

ASU Women Thump LMC In Opener

Written by Ryan Bower

Friday, 09 November 2012 23:02

Appalachian State University women's basketball overcame a pesky Lees-McRae team to win its season opener, 91-54, on Friday night at the Holmes Center. The Mountaineers (1-0) started the game uncharacteristically cold from the floor, falling

behind by seven points (10-3) early in the contest as the Bobcats started the game on fire offensively.

Lees-McRae struck first on a three-point bucket from Lauren Lewis, who connected from deep just moments later to stake the Bobcats to an early 8-2 lead. The Mountaineers would chip away at the deficit with a quick 5-0 run to make it 10-8 before finally tying the contest, 17-17, on an Anna Freeman three-pointer with just over 10 minutes left to play.

The Bobcats would regain the lead minutes later after a jumper from Alyssa Munson made it 21-19 with 8:27 on the clock, but App State took the lead for good when LaShawna Gatewood put in an easy layup to give the Mountaineers a 23-21 lead with just over seven minutes remaining in the half.

Appalachian took its first double-digit (43-33) lead after Courtney Freeman connected on a pair of free throws in the final two minutes and went into the half with a 45-36 lead. The Mountaineers would find their stride early in the second half as they began to pull away.

Appalachian outscored Lees-McRae 21-4 through the first nine minutes of play to push its lead to 29 points (69-40) and never led by less than 25 points the rest of the way en route to an emphatic season-opening win.

C. Freeman led all scorers with 22 points on 8-of-14 shooting while A. Freeman poured in 18 and dished out four assists. Maryah Sydnor fell just shy of a double-double with 15 points and eight boards and Kelsey Sharkey added 12 points and eight rebounds. Michelle Taylor, making just her eighth collegiate start, scored five points, dished out five assists and tallied three steals. Lees-McRae was paced by a team-high 14 points from Lauren Lewis while three other Bobcats finished with eight points. The Bobcats were held to just 26.1 percent (6-of-23) from the floor in the second half after shooting 50.0 percent in the first.

Appalachian State finished with 37 rebounds to Lees-McRae's 27. The Mountaineers forced 38 turnovers and tallied 21 steals while committing 25 turnovers of their own. The Apps shot an impressive 52.9 percent (37-of-70) from the floor.

The Apps return to action when they head to Virginia Tech on Wednesday. That game is scheduled for a 7 p.m. tipoff in Blacksburg, Va.

GAME NOTES: The 38 turnovers forced by the Mountaineers are the highest total since at least the 2005-06 season... the Apps forced 37 turnovers against Central Florida on Nov. 11, 2006... C. Freeman needs just 108 points to score 1,000 for her career... Appalachian forced 10 or more turnovers for the 102nd-straight game... the Apps have won three-straight home openers and nine of the last 13 since moving to the Holmes Center in 2000.

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ASU 91, LMC 54

Score by periods 1st 2nd Total

Lees-McRae	36	18	-	54
Appalachian State	45	46	-	91

LMC: MUNSON 8, BELCHER 4 (6 REBOUNDS), LEWIS 14, FLOWERS 5, PATTERSON 8, TRUESDALE 6, DeSOUZA 8, COLLINS 1. FG: 17-45, 3FG: 5-11, FT: 15-17. 27 REBOUNDS, 5 ASSISTS, 38 TURNOVERS.

ASU: SHARKEY 12 (8 REBOUNDS, 4 ASSISTS), SYDNOR 15 (8 REBOUNDS), A. FREEMAN 18 (4 ASSISTS), TAYLOR 4 (5 ASSISTS), C. FREEMAN 22, WOOD 3, GATEWOOD 4, MALLOW 8, WILKERSON 2, COOPER 3. FG: 37-70, 3FG: 4-10, FT: 13-17. 37 REBOUNDS, 25 ASSISTS, 25 TURNOVERS.

Photo Courtesy: Kelsey Sharkey, ASU Athletics