

Vilarino's Career Night Leads ASU Past Furman

Written by Charles Cochrum
Friday, 10 February 2012 08:37

Solid free-throw shooting and efficient second-half shooting propelled Appalachian State University men's basketball to a 79-69 road win against Furman on Thursday night at Timmons Arena. Guards Mike Neal (Greensboro, N.C./Oak Ridge Military) and

G.J. Vilarino (McKinney, Texas/Gonzaga) set season highs in points to lead the Mountaineers to victory.

Appalachian shot 56.5 percent from the field and 19-of-24 from the foul line in the second half to fend off several Paladin runs and expand the lead to as many as 13 points late in the contest. On the night, ASU sank 30-of-38 free throws (78.9 percent) and 41.1 percent from the floor. The Mountaineers owned a seven-point advantage with less than five minutes led when foul trouble caught up to the visitors. Isaac Butts (Milledgeville, Ga./Georgia Military) was the first player to foul out and was followed closely by Nathan Healy (New Bern, N.C./Blair Academy) less than two minutes later.

Fortunately, the free throws kept falling for the Apps and the lead never dipped below seven points down the stretch and the squad was able to close out the final two minutes without Andre Williamson (Dayton, Ohio/Prince George), who also fell victim to fouling out.

Vilarino made his first start since December and came out firing to notch 13 points, including a 7-of-8 mark at the foul line. He led Appalachian (10-14, 6-8 SoCon) with nine rebounds as well. Neal led ASU with 18 points on 3-of-7 shooting with a 12-of-14 mark at the charity stripe. The freshman also led the squad with four assists and three steals.

Williamson joined the pair in double figures with 10 points on 3-of-8 shooting and a 4-of-8 mark from the line. Butts added nine points and Healy chipped in a modest seven points after pacing the Mountaineers in scoring in each of the last three games.

The Apps turned the ball over just eight times and forced 11 Paladin (12-13, 6-8) turnovers which converted into 14 points. The Mountaineers were strong on the boards with a 37-36 rebound advantage. Omar Carter (Charlotte, N.C./Charleston Southern) grabbed seven boards to accompany eight points and three of ASU's 12 assists.

Furman's Brandon Sebirumbi notched 14 points to lead his squad and was one of five Paladins to haul in a team-high five rebounds on the night. Bobby Austin added 10 points for Furman. Furman shot 40 percent from the field with 6-of-20 three-pointers and a 19-of-26 mark from the foul line.

ASU's Tab Hamilton (Winston-Salem, N.C./Fishburne Military) notched seven points with three steals and a pair of rebounds on the night. Mitch Woods (Naples, Fla./Community School of Naples) added five points and two assists in his first start since November. Petey Hausley (Marion, N.C./Iowa Western) also filled in with two points, two rebounds and a block in 11 minutes on the floor.

The Mountaineers return home on Saturday to host Wofford at 2 p.m. The game is the first of a double-header with ASU's women's basketball, and is also part of the WBCA Play4Kay cancer awareness day. Visit GoASU.com for more information about the event.

NOTES: The win was ASU's first at Furman since 2007-08 ... the team's eight turnovers were the second-fewest of the season ... Jamaal Trice sat out the game as a one-game suspension ... Alongside Hamilton, Healy and Williamson, Vilarino and Woods started their first games since

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December ... the win snapped a three-game slide and gave ASU its first two-game season sweep of the season.

ASU 79, FURMAN 69

SCORE BY PERIODS 1ST 2ND TOTAL

APPALACHIAN STATE..	33	46	79
FURMAN.....	31	38	69

ASU: HEALY 7, WILLIAMSON 10 (4 REBOUNDS), HAMILTON 7, VILARINO 13 (9 REBOUNDS), WOODS 5, CARTER 8 (7 REBOUNDS, 3 ASSISTS), NEAL 18 (5 REBOUNDS, 4 ASSISTS), BUTTS 9, HAUSLEY 2. FG: 23-56, 3FG: 3-12, FT: 30-38. 37 REBOUNDS, 8 TURNOVERS, 12 ASSISTS.

FURMAN: SEBIRUMBI 14, TOLER 9, LOYD 9 (4 ASSISTS), REDDICK 5, AUSTIN 10, BROWN 8 (4 ASSISTS), IRWIN 6, BARNES 8, FG: 22-55. 3FG: 6-20, FT: 19-26. 36 REBOUNDS, 11 TURNOVERS, 14 ASSISTS.

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Photo Courtesy: G.J. Vilarino, by Dave Mayo, ASU Athletics