

UNCC Routs UMass for Tourney Title; Jackson Cops MVP Award



Melvin Watkins (32) fires from close range behind a Cedric Maxwell screen.

Tournament MVP George Jackson hit his first seven shots Saturday night and Cedric Maxwell and Jon Heath controlled the boards as UNCC rolled to the Hall of Fame Championship over Massachusetts, 85-57.

Jackson and Maxwell landed spots on the All-Tournament Team, largely on the strength of their play in the title game held in the Springfield Civic Center before a subdued crowd.

The partisan UMass crowd saw the 49ers break open a tight contest late in the first half and steadily lengthen the point spread after intermission. The UNCC pressure defense was puzzling to the Minutemen, making their guards look like monkeys caught in a revolving door.

The first half of play turned into a crowd-pleasing shootout between Jackson and UMass center John Murphy. After an opening basket by Maxwell, Jackson scored the next 15

UNCC points. Floating behind screens and through tiny openings in the defense, George hit from all areas of the court. He varied his shots and the UMass guards were helpless to contain him. On several occasions he followed his quick release jumper with delicate hangs in midair before releasing his next shot.

The massive Murphy was equally effective in the title game. Scoring most of his 30 points from outside, the 6-8 senior carried the UMass attack all evening long. His basket brought the Minutemen close at 27-23 late in the first half.

At this point, Heath led a 12-4 UNCC surge that gave the 49ers some breathing room at halftime. Scoring on feeds from Melvin Watkins and Bob Ball, Heath began to assert himself at his new wing position.

The second half was a UNCC team effort on both ends of the floor for the 49ers. Ahead 52-41, UNCC ran off 13 quick points to

only two for the Minutemen.

A basket by Maxwell and an alley-oop pass to Heath started the breakaway surge. Heath scored twice more and Lew Massey drew a goaltending call on a short jumper. This stretch demoralized the Minutemen and rendered the last 11 minutes of play as purely academic.

Jackson's 31 points led all scorers for the second night in succession. Heath and Maxwell added 18 and 15 points and grabbed 10 and 12 rebounds respectively. Massey chipped in with 10 points and Ball handled the ball well from the point position against a team that competed in the NIT last season.

Still trying to figure out what happened a half hour after the game, losing Coach Jack Leaman summed up the feelings of the home crowd when he said, "We were outplayed and outcoached the whole night. They made us play their game, not ours."

UNCC vs. Massachusetts Finals - Hall of Fame Classic							
UNCC	FG	FT	PTS.	MASSACHU.	FG	FT	PTS.
Jackson	13	5-5	31	Eldridge	1	0-1	2
Ball	2	2-2	6	Endicott	1	2-3	4
Watkins	0	0-0	0	Town	2	5-8	9
Bommer	1	0-1	2	Burke	1	0-0	2
Maxwell	7	1-3	15	Murphy	13	4-5	30
Heath	8	2-4	18	Duarte	0	0-0	0
Shipman	1	1-2	3	Mayfield	2	2-6	6
Massey	3	4-7	10	Stokes	2	0-2	4
Gruber	0	0-0	0	Johnson	0	0-0	0
Pearce	0	0-2	0	Pyatt	0	0-0	0
Haneburg	0	0-0	0	Claiborne	0	0-0	0
Total	35	15-26	85	Total	22	13-25	57
			1st	2nd	Total		
			UNCC 39	46	85		
			Massachusetts 27	30	57		



The Hall of Fame Classic Tournament First Team: (Left to Right) Tournament Director Lee Williams, George Jackson and Cedric Maxwell of UNCC, Robert Parish and Leon Johnson of Centenary, and Massachusetts John Murphy.

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