

Presbyterian Rallies Past ASU

Written by Ryan Bower

Thursday, 19 December 2013 10:21

Tab Hamilton(Winston-Salem, N.C./Fishburne Military) scored a career-high 33 points, but Appalachian State University men's basketball was unable to hold on

to a double-digit lead in a 74-69 loss at Presbyterian on Wednesday at the Templeton Center.

The Mountaineers (2-8) looked as if they may rout the Blue Hose (4-9) with a strong start, but a long scoring slump midway through the first half was enough for Presbyterian to seize momentum and battle back en route to the win.

Appalachian jumped out to a 10-0 lead less than three minutes into the ballgame as back-to-back threes from Hamilton and Mike Neal (Greensboro, N.C./Oak Ridge Military) got the scoring started and Tevin Baskin (Stamford, Conn./Chipola College) capped off the run with a thunderous fastbreak dunk to get the Mountaineers started on the right track.

After surrendering Presbyterian's first bucket of the game with 17:43 remaining in the first, the Apps scored four-straight points to push their lead to 12 (14-2), but the Blue Hose rallied and reeled off a 20-4 run to grab a 22-18 lead with 11:49 on the clock. During the run, the Mountaineers were held scoreless for just over five and a half minutes (14:44-9:10), which allowed Presbyterian to climb out of the early hole.

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The Blue Hose pushed the lead to six points (36-30) with just over three minutes left in the first half, but Appalachian scored seven of the final 10 points of the half and trailed just 39-37 at the break.

Appalachian seemed to regain momentum early in the second half when Hamilton connected from long range to give the Mountaineers a 49-47 lead with 14:25 left to play, but the lead was short-lived as the Blue Hose used a 10-1 run over the next four-plus minutes to push their lead to 57-50 and never trailed the rest of the way, leading by as many as eight points (62-54) in the final five minutes.

The Mountaineers never came within five points over the final 11 and a half minutes of play and shot just 30.6 percent (11-of-36) from the floor in the second half while Presbyterian connected on 50.0 percent (11-of-22) of its shots over the final 20 minutes.

Hamilton scored 21 of his points from beyond the arc as he went 7-of-13 from long range while Neal added 12 points and six assists and Chris Burgess (Lakeland, Fla./George Jenkins) added 10 points and six assists of his own. Michael Obacha (Edo State, Nigeria/High Point Christian) led the Mountaineers on the boards with 14 rebounds, his second-straight game with double-digit rebounds.

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William Truss paced the Blue Hose with 25 points on 10-of-12 shooting while Jordan Downing poured in 23 and Danny Herrera added 10. Truss also pulled down a team-best seven rebounds and blocked four shots.

On the night, Appalachian shot 37.1 percent (23-of-62) and was 14-of-18 from the charity stripe while Presbyterian shot 49.0 percent (24-of-49) and made 20-of-25 free throws. The Mountaineers finished with a 36-32 edge in rebounds but turned the ball over 15 times.

The Mountaineers return to action on Saturday when they play host to Milligan at 2 p.m. at the Holmes Center before taking a week off for the holidays.

NOTES: Appalachian dropped to 10-2 all-time against Presbyterian... the loss snapped a seven-game winning streak over the Blue Hose... Hamilton's 33 points were the most for a Mountaineers since Omar Carter scored 35 in a win at Tulsa on Nov. 12, 2010... his seven made three pointers are tied for 10th in a single game in school history... Hamilton tallied nine of Appalachian's 11 field goals in the second half and scored 22 points over the final 20 minutes... he is shooting 56.5 percent (13-of-23) from long range over the past two games.

PRESBYTERIAN 74, APPALACHIAN STATE 69

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Score by periods 1st 2nd Total

Appalachian State 37 32 69

Presbyterian College 39 35 74

ASU: BASKIN 5, OBACHA 5 (14 REBOUNDS), HAMILTON 33, BURGESS 10 (6 ASSISTS), NEAL 12 (6 ASSISTS), KOBANI 2, GILBERT 2. FG: 23-62, 3FG: 9-26, FT: 14-18. 36 REBOUNDS, 14 ASSISTS, 15 TURNOVERS.

PRESBYTERIAN: HERRERA 10, TRUSS 25 (7 REBOUNDS), ANDERSON 7 (6 REBOUNDS, 5 ASSISTS), DILLARD 5, DOWNING 23 (6 REBOUNDS), TERRY 3, DREW 1. FG: 24-49. 3FG: 6-13, FT: 20-25. 32 REBOUNDS, 12 ASSISTS, 14 TURNOVERS.

Photo Courtesy: Michael Obacha, ASU Athletics