

Christians Topple Bulldogs In Lopsided Tilt On Elon Floor

SCENES ON COURT AND BENCH AS ELON TOPS CENTURY MARK AGAINST BULLDOGS



Action on both the court and the bench proved interesting as the Fighting Christians blasted out with their finest scoring of the year and topped the century mark in a 106 to 79 victory over the Atlantic Christian Bulldogs in Elon's Alumni Memorial Gymnasium on Thursday night, January 7th. Jesse Branson, Elon's All-American forward, launched very nearly into orbit as he went up for a crucial rebound against the Bulldogs in the scene at the left. He got the ball as Bill Tice, Bulldog star, seemed about to yank Branson's leg off and leave with it. Coach Bill Miller is shown above as he took advantage of a brief time out to give instructions to the Christians in front of the Elon bench, lining up some of the strategy that resulted in the impressive triumph.

Branson Leads As Elon Records 106-79 Victory

Hitting with deadly accuracy from both the floor and the free throw line and dominating both boards on rebounds, the Christian cagers hit the century mark for the second time this season as they walloped the Atlantic Christian Bulldogs 106 to 79 here on Thursday night, January 7th.

There were five Elon players in double figures, with Jesse Branson banging home 30 points for the top honors. Others were Art Davis with 17, Charlie Van Lear with 13, and Richard Such and Dave Winfrey with 10 points each. High for Atlantic Christian was Doug Simmons with 17 counters.

In hitting the century mark, the Christians jumped off to a quick 16 to 7 lead and were ahead by a lopsided 58 to 33 margin at the halftime. Branson got 20 of his 30 points in that opening half and played only ten minutes of the final half as younger players took over.

The Christian outfit profited by its accuracy at the free-throw line as the Elon cagers hit 36 of 48 charity tosses. Four of the Bulldog players went out by the five-foul route.

The line-ups:
Pos. Elon (106) F—Branson (30) F—Such (10) C—Van Lear (13) G—A. Davis (17) G—Atkins (8)
A.C.C. (79) Jones (4) Ramsey (8) Hobbs (6) Serba (9) Simmons (17)

Elon Cage Games

- Elon 65, Wofford 64.
 - Elon 66, Pfeiffer 68.
 - Elon 85, Lenoir Rhyne 84.
 - Elon 65, High Point 76.
 - Elon 56, Appalachian 59.
 - Elon 60, Erskine 65.
 - Elon 100, Loyola 80.
 - Elon 71, Fort Eustis 75.
 - Elon 84, Wofford 92.
 - Elon 106, A.C.C. 79.
 - Elon 60, East Carolina 67.
- (Remaining Games)
Jan. 11—Campbell, away.
Jan. 14—Guilford, home.
Jan. 16—Catawba, away.
Jan. 18—Campbell, home.
Jan. 23—High Point, home.
Jan. 30—Catawba, home.
Feb. 1—A.C.C., away.
Feb. 3—Frederick, away.
Feb. 6—West Carolina, home.
Feb. 8—Pfeiffer, away.
Feb. 10—Appalachian, home.
Feb. 13—East Carolina, home.
Feb. 17—Lenoir Rhyne, away.
Feb. 20—West Carolina, away.
Feb. 24-27—Conference Tourney at Lexington.

Half-time: Elon 58, A.C.C. 33.
Elon subs — Hughes 2, Andrew 8, T. Davis 1, Nickes 7, Winfrey 10.
Atlantic Christian subs — Tice 10, Ashworth 9, Harper 4, Samuel 2, Johnson 10.

Elon Quint Tops Bears In 85-84 Loop Contest

Hitting one of the high spots of the early basketball season and hitting the basket with sensational accuracy, the Fighting Christian cagers grabbed a brilliant 85 to 84 victory over the Lenoir Rhyne Bears on the Elon floor on Wednesday night, December 9th.

The hot-shooting Elon cagers, who swished in 35 of 55 tries from the floor for a blistering 63.6 percentage for the game, grabbed an early margin and led all the way except for one brief moment when Lenoir Rhyne pulled up to a 45-45 tie early in the second half.

