

ASU Men Wrap Regular Season at WCU

Written by Charles Cochrum
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Appalachian State University men's basketball takes on archrival Western Carolina in the regular season finale. Saturday's tipoff is slated for 2 p.m. at WCU's Ramsey Center. Heading into the season's final day,

several possibilities remain for the Mountaineers' (12-16, 7-10 SoCon) seeding in next weekend's conference tournament. A win over the Catamounts coupled with a loss by Elon (vs. UNCG), Samford (at UTC) or both would give ASU the North's third seed.

Should ASU, Elon and Samford all pick up wins, the Mountaineers drop to fourth place, and an ASU loss at WCU places Appalachian in the fifth slot in the division. The Citadel shot 50 percent and snapped ASU's two-game winning streak on Wednesday, despite a double-double by Andre Williamson. The senior came off the bench to score 10 points and haul in a game-high 14 rebounds. Junior Nathan Healy notched a career-high 19 points in the game and sank all three of ASU's three-pointers. Coverage begins at 1:15 p.m. on AM 1450, WATA.

SCOUTING THE CATAMOUNTS:

- Western Carolina (13-17, 7-10 SoCon) won its third-straight game on Thursday, 79-77, against Samford.
- Harouna Mutombo leads the team with 13.2 points and 5.9 rebounds per game. He is joined in double-figure scoring by Trey Sumler (12.7), Keaton Cole (12.4) and Brandon Boggs (10.5).
- Sumler's 119 assists on the season rank fifth in the Southern Conference.
- The Catamounts lead the league with 8.1 steals per game and force nearly 16 turnovers per game altogether.
- Perimeter defense has been a weak spot for WCU, as opponents connect on 37.2 percent of three-pointers on the season.
- WCU is still in contention for a first-round bye in the SoCon Tournament and can earn a seed anywhere from second to fifth in the division. The Catamounts would need a win on Saturday and losses by both Elon and Samford. A loss will rank Western Carolina fifth.
- WCU is 3-6 against SoCon North teams.

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SERIES HISTORY:

- Against its most frequent opponent in program history, Appalachian holds a 111-65 lead in the all-time series against Western Carolina.
- The Mountaineers have won 13 of the last 16 meetings between the teams and hold a 41-39 advantage on the road.
- In this season's first game, WCU fouled ASU on eight-straight possessions in the game's final minutes and five Mountaineers combined for a 16-of-16 mark at the stripe to secure an 84-72 victory.
- Jamaal Trice led five players in double figures with 21 points on 7-of-11 shooting.
- Omar Carter added 20 points (12-12 free throws) and nine rebounds, while Williamson notched a double-double with 10 points and 11 boards.
- Williamson has faced the Catamounts seven times and averages 8.3 points, 4.6 rebounds and 1.6 blocks against the foe.
- Carter chips in 17.7 points and 8.7 boards in three meetings, while Trice (21 points) and Mike Neal (10 points, 4 assists, 2 steals) fared well in their first tastes of the rivalry earlier this season.
- Isaac Butts shoots 60 percent against WCU for 6.8 points per game.

Photo Courtesy: Jamaal Trice, ASU Athletics