



**SACRAMENTO STATE 73, PORTLAND 66**

**First Round, Wednesday March 18, 2015**

PORTLAND, Ore. -- Playing in its first postseason game in the Div. I era, Sacramento State shot .520 (26-50) from the field and .500 (7-14) from the 3-point line on the way to a 73-66 victory at Portland in the first round of the CollegInsider.com Postseason Tournament (CIT) on Wednesday evening at the Chiles Center.

With the win, Sacramento State improved to 21-11, and won its first postseason game in 53 years. That win was a 74-73 double overtime victory over Nebraska Wesleyan on March 16, 1962, in the NCAA College Division national semifinals. The postseason appearance for the Hornets was the program's first since the team qualified for the NCAA Div. II Tournament in 1988.

The Hornets now advance to the second round of the CIT, and will host Northern Arizona on Saturday night at 7:05 p.m. Fans can buy tickets at 10 a.m. tomorrow morning by clicking [here](#), or by going to the Athletics Ticket Box Office in the Athletics Center located in Parking Lot 1 on campus. Northern Arizona won its first round CIT game earlier this evening at Grand Canyon, 75-70.

The 21 victories are now tied for the second most in school history with the 1961-62 squad, and one shy of the program record of 22, set by the 1987-88 squad. Tonight marked just the fifth postseason appearance in program history (1948-pres.), as the team qualified for the NCAA Div. II Tournament in 1959, 1962, 1970 and 1988. The Hornets went 0-2 at each tournament except the 1962 tourney when the team posted a 4-1 record and lost in the national championship game.

Playing their sixth straight game away from home, which included over 4,500 travel miles during that three-and-a-half week span, the Hornets outscored Portland in both the first (36-30) and second (37-36) halves. In fact, Sacramento State used a 12-1 run to close the first half and did not trail the final 24:06 of the contest.

The Hornets jumped out to a nice start in the second half, and by the time Dylan Garrity buried a 3-pointer to give the Hornets a game-high 13-point lead (55-42) with 12:14 left, Sacramento State had gone on a 31-13 run spanning nearly 17 minutes of both halves. Portland, which had defeated Saint

Mary's in the WCC Tournament 11 days ago, stormed back with a 16-3 run to tie the score at 58-58 with 7:34 to play.

The Pilots (17-16), however, were never able to take the lead and the momentum, tying the score again at 64-64 (3:16) and 66-66 (1:16) before the Hornets were able to score the game's final seven points. After Portland tied with 1:16 left, Garrity made perhaps the shot of the game, burying a 12-foot floater in the lane to put the Hornets up, 68-66, with 54 seconds left. Sacramento State then forced three misses and a turnover on Portland's final four possessions, and the Hornets went 5-for-6 from the free throw line during the game's final 28 seconds to secure the victory.

Not only did Sacramento State shoot well from the field, the team also limited Portland to .426 (23-54) from the floor, and just 5-for-21 from the 3-point line. The Hornets also held an 11-4 advantage in second chance points, and committed just 10 turnovers. Seven different Sacramento State players had at least five points, including Garrity (17 points), McKinney (16 points) and Nick Hornsby (10 points).

"Our guys really came ready to play tonight, and we got off to a pretty good start," Sacramento State head coach and Big Sky Conference co-Coach of the Year Brian Katz said. "When Portland came roaring back in the second half to tie the game, our guys really stayed calm and that allowed us to regroup. There were a number of big plays late, we got some defensive stops, and tonight was really a collaborative effort among the whole team.

"This has been a year of knocking down a lot of firsts in program history, and this is just another milestone for our players. We just accomplished something (a postseason win) that hadn't been done by this program in 53 years, but we still have a game to play Saturday night and I know our guys don't want the season to end."

Garrity's 17 points came on 6-of-12 shooting from the field, 3-of-6 from distance and 2-for-2 from the free throw line. McKinney, who did not play the final 5:10 of the first half after picking up his third foul, shot 5-for-8 from the field, 2-for-2 from the 3-point line and had four huge free throws during the game's final 28 seconds. Hornsby's 10 points came on 5-of-8 shooting to go along with three rebounds, two assists and a steal.

Eric Stuteville had eight points and four rebounds, Alex Tiffin added eight points before fouling out with 7:58 to play, Cody Demps had six points, seven rebounds, three assists and two steals, and Zach Mills had five points and a steal. Tiffin and Mills both started for the first time in 22 games as Katz used a starting lineup that consisted of four seniors (Garrity, McKinney, Mills, Tiffin) and one junior (Demps). Among Stuteville's eight points were two huge free throws to put the Hornets up, 66-64, with 2:11 left, and he added a blocked shot and rebound with 1:45 to play.

Four Pilots scored in double figures, comprised of Volodymyr Gerun (15 points, six rebounds), Bryce Pressley (12 points), Kevin Bailey (11 points) and Wintering (10 points, four assists and four steals). After shooting .458 from the field in the first half, the Pilots were limited to .400 shooting in the second half.

Saturday night will mark the third time the Hornets will play fellow Big Sky Conference member

Northern Arizona this year. The two teams split their season series with each team winning on its home floor.