

Broncos Beat George Mason to Take 1-0 Lead in CBI Best of Three Finals

SANTA CLARA, Calif. - In the first game of the best of three final of the College Basketball Invitational presented by Buick, Santa Clara topped George Mason by a final of 81-73. It was the eighth consecutive post-season win for the Broncos. Santa Clara will now travel to George Mason to play at 4 pm Pacific on Wed., April 3 on AXS-TV nationally. The game will be rebroadcast on KDOW 1220 AM at 7 pm Pacific.

The win puts Santa Clara at 25-11 and George Mason is 21-14.

Santa Clara has won 25 games for just the second time in the 106-year school history of basketball; and 24+ games for the second time in three years under Coach Keating, having won 24 in 2010-11 when the Broncos won the CIT.

"It was a good overall effort tonight," said Santa Clara head coach Kerry Keating. "It was a little close early and we were trying to make the home run plays late. We did a better job in the second half and had those three turnovers in the last two minutes. We have to understand how to handle the pressure at the end of a game. We're excited to have picked up the first win tonight."

Santa Clara shot 44.2 percent from the field (23-for-52), including 41.7 percent from beyond the arc (10-for-24). The Broncos shot 83.3 percent from the free throw line (25-for-30). They collected 30 rebounds, 12 assists, nine steals, three blocks and had 17 turnovers.

Santa Clara was led by Kevin Foster who scored 28 points on 7-15 shooting including 5-11 from deep. It was the fourth straight game in the CBI that Foster has scored at least 23 points. Evan Roquemore added 20 points on 5-10 shooting and a perfect 7-7 from the charity stripe with six assists and four rebounds. Marc Trasolini scored 17 on 6-10 shooting with a team-high seven rebounds.

"The team is really trusting one another and we don't want to lose," said Foster. "We're playing winning basketball on the defensive end. We didn't come out as hard as we should have in the second half, but we picked up the effort. We all want to end this season on a positive note."

"We had to win the first game because we have no intention of going to game three," said Trasolini. "We really want this to be a two-game series. This group hasn't lost yet in the post-season. We've had a lot of fun together in these five years in the Leavey Center and I'm so thankful for the memories."

George Mason shot 42.6 percent from the field (26-for-61), including 31.3 percent from beyond the arc (5-for-16). The Patriots shot 80.0 percent from the free throw line (16-for-20). They collected 20 rebounds, 12 assists, seven steals, one block and had 19 turnovers.

The Patriots were led by Jonathan Arledge who scored 21 points on 8-12 shooting and had eight rebounds. Patrick Holloway scored 17, all in the second half, on 6-10 shooting and 3-6 from downtown. Bryon Allen added 15 on 6-12 shooting with eight assists while Erik Copes grabbed a game-high 14 rebounds with four points.

