

'Dogs Take Down ODU 71-64, Headed for CBI Finals

FRESNO, Calif. -- Fresno State is moving on to the College Basketball Invitational after a hard fought 71-64 win over Old Dominion in a game that saw the Bulldogs attempt 27 less shots than the Monarchs and be outrebounded by nine.

Next up, Game 1 of the CBI Championship Series on Monday night at 7:00 p.m. at the Save Mart Center against Siena. The Saints advanced to the championship series with a 61-49 win over Illinois State.

The Bulldogs will be making their first championships appearance in a postseason tournament since winning the NIT in 1983.

Despite the differences in shots attempted and rebounds, it was the disparity between the two at the free throw line that proved to be the true teller in the game. Behind Cezar Guerrero's 10-of-11 night at the line, Fresno State made 27 of their 34 attempts. They outscored Old Dominion at the line 27-8.

Aaron Bacote's three for the Monarchs gave them a 5-4 lead at the 17:07 mark in the first half and that was the last lead they would have. Marvelle Harris answered with a layup and the Bulldogs never trailed.

The lead was extended to as much as 11 at one point in the opening half fueled by hot shooting from freshman Paul Watson, but Old Dominion used a late run to cut Fresno State's halftime lead to just 35-31.

That lead was cut down to one four different times in the second half. The Monarchs made one last push to cut what had been an eight point lead in the final four minutes down to four, but a Cezar Guerrero layup plus the free throw after the foul with 2:00 to play gave Fresno State a 62-55 lead and shifted the momentum and the game right back into the hands of the Bulldogs.

Guerrero finished with 14 points as one of four players in double figures for Fresno State. Harris led the way with a postseason-high 20 points. Paul Watson and Tyler Johnson scored 15 and 13, respectively.

Now it is off to the championship series on Monday night where the Bulldogs and Siena will square off for the first time in program history.