

Perry's Late Bucket Leads Hatters to CBI Victory

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Prior to the start of the 2019-20 season, the NCAA Rules Committee changed its rules to prevent coaches from calling timeouts during live-ball situations. Now, only players can call them.

Never has Stetson head coach Donnie Jones been so happy about a rule change.

Trailing by a point with time winding down, Jones' pleas for a timeout went unheeded by his players and sophomore Rob Perry buried what proved to be the game-winning 3-pointer as Stetson rallied for a 53-52 win in the opening round of College Basketball Invitational against Bowling Green, Monday at The Ocean Center.

Stetson (12-14) advances to Tuesday's 5:30 p.m. semifinal against either Coastal Carolina or Bryant.

Trailing by as many as 15 points in the second half and down 49-36 with 8:12 to play, the Hatters closed the game on a 15-2 run, punctuated by Perry's triple from the wing just in front of the Hatters' bench with :17.2 to play.

While Perry's shot proved to be the dagger, the Hatters were carried down the stretch by big men Mahamadou Diawara and Gabriel Wuor, who combined to score 10 of Stetson's final 17 points. The duo also combined for 11 rebounds in the game's final 6:42, part of a 48-39 rebounding advantage Stetson had for the game.

Bowling Green led, 47-32, after a Kaden Metheny with 9:55 to play, before Stetson's defense and the combination of Diawara and Wuor stepped up.

A dunk by Diawara with 6:31 left pulled the Hatters within 50-40, and another bucket by Diawara 80 seconds later made it 50-42. Two free throws from Wuor and a jumper by Perry brought Stetson to within 50-46 with 3:19 to go.

Another Diawara bucket with 2:26 left made it 50-48. The Falcons gained a bit of breathing room when Metheny's jumper with 2:06 to go made it 52-48. But the Falcons wouldn't score again.

Two Perry free throws at 1:51 pulled the Hatters within 52-50, setting the stage for the sophomore's late-game heroics.

Bowling Green led, 29-21, at halftime after the team combined to shoot 31 percent from the field.

Perry scored a game-high 16 points, while Diawara finished with 15 points and 12 rebounds. Wuor had 8 points and 6 rebounds.

Trey Diggs led Bowling Green with 13 points.

Game Notes

- This is Stetson's first postseason win since the Hatters moved up to Division I status in 1971
- Freshmen Giancarlo Valdez and Gabriel Wuor each made their first career starts
- Mahamadou Diawara recorded his fourth double-double of the year and ninth of his career
- Stetson won despite enduring its worst 3-point shooting effort of the season (2-19)
- Stetson won for just the third time all season when trailing at halftime (3-11)
- Freshman Stephan Swenson registered 4 assists, giving him an even 100 for the season