



NORTHERN ARIZONA 75, GRAND CANYON 70

First Round, Wednesday March 18, 2015

PHOENIX, Ariz. – For the first time in Northern Arizona men's basketball history, the Lumberjacks pulled out a victory in the College Insider Postseason Tournament defeating in-state rival Grand Canyon 75-70. The win over the Antelopes gives NAU its 20th win on the season.

"Today's win feels good and I am proud of the way they came out and played for each other," said assistant coach Matt Dunn. "The key to the game is our defense because coming out of the second half we challenged our players to lock them down and they did that. Although Coach (Jack) Murphy wasn't here today, we stuck to the same game plan. The only difference was that I got to stand up and talk to the officials today."

The first half didn't quite start out the way NAU wanted. The Lumberjacks got on the scoreboard first with a basket by Jordyn Martin, but NAU did not lead again until the 1:28 mark when Aaseem Dixon hit a three-pointer from far out. Continuing with its mainstay of solid rebounding, the 'Jacks held the edge on the boards 19 to 18. The leadership of senior guard Quinton Upshur on and off the court was what kept NAU in arms' length as he led the team with 14 points in the first half.

Keeping the Antelopes in the lead was the play of Royce Woolridge. The guard was 6-for-7 from the floor and 5-of-5 from the free throw line as GCU took a 40-36 lead into the locker room.

NAU started the second half with energy that stunned the Antelopes. Scoring nine quick points the 'Jacks took a 45-43 lead forcing GCU to call a timeout and regroup.

With a few lead changes and some ties taking place over the next six minutes, it was ultimately NAU that changed the pace of the game.

"We need to communicate more on defense and be tougher," said Dixon. "Today was a building block for all incoming players. We want to start a new winning trend and that started at the beginning of the season and continued through today."

The last seven minutes left no room for mistakes with both teams leaving it all on the court. The final media timeout saw NAU with a 67-65 edge with 3:58 remaining in the game.

A two-minute scoring drought went by before anyone scored again. Dixon hit a three-pointer to give NAU a 70-65 lead with 1:34 left to play. The trey was his fifth of the night and seventh field goal of the game. The Lumberjacks had ice in their veins when it came to the end of the game shooting five of six from the free throw line in the final minute of the game.

"We came out and played together tonight," said Dixon. "We are trying to put NAU on the map and we wanted to come out and I am so proud of our team to come out with a win."

Dixon led NAU to a game-high 21 points. Upshur netted 19 points and went 7-of-7 from the free throw line. Martin recorded his first career double-double of 10 points and 14 rebounds, while Kris Yanku finished with 10 points, seven rebounds and seven assists. The 'Jacks shot 39.7 percent from the field and 75 percent from the charity stripe. NAU improved its overall record to 20-14.

NAU held Woolridge to seven points in the second half, as he finished with a GCU high 24 points. Daniel Alexander recorded a double-double of 11 points and 13 rebounds. De'Andre Davis added 17 points, while Joshua Braun netted 11 points. The Antelopes shot 41.2 percent from the floor and were a perfect 11-of-11 from the free throw line. GCU dropped to 17-15 overall for the season.