

## Slow Start Dooms Mountaineers

Written by Mike Kelly

Wednesday, 16 November 2011 08:58

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The Appalachian State University men's basketball team turned the ball over 20 times in the first half and dropped an 81-68 decision to former Southern-Conference rival, East Tennessee State, Tuesday night in Johnson City, TN.

The Mountaineers (1-1) were ice cold from the floor in the first half and only made six field goals. In turn,

ASU was extremely generous as the Mountaineers turned the ball over 29 times on the night. That allowed East Tennessee State (1-1) to build a commanding 19-point advantage.

"It was all us," said ASU coach Jason Capel in a dejected tone. "We worked very hard in practice against this press. But we lost our poise, made bad decisions and threw the ball all over the court."

The Mountaineers trailed 39-23 at the intermission, but they came charging back with a strong second-half effort, thanks to Jamaal Trice. The junior-college transfer erupted for 18 points in the second half, and brought the Mountaineers to within seven points with four-and-a-half minutes left in the game.

Unfortunately, ASU ran out of gas and the Buccaneers eventually pulled away.

"I just wanted to win this game," said Trice, who scored all of his points in the second half. "But we just came up short. The fight was there, though. We just can't get down about this. It's a long season and this is only the second game. We have to learn from it and focus on Saturday (at Tennessee Tech)."

Trice was 7-11 from the field and 4-7 from three-point range. As a team, the Mountaineers shot 50% from the floor (19-38) in the second half. It was a huge improvement following their first-half collapse.

"We reduced our chances to score because of all the turnovers in the first half," Capel said. "We had problems getting the ball up the floor, and we struggled getting the ball inside. It limited our chances, and they took advantage of it with breakaways, transition baskets and some easy dunks."

But despite their problems getting the ball inside, the Mountaineers out-rebounded ETSU, 46-33. And 23 of those came on the offensive end. Ike Butts turned in another strong effort with his 17th career double-double with ten points and 11 rebounds. He is also ranked tenth all time in ASU history in rebounding, thanks to Tuesday night's effort.

"To be down by as many as we were, and to fight back like we did, shows me the character of this team," Capel said. "We got within seven points with four-and-a-half minutes left. But we have to show more toughness, especially when the game is on the line. We have to make the right decisions when favorable opportunities present themselves. Making turnovers like we did tonight, especially in the first half, is unacceptable."

Omar Carter finished with 14 points and eight rebounds. Andre Williamson, who was plagued by foul trouble, only played 18 minutes and finished with 10 points. Tommy Hubbard paced ETSU with 23 points; Adam Sollazzo had 16 points.

"It's a long journey," Capel said. "This is only the second game. It's a setback, but we just have to regroup."

The Mountaineers travel to Cookeville, TN., to play Tennessee Tech Saturday night. Our

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coverage begins at 7:15 p.m. on AM 1450, WATA.

NOTES: The Mountaineers take on ETSU in a rematch at the Holmes Center on December 10. A starting time for that game has not been announced as yet. It all depends on football, and when the Mountaineers, if they're still alive in the FCS playoffs are still alive.....The Mountaineers close out this three-game road trip next Tuesday night against East Carolina at the Time Warner Cable Arena in Charlotte.....Their next home game will be a week from Saturday, November 26 when Milligan comes to town.

### ETSU 81, ASU 68

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ASU 23 45 - 68  
ETSU 39 42 - 81

**ASU:** CARTER 14 (8 REBOUNDS), WILLIAMSON 10, BUTTS 10 (11 REBOUNDS), TRICE 18, WOODS 2 (4 ASSISTS), MILUM 5, HAMILTON 5, HEALY 2, NEAL 2. FG: 25-64, 3FG: 5-27, FT: 13-18. 46 REBOUNDS, 29 TURNOVERS.

**ETSU:** HUBBARD 23 (7 REBOUNDS), BROWN 12 (6 REBOUNDS), COOLEY 11 (5 REBOUNDS), DUBOSE 9 (5 REBOUNDS), SOLLAZZO 16 (6 REBOUNDS, 5 ASSISTS), JONES 3, PODERIS 7. FG: 27-57, 3FG: 3-10, FT: 24-39. 33 REBOUNDS, 16 TURNOVERS.

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**Photo Courtesy: Jamaal Trice, by Dave Mayo, ASU Athletics**