

App State Falls to Georgia

Written by Ryan Bower

Friday, 29 November 2013 23:57

An early second-half scoring drought was too much to overcome as Appalachian State University men's basketball dropped a 71-53 decision at Georgia on Friday at Stegeman Coliseum.

The Mountaineers (1-5) were held without a field goal for an eight-minute stretch in the second half, long enough for the Bulldogs (2-4) to take a double-digit lead in the opening stages of the final period en route to their first victory in nearly a month.

After battling UGA to a one-point game at halftime and grabbing a 36-35 lead in the opening minute of the second half, the Apps were held without a field goal for an eight-minute-and-nine-second stretch (19:16-11:07) with its only scoring coming on a free throw with 15:34 left to play.

The scoring drought allowed the Bulldogs to reel off a 12-1 run and jump out to their first double-digit lead (47-37) when Nemanja Djuricic connected on a layup at the 12:32 mark, and Appalachian would never regain its momentum from the first half.

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Georgia extended its lead to as many as 16 points (59-43) with just under seven minutes to play as the Mountaineers were unable to come away with the victory despite hanging with the Bulldogs in the first half.

Both squads treated fans to an exciting first half that saw six lead changes as the Bulldogs snagged an early seven-point lead (20-13) midway through the opening period, but the Mountaineers reeled off a 7-0 run to tie things at 20-20 with 7:30 left on the clock.

Appalachians run began with a pair of free throws from Tab Hamilton at the 9:20 mark and tied the game two minutes later when he soared through the lane and threw down thunderous dunk off a missed three pointer from Chris Burgess.

The Apps would grab the lead late in the first half when Mike Neal drilled a shot from beyond the arc with 53 seconds remaining to make it 32-31 in favor of the Mountaineers, but UGA hit a pair of free throws with 33 seconds to go and took a 33-32 lead into the locker room.

Tevin Baskin led all players with 20 points on 8-of-16 shooting while adding three assists and two steals. Hamilton scored 11 points and was 5-of-5 from the free-throw line while Michael Obacha paced Appalachian on the boards with six rebounds.

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Georgia was co-led on offense by Kenny Gaines and Charles Mann, who each tallied 14 points while Brandon Morris and Donte Williams ripped down six rebounds each.

Appalachian was held to just 32.7 percent (18-of-55) from the floor while the Bulldogs connected on 55.1 percent (27-of-49) of their shots. The Mountaineers went 13-of-17 (76.5 percent) from the charity stripe, their best free-throw shooting performance of the season and hauled in 31 rebounds. The Bulldogs finished with 36 rebounds and forced 14 Mountaineer turnovers.

The Apps return to action when they play host to North Greenville at 7 p.m. on Dec. 4 before an in-state showdown with Charlotte at 2 p.m. on Dec. 8.

NOTES: The Mountaineers dropped to 0-5 all-time against Georgia and 2-22 against current members of the Southeastern Conference... Frank Eaves made his first collegiate start as the Apps used their third-different starting lineup of the year... Baskin recorded his third game with 20 or more points this season, all of which have come on the road... Appalachian was outscored 40-14 in the paint and 20-8 in points off turnovers... the 76.5 percent from the charity stripe was Appalachian's best free-throw shooting performance since connecting on 78.6 percent (11-of-14) from the line in the Southern Conference Tournament semifinals against Davidson on March 10, 2013.

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GEORGIA 71, APPALACHIAN STATE 53

Score by periods 1st 2nd - Total

Appalachian State 32 21 - 53

Georgia 33 38 - 71

ASU: BASKIN 20 (3 ASSISTS), OBACHA 4 (6 REBOUNDS), HAMILTON 11, BURGESS 5 (3 ASSISTS), GILBERT 5, SPAGNOLO 2, NEAL 6. FG: 18-55, 3FG: 4-18, FT: 13-17. 31 REBOUNDS, 8 ASSISTS, 14 TURNOVERS.

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UGA: THORNTON 6, FORTE 8, WILLIAMS 5 (6 REBOUNDS), MANN 14, GAINES 14, PARKER 5, DIXON 2, GENO 1, MORRIS 6, DJURISIC 10. FG: 27-49, 3FG: 3-11, FT: 14-23. 36 REBOUNDS, 11 ASSISTS, 11 TURNOVERS.

Photo Courtesy: Tevin Baskin, ASU Athletics