Jesse Branson made good on 13 of 15 attempts from action and burned the nets for 31 points as he paced the Christians to their victory, but he received able assistance from several of his mates. Howard Andrew bucketed 20 points, Bobby Atkins hit for 19, and Dave Winfrey caged 10 counters in the Christians' victorious sweep.

(Continued on Page Four.)

Panther Five In 76-65 Win

A fine Elon comeback fell short, and the High Point Panthers chalked a 76 to 65 victory over the Fighting Christian cagers in a Carolinas Conference battle on the Panther court on Saturday night, December 12th, with the triumph enabling the High Pointers to maintain their leadership in the loop race.

The Panthers, playing before a partisan home crowd, rolled for a quick 15 to 5 lead and then went on to build a 48 to 35 margin at the break, and at that point it appeared that the High Point five would have an easy time of it in posting its fifth consecutive victory and its third straight in the Conference.

It was not to be that easy, however, for the Christians came back strong after the halftime and climbed to within three points at 59 to 56 at one point late in the game. The bid fell short as big Jesse Branson went out by the foul route, and the Panthers moved ahead again for the final 11-point victory edge.

Branson, who topped the Conference in scoring last year, proved the big show for both teams as he racked up 10 field baskets and eight free throws for 28 points. Other Elon players hitting double figures were Howard Andrew and Bobby Atkins, each of whom counted 10 for the night.

The Panthers got double-figure scoring from four of their five starters, with guard Barry Smith leading the way with 24 points. Steve Tapgenhorst hit 14, Kirk Stewart 12 and Dale Neel 10 points in the winning drive.

The home-standing High Pointers were hotter than the proverbial (Continued on Page Four.)

Winning One And Losing One . . .

Elon Hits Finals In Fort Eustis Meet

The Christian basketballers cut short their Yule season holidays and battled to the finals of the annual Fort Eustis Christmas tournament, which was a four-team event staged at the Virginia military post on December 29th and 30th.

The Elon quint turned back a strong outfit from Loyola of Baltimore by a 100 to 80 count in the opening game of the tourney on Tuesday night, December 29th, but the Christians were unable to match the power-laden Fort Eustis Wheels in the finals and dropped a hard-fought 75 to 71 decision to the undefeated service team.

Elon Tops Loyola

The Christians were off to a slow start against the Loyola quint, and the Baltimore cagers led three times and tied the score twice within the opening minutes, but Jesse Branson led an Elon drive that moved Elon to a 46-31 margin at half-time. Branson hit 12 of his 21 points in that opening half.

The Elon basketballers put four men in double figures in this game, with Richard Such topping the Christian attack in the game with 22 points, with Branson hitting 21, Art Davis 19 and Bobby Atkins 17 for the victors. The Christians grabbed down 63 rebounds to cut the Loyola five off from second shots. Tommy O'Hara led Loyola with 19 counters.

The line-ups:
Pos. Elon (100) F—Branson (21) F—Such (22) C—A. Davis (19) G—Atkins (17) G—T. Davis (7)
Loyola (80) McCabe (15) Morris (12) O'Hara (19) DeVaney (6) Phillips (12)

Half-time: Elon 46, Loyola 31.
Elon subs — Andrew 1, Denhart 6, Hughes 6, Winfrey 1.
Loyola subs — Lister 4, Maher 7, Lawrence 4, From 1, Brown, Ruane.

Loss To Wheels

The Fort Eustis Wheels, rated one of the strongest service teams in the country, chalked their eleventh straight win as they turned back Elon 75 to 71 in the championship finals of the tournament, played on Wednesday night, December 30th, but the strong army outfit found the Elon defense tough and was held under 100 points for only the second time in eleven games.

The early part of the game was hard-fought, with Elon moving to a quick lead and then falling behind the home team. The Wheels were ahead by a single point at 42-41 at half-time, and they widened that margin early in the last half, only to see Elon climb ahead twice in later moments of play. The last Elon lead was 64-63 with 5:26 left on the clock.

