



IN THE NEWS

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Fun time at UC for everyone but Shepherd
By Tommy R. Atkinson

It was nearly impossible for anyone who attended the University of Charleston's 87-67 victory over Shepherd Saturday night to leave without a smile on their face.

A vocal student section and the UC pep band made for a lively college atmosphere inside Eddie King Gym. Rod Blackstone, who is better known as the Toastman from Appalachian Power Park, led his customary rousing cheers.

The good times even trickled down to the court where UC senior Robert Strickland and his teammates seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves in the West Virginia Conference men's basketball matchup. That was something the Golden Eagles needed after dropping an 85-73 decision at Davis and Elkins on Thursday.

"We just had fun tonight," said the 6-foot-7, 225-pound forward from Chesapeake, Va. "We got to run our break. We usually don't run our break; we just slow the ball down.

"We were just sharing the ball. It was a lot of fun for everybody. We were out running [and] getting rebounds. We got a lot of steals and everybody played as a team."

The Golden Eagles crisp ball movement led to easy baskets, allowing them to shake free from the Rams in the second half. UC converted 65.6 percent of its shots (21-of-32) after halftime, including 60 percent (6-of-10) from 3-point range.

After Shepherd closed to five points (60-55) with 8:41 left in the game, UC scored nine straight for a 69-55 advantage with 5:55 to go. Strickland began the surge with a bank shot and a baseline jumper. The Golden Eagles (15-7 overall, 9-6 WVC) kept extending their lead by rarely missing a shot down the stretch.

"It was a great team win," said UC coach Greg White. "I thought it was a really dominating performance. I thought we really competed hard. If someone told me we'd win by 20, I wouldn't have believed them. When you're in conference you've just got to win. Games are hard to win in conference."

UC senior guard Marquis Brooks poured in 30 points on 11-of-15 shooting, including 6-of-8 from long range. Strickland finished with 22 points, 11 rebounds, four assists, three steals and five blocks.

Golden Eagles sophomore guard John White added 10 points, nine boards and three steals and sophomore guard Warren Wallace donated 10 points. UC converted 59 percent (36-of-61) of its shots overall and 63.2 percent (12-of-19) beyond the arc.

Junior center Justin Jarman turned in 16 points, nine rebounds and four steals for Shepherd (13-9, 7-8) while freshman forward Abdullah Dosu chipped in 16 points and five boards. Rams freshman forward Liki Turner added 13 points and seven rebounds and junior guard Fred Lymas had 11 points and five assists.

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