

Mountaineers Fall to Pirates, Golden Gophers

Written by Ryan Bower

Sunday, 26 August 2012 08:41

Appalachian State University volleyball dropped both matches of a doubleheader on the final day of the JMU Days Inn Invitational on Saturday at Sinclair Gymnasium. The Mountaineers (0-3) were defeated by the Seton Hall (1-0) by

scores of 25-18, 25-20, 25-27 and 25-15 in the morning match before being downed in straight sets by No. 16 Minnesota (2-0) by scores of 25-10, 25-12 and 25-19.

Seton Hall 3, Appalachian 1

The Pirates used a balance attack and stifling defense to down App State in the first match on Monday as Seton Hall saw three players tally double-digit kill totals. Appalachian took several early, one-point leads and led by as many as two points (10-8) before the Pirates roared back with a 6-2 run to take a 14-12 lead midway through the first set en route to a 25-18 win.

In the second set, Seton Hall snagged a quick lead, but the Apps strung together a 6-0 run midway through the set to grab a 14-10 lead and force a Pirate timeout. Seton Hall regrouped following the stoppage in play and posted an 8-2 run of its own to take an 18-16 lead it would never surrender as it finished off ASU with a 25-20 second-set win.

The Mountaineers got back on track in the third set as they never trailed in a hard-fought 27-25 victory that saw Lauren Gray (Round Rock, Texas/Round Rock) register five kills. The Pirates were able to bounce back in the fourth and final set, jumping out to a quick 6-1 lead on their way to a decisive 25-15 set victory.

Appalachian did get solid performances from a pair of underclassmen as sophomore Dalton Tolliver (Ortonville, Mich./Notre Dame Prep) notched a double-double with 10 kills and 10 digs while posting four block assists. Lindsey Sauls (Prairie Village, Kan./Shawnee Mission East) also tallied double-digit digs with 10 while adding eight kills.

Paige Brown (Overland Park, Kan./St. James Academy), making her first collegiate start, posted a team-high 29 assists to go along with 19 digs while Courtney Rhein (York, Pa./Eastern York) added a team-leading 28 digs. The Mountaineers struggled offensively, hitting at a clip of just .037 percent, but the Pirates fared only slightly better with an attack percentage of .144.

Appalachian tallied 14 blocks to SHU's 12 but committed 33 attack errors compared to 29 for the Pirates.

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No. 16 Minnesota 3, Appalachian 0

In the second match of the day, Appalachian State would find itself up against one of the top teams in the nation as they took the court against No. 16 Minnesota. The Golden Gophers would prove to be too much of a challenge for the Mountaineers to overcome as they were able to hold the lead for nearly every point of the entire match en route to a 3-0 victory.

Minnesota dominated the first two sets as it did not trail once while picking up back-to-back double-digit set victories. App State would jump out to a 3-0 lead in the third and final set, but the Golden Gophers would settle in and cruise with relative ease to a 25-19 third-set victory as they led by as many as seven points late in the set before a small Mountaineer rally fell short. Minnesota used an offensive onslaught to capture the victory as it hit a scorching .412 percent on the attack during the match and saw three players post double-digit kill totals. Appalachian was held to an attack percentage of just .098 percent but picked up another solid performance from Tolliver, who tallied a team-high 10 kills.

The Golden Gophers collected seven blocks to the Mountaineers' six and had three different players total at least 12 digs.

Up Next

Appalachian State continues play on the road as it takes part in the Lipscomb Invitational next weekend. The Mountaineers will face Lipscomb on Friday before taking on Houston and Missouri to cap off the weekend.

MATCH NOTES: Rhein increased her career dig total to 1,361 and needs just 23 more to move into third place in Appalachian State history... the Apps dropped to 173-161 all-time in regular-season tournaments and 6-7 in matches played in Harrisonburg... the Mountaineers are 0-3 for the first time since beginning the 2008 season with an 0-6 record.

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Photo Courtesy: Courtney Rhein, ASU Athletics