



RIVERDALE, N.Y. - George Beamon erupted for a season-high 34 points propelling the Manhattan men's basketball team to the program's first postseason tournament win in six years. The Jaspers rolled to an 89-79 victory at Albany (19-15) on Wednesday night in the Opening Round of the CollegeInsider.com Tournament.

Manhattan (21-12) lit up the scoreboard shooting a season-best 62.5% (35-56) from the field with the help of sophomore point guard Michael Alvarado's 4-for-5 shooting night in his return from an injury he suffered on Feb. 14 against Siena. Alvarado finished with 12 points and five rebounds, while junior guard Mohamed Koita matched a career-high 11 points. Sophomore forward Rhamel Brown contributed 10 points on 5-for-6 shooting and three blocks in the Jaspers' first postseason victory since defeating Maryland (87-84) in the National Invitation Tournament on March 18, 2006.

Coming off a 10 day break since its last contest, Manhattan did not start clicking until the final four minutes of the first half. The Jaspers erased an eight point deficit with a 17-2 run to close the stanza and carried a 37-30 advantage into the locker room at intermission. Manhattan scored 13 straight points during the surge beginning with two buckets from Alvarado, and then two three-pointers from senior guard Liam McCabe-Moran and another trey from Beamon.

The Jaspers were locked in defensively for the final four minutes of the first half as they forced the Great Danes into four turnovers and did not yield a field goal during the stretch. The defensive stance helped offset Albany junior guard Jacob Iati's sharp shooting where he scored 15 points of his career-high 23 point performance in the first 20 minutes. Iati buried seven three-pointers in the contest.

Albany continued its hot shooting beyond the arc in the first two minutes of the second half to climb within two points of the Jaspers. Junior point guard Mike Black had a pair of threes sandwiched around Iati's fifth trey of the game to get within 41-39 of Manhattan. But after a regrouping in a timeout, Manhattan answered with the next five points on Koita's lay up and Beamon's three-pointer to go on top 46-39.

The Jaspers never trailed in the second half and blew open the contest with a 13-0 run over a three minute span midway through the half. Beamon and Koita combined to score 11 of the 13 points that sent Manhattan to its largest lead of the contest, 70-55 with 8:36 remaining.

Manhattan received a solid all around effort from freshman forward Emmy Andujar who scored nine points, dished out a game-high seven assists and grabbed four rebounds. Senior forward Roberto Colonette led the Jaspers' bench with seven points and five boards.

Junior point guard Mike Black sank four three-pointers and finished with 14 points for Albany. Junior wing Gerardo Suero, the America East scoring leader (21.6 ppg), scored 10 of his 18 points at the free-throw line.

With the victory, Manhattan advances to the Second Round of the CollegeInsider.com Tournament. The Jaspers will travel to Fairfield on Sunday. Game time is 4 pm.