

ASU Men Grab Road Win at Tennessee Tech

Written by Charles Cochrum
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Appalachian State University men's basketball fought off a late Tennessee Tech rally to earn a 68-63 win on Saturday night in the Eblen Center. Omar Carter (Charlotte, N.C./Charleston Southern) and Jamaal Trice (Los Angeles, Calif./Midland College) led the Mountaineers with 19 points each in the close victory.

After the Golden Eagles (1-2) erased an eight-point deficit in the second half,

the Mountaineers (2-1) responded with an 11-2 run spanning nearly five minutes in the middle of the period. Appalachian then kept its lead to at least four points until the game's final minute and closed out the contest with free throws to pick up its first road win of the young season. ASU shot 14-of-19 from the foul line in the game.

TTU cut the ASU lead from five to two points with 47 ticks left in regulation before Isaac Butts (Milledgeville, Ga./Georgia Military) padded the narrow lead with a free throw with 18 seconds on the clock. The Apps then forced a difficult TTU three-pointer with four seconds left and Rodney Milum (Houston, Texas/Midland College) hauled in the rebound. The junior transfer sank two ensuing free throws to ice the win.

The Mountaineers worked out from a slow start and early eight-point deficit to take a 39-33 lead into the intermission. The first-half comeback was all the more impressive due to the foul discrepancy, as TTU shot 15 free throws before ASU shot its first. Big men Butts, Petey Hausley (Marion, N.C./Iowa Western), Brian Okam (Enugu, Nigeria/Rutgers) and Andre Williamson (Dayton, Ohio/Prince George) picked up two fouls each in the opening 20 minutes. Leading the way, Carter sank 6-of-14 shots with two treys to accompany four rebounds and an assist. All five of Trice's baskets came from downtown, where he was 5-of-9 on the night to accompany three assists.

In addition to his clutch rebound, Milum scored 13 points on 4-of-6 shooting. Butts led ASU with seven rebounds in addition to his six points and an assist. Williamson scored six points, grabbed three rebounds and blocked a pair of shots before fouling out.

Appalachian was out-rebounded by its opponent for just the first time this season as the Golden Eagles owned a narrow 33-30 edge on the glass. TTU converted 15 offensive rebounds into 19 second-chance points. The home squad dished out just seven assists in the game.

The Apps dished out 14 assists on 22 field goals in the game, led by Mitch Woods' (Naples, Fla./Community School of Naples) team-high four. ASU shot 51.2 percent (22-43) from the field and 10-of-22 from downtown. Tennessee Tech converted just 34.5 percent of its shots (19-55) for the night and only 3-of-12 three-pointers.

Ohio Valley Conference Preseason Player of the Year Kevin Murphy led TTU with 28 points to accompany eight rebounds and teammate Jud Dillard notched a double-double with 22 points and 11 boards.

The Mountaineers host East Carolina on Tuesday at Charlotte's Time Warner Cable Arena. The 7 p.m. contest marks the return of the in-state rivalry, which has been dormant for 10 years.

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