie Village, Kan./Shawnee Mission East) and Kelly Rhein (York, Pa./Virginia/York Catholic).

UNCG jumped out to a 6-3 lead in the third set, but ASU came back to take a 7-6 lead before extending its advantage to 14-10. The Spartans, who also trailed 17-12, bounced back with a 5-1 run to cut the Apps' lead to just one point (18-17). Appalachian was able to put the set away by scoring seven of the final 10 points en route to a 25-20 set win.

Appalachian found itself behind (13-12) midway through the fourth set before rallying to take a 14-13 lead. UNCG would tie the match twice in the closing moments, but were unable to retake the lead as the Mountaineers put an emphatic end to the match on a service ace from Sauls to pick up a 25-20 set win.

Anna Wagner (Lincoln, Neb./Florida Gulf Coast/Lincoln East) led ASU with 14 kills for the second-straight match while Alison Blasingame (Yorktown, Va./Virginia Tech/Grafton) notched 10 kills.

Sauls and Lauren Brown (Overland Park, Kan./St. James Academy) finished with 26 and 20 assists, respectively. Courtney Rhein (York, Pa./Eastern York) recorded 23 digs.

Appalachian finished with a .271 attack percentage while holding UNCG to just a .200 mark.

The Mountaineers also finished with twice as many blocks (12) as the Spartans (6). Blasingame and Meghann Forshey (Glen Allen, Va./Deep Run) each recorded five block assists.

The Mountaineers return to action at Georgia Southern on Saturday, Oct. 8 at 7 p.m. ET before heading back to the High Country for three-straight SoCon matches.

OT Goal by Holz Lifts Appalachian Women's Soccer to Win

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In the final minutes of the game, ASU freshman Julia Holz (Marietta, Ga./Walton) netted an exciting sudden-victory goal to lift Appalachian State women's soccer, 1-0, over Wofford in double overtime Sunday at ASU Soccer Stadium. The win is the Apps' first Southern Conference victory of the season as the team improves to 5-6-1 (1-2-1 SoCon), while the Terriers dip to 7-3-0 (1-3 SoCon).

"Our ladies really stepped up today," said head coach Sarah Strickland. "They really laid it on the line, and we felt like a goal was coming all game. Julia [Holz] scored a great goal, and I'm very proud of our team."

The win was Appalachian's first overtime conference win since a 2-1 double-overtime victory over Western Carolina in 2004. Wofford suffered its third straight loss after a 7-0 start to the year.

In the opening minutes of the game, Appalachian's Sydney Hill (Alpharetta, Ga./) broke loose on the front for what looked like a quick goal for the Mountaineers, but her shot drifted wide left of the post.

Wofford's defense collected itself and allowed only three more shots in the period. On the other end of the field, the Appalachian defense proved equally formidable, and the Terriers were only able to pull the trigger once in the opening half.

The Terriers gained momentum late in regulation and seemed on the verge of ending the scoreless drought. In the 78th minute, Wofford's Erin Stephenson fired from near the top of the box. ASU goalkeeper Amy Kolowsky (Columbia, S.C./Spring Valley) came out to play the ball and smothered the shot, but the ball rebounded to Emily Bougas.

With only one defender between her and an open goal, Bougas was unable to keep her shot on target, and the opportunity ended with the ball sliding outside the left post.

After no score in regulation, the teams upped the tempo in the first extra period. Kolowsky saved two Wofford shots on goal, and the Black and Gold notched three shots with two deflecting off the crossbar.

Appalachian's big break came in the 107th minute. Deep in Wofford territory, freshman Morgan Fancher (The Colony, Texas/The Colony) and junior Hannah Coad (Alpharetta, Ga./Blessed Trinity) maneuvered the ball to Holz, who drew the keeper off her line. Holz's shot was partially deflected by the diving goalie but caught the inside of the left post to clinch the Mountaineers' victory.

Kolowsky finished the game with five saves, while ASU's Meggie Graham (Marietta, Ga./Walton) had a game-high three shots.

"I didn't even see the shot," admits Holz. "I was just focused on my foot and the ball and hit it with everything I had left." The goal was her team-high fifth of the season. "Overall, I think we were a little off our game at times, but we stayed in it," she added.

"Holz scored an incredible goal," commented Strickland. "Taylor Dunlap (Fenton, Mich./Fenton) did a great job on defense, and Amy [Kolowsky] earned her fourth shutout. Katy Dodd (Apex, N.C./Apex) stepped up, too."

The Mountaineers return to the road next weekend with games at Davidson on Friday, Oct. 7 and Georgia Southern on Saturday, Oct. 9.

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Field Hockey Shutout by Lancers

Appalachian State University field hockey fell to Longwood, 3-0, on Sunday afternoon at Kidd Brewer Stadium.

The Mountaineers (1-9, 1-2 NorPac) held the Lancers (6-7, 2-1 NorPac) scoreless with just seconds left in the first-half, when Longwood's Christina Verhulst blasted a goal from 13 yards out as time expired for intermission to give the Lancers a 1-0 lead at halftime.

The Lancers increased their lead when Jessica Diaz netted her third goal of the season on a tip in off a rebounded shot in the 57th minute. Longwood's Lauren Sullivan tagged on another goal, 3-0, with less than 10 minutes left in the game.

Appalachian returns to action on Tuesday when they play host to Davidson at 7:45 p.m. at Kidd Brewer Stadium.