

Bulldogs Down Delaware In CBI Opener

INDIANAPOLIS, IND. Sophomore Chrishawn Hopkins scored 19 points and junior Andrew Smith added 17 to lead Butler to a 75-58 victory over visiting Delaware in the first round of the 2012 College Basketball Invitational presented by Zebra Pen at Hinkle Fieldhouse on Wednesday. The win sends the Bulldogs to a second round game at Penn on Monday, March 19.

Hopkins and Smith combined for 26 points in the second half when the Bulldogs pulled away to a double-digit advantage. The two helped spark a 9-0 run to open the final period, stretching a 31-23 halftime lead to 40-23 with just over 15 minutes remaining.

Delaware (18-14) never got closer than nine points the rest of the game.

"We've got some guys growing and getting better, and I specifically think Hopkins has come a long way," said Butler head coach Brad Stevens after the game. "His consistency level is at an all-time high, both in practice and in games."

Butler (21-14) started slowly in its first game in 11 days. The Blue Hens grabbed an early 6-2 lead. The game was tied five times in the first 12 minutes, until a three-point field goal by junior Chase Stigall put the Bulldogs in front for good at 18-15. Butler stretched the lead to double-figures at 29-19 on a three-point field goal by Smith with 2:10 left in the opening period, before settling for the 31-23 halftime advantage.

Hopkins (left), who hit just one of four shots in the opening period, exploded for 17 points in the second half. He hit six of the 11 shots he attempted in the final 20 minutes, including both of his three-point field goal attempts. Smith added nine points in the final period on four of six shooting.

The Bulldogs stretched their lead to 19 points on two occasions in the closing minutes, before settling for the 17-point victory.

Senior Ronald Nored added 12 points, while Stigall added 10. Nored played in his 140th career game, one shy of the school record held by Matt Howard, 2007-11. Stevens played all 14 players in the win.

Delaware was led by freshman Jarvis Threatt with 31 points, including 21 in the second half. Devon Saddler added 10.

Butler finished with a 37-25 rebounding advantage in the game, including a 17-6 margin in offensive rebounds. Smith finished with a team-high seven rebounds, while freshman Roosevelt Jones added six, including five offensive boards.

Penn (20-12) won its opening round game in the CBI, 74-63, over Quinnipiac.