Pos. Elon (75) F—Branson (23) F—Such (5) C—Andrew (13) G—Atkins (6) G—A. Davis (16)
Fort Eustis (75) Alexander (13) Brown (8) Fuenneman (11) Zagar (22) Greene (13)
Half-time: Fort Eustis 42, Elon 41.
Elon subs — T. Davis 3, Van Lear 9. Eustis subs — Craig 6, Smith 2, Isaacs, Pelzer.

DAVIS AND ATKINS STAR DESPITE INJURIES



Art Davis, left, and Bobby Atkins, right, are two Fighting Christian cagers who have overcome early-season injuries to play outstanding roles in Elon basketball battles of recent weeks. Davis, a rugged senior from Roanoke Rapids, who goes at either guard, forward or center, missed two games with a broken toe, but he has been hitting consistently in double figures in other games. Atkins, a nifty sophomore guard from Mount Airy, has well lived up to the fine promise he showed as a freshman last winter. He too, has hit consistently in double figures in many of Elon's early battles, despite the fact that he has been playing with an injured knee. Davis and Atkins are two of the four Elon players who were hitting double-digit averages in latest cage statistics compiled last weekend after ten games had been played.

Spotlighting The Fighting Christians

By TOM CORBITT



The often alleged "poor showing" of our Fighting Christian cagers at the first of this season may be attributed to several factors. Unquestionably, the team has been erratic. A weakness at the guards was all too evident, and the forwards were not consistent. The team was not functioning as a unit.

Along with those shortcomings, and to add to the agony, injuries crippled the team. Dave Winfrey's knee started acting up again, Art Davis broke a toe, and then both Charlie Van Lear and Bobby Atkins sustained hurt knees. All of these were key injuries, and there were minor hurts too.

Despite these injuries, the team improved, but it still lost games. Erskine beat us. The Christians played well but still lost a close one, and then the Christians turned in another fine game and went down before a powerful Fort Eustis team. The low point apparently came with the 92-84 loss to Wofford in overtimes, a loss that came after losing a big lead in the final two minutes.

Yet, a quick review of the games showed that in every game except the High Point ordeal, the Christians led by at least ten points with ten minutes left to play in the battle.

Signs of improvement blossomed everywhere. Bobby Atkins and Jesse Branson consistently played good games. Richard Such turned in a 22-point performance during the Christmas tournament. Against Wofford, in a losing cause, Elon had five men in double figures. Among these was a 20-point effort by Art Davis. Against Atlantic Christian Davis proved that it had been no fluke, and Charlie Van Lear moved into a starting role.

Throughout the shaky beginning of the season Coach Bill Miller remained optimistic. He was, in fact,

pleased with several aspects of the Christian play, but there remained the problem of finding the best starting five. And to start winning again, a good performance from the guards was necessary in each game.

Now, after all the trials and tribulations, a new Fighting Christian team has been turned loose on the unsuspecting world. It all began with the Atlantic Christian rout. The starting five in that game showed Atkins, Branson, Davis, Such and Van Lear. Armed with bandages and tape, the "Cripples" came roaring back to win one of the most lopsided games in recent years and score 100 points for the first time on the home court since 1960. The team had previously hit the century mark this year against Loyola at the Fort Eustis tourney.

Everyone got into the act against the Bulldogs. Dave Winfrey hobbled onto the court and paired with freshman Tommy Davis to make a shambles of the Atlantic Christian press. Howard Andrew dominated the defensive boards and looked like the Number Thirty we saw against Lenoir Rhyne. Reid Hughes, the campus favorite, got into the act. John Nickes made his debut and scored the 99th and 100th points.

The most obvious characteristic of the new team (it surely cannot be the same team we watched in December) is that the Christians now seem to enjoy playing the game. The stage is set for the Fighting Christians to surprise quite a few people, including several Carolinas Conference teams and the student body of Elon College.

Things must get better. Next to the bottom in the Carolinas Conference is about as low as it is possible to go, so the time is ripe for better things ahead.