

Sellout crowd buoys UTEP to Game 2 victory

EI PASO, Texas – With a sellout crowd of 12,000 roaring from start to finish, the UTEP Miners evened the CBI Championship Series with a 70-63 victory over Oregon State on Wednesday at the Don Haskins Center.

The Miners (23-13) and the Beavers (17-18) will play the deciding game of the series on Friday at 8 p.m. Mountain time. The game will be nationally televised on HDNet.

The Miners trailed 35-30 at the half, but put the clamps on the Beavers in the second stanza, holding them to 28 points and 37 percent field goal shooting.

Oregon State hit 43.6 percent of its shots and 26.9 percent of its three pointers on the night after shooting a blistering 60.5 percent from the floor in game one in Corvallis on Monday.

The Beavers led by as many as eight points in the first half, and they went ahead 37-30 on a tip-in by Josh Tarver off a Seth Tarver miss in the first minute of the second half. But Stefon Jackson's layup with 18:27 to play jumpstarted an 8-0 run for the Miners, who took a 38-37 lead on a layup by Randy Culpepper with 15:27 left.

After Oregon State regrouped to take a 44-40 advantage on a layup by Daniel Deane with 11:07 remaining, the Miners exploded with a 14-2 spurt to take their largest lead of the night, 54-46, with 7:26 on the clock. The Miners didn't give up the lead, although the Beavers made it interesting by closing the gap to one point, 56-55, on two free throws by Seth Tarver with 4:59 to go.

Leading 65-63 with 36 seconds to play, the Miners scored the final five points of the game at the line to salt it away. Oregon State scored just three field goals in the final 5:37.

Jackson scored 28 points and added 10 rebounds for the ninth double-double of his college career, and his first since Nov. 27. Culpepper had 17 points and tied Antoine Gillespie's school record for career three-point field goals with 168. Arnett Moultrie added 12 points and 11 boards for his sixth double-double of the season. T

he Miners finished with only two turnovers, their lowest game total since Jan. 21, 1984 against Wyoming (one). UTEP didn't commit its first turnover until 11:32 remaining in the game.

Roeland Schaftenaar scored 17 points to pace Oregon State.