

Mountaineers Eliminated By UNCG

Written by Charles Cochrum
Saturday, 03 March 2012 16:34

Isaac Butts posted his second-straight double-double and Jamaal Trice scored 11 points off the bench but it was not enough as Appalachian State University men's basketball was bounced by UNCG, 65-55, in the quarterfinals of the

2012 Southern Conference Tournament on Saturday.

The Mountaineers (13-18) took a 39-32 lead into the locker room at the half after shooting 51.7 percent (15-for-29) against the Spartans (13-18) through the first 20 minutes. After pushing its lead to as many as 11 points (49-38) midway through the second half, Appalachian cooled off and allowed UNCG to reel off a 13-2 run to pull even at 51-51 with 8:16 left to play.

The teams would trade leads twice over the next two and a half minutes before UNCG took the lead for good at 56-53 on a Drew Parker three-pointer with 5:25 left to play. The Apps were able to cut the deficit to just two points (57-55) on a pair of Mike Neal free throws with just over four minutes to play, but the Spartans closed the game out with an 8-0 run to advance to Sunday's semifinal round.

Butts solidified his candidacy for the all-tournament team with his dominance in the post for a second-straight day. The center was 8-of-10 from the floor and added one of ASU's six assists in 34 minutes. In two games, he notched 13.5 points, 12.0 rebounds and connected on 12-of-18 attempts from the field.

Joining the big man in the paint, Andre Williamson pulled in nine rebounds to accompany six points on 3-of-6 shooting with a pair of blocks. He cements his place in the ASU record book with 126 games played (third all-time), 160 blocks (fourth), 722 rebounds (11th) and a 54.2 field-goal percentage (10th).

Trice sank 3-of-7 attempts with a three-pointer and all four free throws to reach his point total. The wing added two rebounds in 21 minutes off the bench. Omar Carter chipped in 10 points after sinking three of his first five attempts. The senior then cooled off to finish the day with a 4-of-17 mark from the floor. He grabbed five rebounds and picked off a steal.

After leading ASU with 21 points in Friday's win against College of Charleston, Neal scored eight points and dished out a team-high two assists. Fellow freshman Tab Hamilton (Winston-Salem, N.C./Fishburne Military Academy) swiped two of ASU's four steals on the afternoon but was kept off of the scoreboard for just the second time all season.

UNCG's Trevis Simpson led his squad with 18 points and nine rebounds. The Spartans owned a 44-36 advantage on the glass and converted 17 offensive rebounds into 14 second-chance points. The North champions converted 14 ASU turnovers into 15 points and owned a 12-8 lead in fast-break points.

The Mountaineer defense limited UNCG to just 37.7 percent shooting in the game and 5-of-14 three-pointers, but ASU's cold spell down the stretch proved to be more costly.

ASU graduates four seniors in Butts, Carter, Petey Hausley and Williamson, but returns seven players from this season's squad along with sophomore transfer Jay Canty.

NOTES: ASU is now 0-2 against UNCG in SoCon Tournament play (2008 opening round) ... the loss was just the team's second of the season when holding the opponent under 40 percent shooting ... ASU's 84.6 percent mark from the foul line (11-13) was the third-highest total of the season ... the Apps' last field goal of the game came at the 9:03 mark in the second half, as the

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team's final four points came at the foul line.

UNCG 65, ASU 55

Score by periods	1st	2nd	Total
Appalachian State...	39	16	55
UNCG.....	32	33	65

ASU: WILLIAMSON 6 (9 REBOUNDS), BUTTS 16 (10 REBOUNDS), CARTER 10, NEAL 8, VILARINO 2, HEALY 2, TRICE 11. FG: 21-58. 3FG: 2-17, FT: 11-13. 36 REBOUNDS, 14 TURNOVERS, 6 ASSISTS.

UNCG: WILLIAMS 12 (9 REBOUNDS), BRACKETT 2, PARKER 7, VAN DUSSEN 5, SIMPSON 17 (9 REBOUNDS), ARMSTRONG 11 (6 REBOUNDS), RANDALL 2, HENRY 6, PAULOS 3. FG: 23-61, 3FG: 5-14, FT: 14-24. 44 REBOUNDS, 9 TURNOVERS, 10 ASSISTS.

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Photo Courtesy: Isaac Butts, by Tyler Buckwell, ASU Athletics