

ASU wins third straight

Written by Mike Kelly

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The Appalachian State men's basketball team kicked off its three-game road trip impressively Saturday just outside of Pittsburgh, PA.

The Mountaineers, riding a three-game winning streak, with two of those wins coming on the road, defeated Robert Morris 65-52 at the Sewall Center. The win also snapped Robert Morris' 13-game, home-court winning streak dating back to December 28, 2008.

And the Mountaineers (7-4) did it with a stingy defense that limited the Colonials to 26% shooting from the floor.

"We did a good job changing up our defenses," said ASU coach Buzz Peterson. "They made a run at us, but our guys stayed focused, and didn't lose their composure. It's a good way to start the road trip."

But the Apps had their anxious moments. Leading by 13 in the second half, the Colonials, a member of the Northeast Conference and an NCAA tournament qualifier last season, made a run and closed the gap to 50-49 with five minutes left to play. A three-point bucket by Jeremy Booth with 3:49 left gave ASU a four-point lead. It also ignited a 12-0 run that gave the Mountaineers a commanding 62-49 advantage with 1:08 to go.

"We knew they would make a run at us," said ASU point guard Donald Sims. "After all, this is their home and they haven't lost here in quite a while. But it's coming together for us right now. Coach Peterson has added some stuff, and we've responded. We're just playing with a lot of confidence right now."

Sims led three players in double figures with 17 points. He was 4-8 from the floor, and 6-6 from the free-throw line.

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"I just happen to be on the line in crucial situations because I'm the point guard," Sims said. "And I want to be in position to help us win."

Booth finished with 11; Kellen Brand had 10. Ike Butts, who didn't score in the first half, finished with six points, 11 boards and two blocks. Josh Hunter had seven points and ten boards. Karon Abraham led Robert Morris with 15 points.

"I'm proud of the way we finished this game," Peterson said. "But they still drive me crazy with some of the turnovers they make. But we have won three in a row and we are playing pretty well right now."

The Apps travel to Dayton Monday night. Our coverage begins at 6:15 pm on WATA 1450 AM.