



## **Samford gets past Canisius for first-ever Postseason Win**

*The Bulldogs reach 20-win for fifth time in School History*

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. -- The Samford University basketball team reached a number of historical milestones Tuesday as the Bulldogs earned a hard-fought 78-74 home victory against the Canisius Golden Griffins in the opening round of the College Insider.com Postseason Tournament held at the Pete Hanna Center.

With the victory, Samford (20-15) won its first postseason game in school history, reached the 20-win plateau for the first time since 2005-06 and notched its fifth 20-win posting in 44 years as a Division I athletic department.

The Bulldogs advanced to the second round of the CIT, but won't find out its next opponent, or destination, until later this week. Similar to the original format of the National Invitational Tournament (NIT), there is no set bracket in the 34-team competition.

All first-round games must be completed before the CIT committee reevaluates the remaining teams and determines the best matchups.

Samford led by as many as 11 points in the first half, but Canisius (18-16) battled back to take a one-point lead at the intermission, 34-33. Neither team shot the ball well in the opening 20 minutes of action, displaying the obvious rust of over week-long layoffs from competition.

The Bulldogs only shot 12.5 percent from 3-point range in the first half, while the Griffs posted a 14.3 percentage from long range.

Samford's Wyatt Walker posted one of his best games of the season Tuesday with a 23-point, 13-rebound performance for his 16th double-double of the 2016-17 campaign. Walker, the Bulldogs' dominant frontcourt player from Jacksonville, Florida, entered the matchup ranked 22nd in the nation in double-doubles.

In the latter portion of the second half, Samford used a mid-range jumper from Triston Chambers and a key up-and-under layup from Walker to take a seven-point advantage, 61-54, with 7:40 left to play.

Canisius would cut the Bulldogs' lead down to one at the five-minute mark, 66-65, but Samford continued to hit the clutch shots down the stretch to hold off the visitors, 78-74.

The Bulldogs' Demetrius Denzel-Dyson scored on a huge put-back layup in the final minute, while fellow-junior Alex Thompson drained four straight free throws to close out the victory.

Walker led Samford with 23 points on 10-of-14 shooting from the floor Tuesday. Denzel-Dyson followed with 15 points and two assists, while Thompson chipped in with 12 points and four boards.

The Bulldogs' Christen Cunningham and Chambers both finished with nine points apiece. Only a junior, Cunningham surpassed the 1,200-point plateau in the victory and increased his school-record total in assists to 473.

Samford outrebounded Canisius, 30-26, and turned in a decisive advantage in second-chance points, 15-2.