

CCU Defeats Bryant in CBI Opener

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. – Coastal Carolina defeated Bryant in the quarterfinals of the College Basketball Invitational (CBI) 93-82 Monday afternoon at the Ocean Arena in Daytona Beach, Fla.

CCU (17-7) led all but 11 seconds of the game in picking up the quarterfinal win and the seventh win in its CBI history.

Essam Mostafa led the Chanticleers with 17 points and tied his career-high with 16 rebounds. He was 7-of-10 from the field and 3-of-4 at the free throw line. He picked up six offensive rebounds and 10 on the defensive end in recording his eighth double-double of the season.

The Chants had five double-digit scorers in the game with the Sun Belt's Player of the Year DeVante' Jones leading the way with a game-high 25 points. Kevin Williams and Tyrik Dixon scored 15 points apiece and Garrick Green added 12. Williamson's point total was a career-high for the junior.

CCU led by as many as 23 points at 59-36 with 17:39 left in the game. From there the Bulldogs (15-7) began to force CCU turnovers and were able to outscore the Chants 30-17 to cut the lead down to 76-66 with just over six minutes left in the game.

CCU recovered and was able to withstand the Bryant rally and pushed the lead back out to 17 with four minutes left and held on for the 11-point win.

CCU shot 45.8 percent (33-of-72) from the field and hit nine of its 26 three-point attempts for 34.6 percent. The Chants also did a good job on the boards, outrebounding the Bulldogs 53-31. Along with Mostafa's work on the boards, Green came up one rebound short of a double-double with nine rebounds along with Jones who also had nine, also missing out on a double-double.

The Chanticleers did a good job of making the extra pass finishing the game with 21 assists as Ebrima Dibba had a game and season-high 10 assists, while on the defensive end, Jones and Dixon finished the game with three steals each.

The Bulldogs came into the game as the fourth-leading scoring team in the nation and after only scoring 34 points in the opening half, they exploded for 48 points in the second half.

Chris Childs led four Bulldogs in double-digits with 24 points. Charles Pride scored 17, while Michael Green and Peter Kiss each scored 12.

Bryant finished the game shooting 40.3 percent (29-of-72) from the field, 32.2 percent (10-of-31) on their three-point attempts, and hit 14-of-18 at the free throw line (87.5 percent).

The Chants used a 16-2 run the first half to run out to a 48-34 lead. Jones and Dixon had 12 points apiece in the opening period while Green had nine. CCU forced nine first-half turnovers which the Chants turned into 16 points in the opening 20 minutes.

The Chanticleers move on to the semifinals where they will face Stetson on Tuesday, March 23 at 5:30 p.m. ET.