

Davidson Outlasts Catamounts in Double OT

Written by SoCon Sports Information
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South Division No. 1 Davidson claimed the 2012 Southern Conference Men's Basketball Championship with a 93-91 double overtime win over North No. 3 Western Carolina Monday night in the

U.S. Cellular Center. It's the Wildcats first title since 2008 and also the first double overtime championship game since 1984, the tournament's first-ever appearance in Asheville, when Marshall topped Chattanooga 111-107.

De'Mon Brooks and J.P. Kuhlman led Davidson with 19 points and eight rebounds apiece. Jake Cohen had 17 points, seven rebounds and seven blocks, while Nike Cochran added 16 points, six rebounds and six assists.

Keaton Cole had game-high honors for the Catamounts with 21 on the night. Tawaski King posted a double-double with 20 points and 10 boards. Harouna Mutombo tallied 20 points, seven rebounds, four assists and three steals, as Trey Sumler chipped in 18 points, five boards and four assists.

Both teams held double-digit leads in the game with Western up 12 in the first half and Davidson by as many as 13 in the second. The Wildcats went up 13, 74-61, on Cohen's jumper with 2:47 left in the game. The Catamounts went on a 14-2 run capped by back-to-back treys from Sumler the last coming with just 20 seconds left to cut it to a one-point deficit, 76-75.

Cochran was immediately fouled and hit both ends of the one-and-bonus to make it a three-point game. On the other end, Cole three-pointer was off the mark, but the foul on Cochran sent him to the charity stripe for three shots with 11 ticks left. He calmly sank all three. Steals by Sumler for WCU and Kuhlman for the Wildcats kept any buzzer-beating moments from happening.

Davidson went up four, 84-80, in overtime on three-point play by Brooks at 2:16. Two King free throws and a layup by Mutombo with 59 seconds remaining tied it at 84-all. A Cohen field goal and two more free tosses from Mutombo knotted the score at 86-all with the shot clock off and 26 seconds to play.

Mutombo stole Cohen's inbounds pass and fed Cole streaking in the lane as Mutombo was falling out of bounds. Cole's contested layup was off the mark and Cohen's rebound led to a Wildcats timeout with 18 seconds left. Brooks' game-winner rattled out and sent the game into a second extra period.

The second overtime period was a nail-biter throughout as neither team had better than a one-possession lead. Chris Czerapowicz struck first with a three for Davidson at 4:29. James Sinclair answered for WCU at 3:02 with a three-ball of his own as the shot clock expired. Cochran's layup on the Wildcats' next trip down the floor gave his mates a 91-89 advantage. After both squads traded missed three-pointers, King went to the line as Cohen fouled out being over-aggressive on the block.

King made both free throws to tie it for the sixth time on the night, fourth in extra periods, with 1:24 to go. Clint Mann found himself unguarded and drove the baseline and slammed in the final points of the night for a 93-91 lead at 1:04. The combatants traded missed shots and the Catamounts had the ball with 14 seconds left.

With the clock running down, Cole got a good look from 22 feet. The shot bounced off the rim.

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Mann then grabbed the board and got the outlet pass to the wing as the buzzer sounded. It was an amazing performance by both the favored Wildcats and gritty Catamounts playing their fourth game in four nights. From the moment WCU made its comeback from 13 down and 2:47 to play, it made all 16 free throw attempts including all eight in the bonus 10 minutes. Davidson is making its league-record 11th trip to the NCAA Championship. The Wildcats learn their travel plans Sunday March 11 at 6 p.m., on CBS.

ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

Most Outstanding Player: De'Mon Brooks, Davidson

FIRST TEAM

De'Mon Brooks, Davidson
Jake Cohen, Davidson
J.P. Kuhlman, Davidson
Harouna Mutombo, Western Carolina
Trey Sumler, Western Carolina

SECOND TEAM

Jack Isenbarger, Elon
Eric Ferguson, Georgia Southern
Trevis Simpson, UNCG
Keaton Cole, Western Carolina
Tawaski King, Western Carolina

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Photo Courtesy: De'Mon Brooks of Davidson, Southern Conference Athletics