

## Flames extinguish Bulldogs in thriller at the Justice Center

By Emily Mase  
STAFF WRITER

The battle between the best teams in the Big South Conference left the women's basketball team in second place behind the Liberty Flames (14-8, 6-1 BSC) in Saturday's 66-62 loss at the Justice Center.

"It's disappointing to lose. It is not a moral victory," said head coach Betsy Blose. "We can beat them, we have to believe we can."

The Flame's 6-3 sophomore triplets Megan, Moriah and Molly Frazee proved their domination leading Liberty to their 24th straight win against UNC Asheville. Megan Frazee led the Flames with 16 points and seven boards and Rebecca Lightfoot scored 11 off of 5-6 shooting.

"They are big and physical," Blose said. "We needed to be tougher, and I thought during the second half we were."

The Bulldogs (13-9, 4-3 BSC) fell again on Wednesday night at Radford (13-8, 5-2 BSC).

Corrie Fertitta led the Highlanders who scored 17 and grabbed 15 rebounds. Kyla Jones, freshman guard, came off the bench to front the Bulldogs, scoring with 14.

In the Liberty game, the Bulldogs led the game for the first 10 minutes, but the Flames surged ahead, taking the lead for the rest of the game.

"It's not good enough. I'm not happy we lost," Blose said. "We needed everybody to show up and play, and we didn't get that from everybody."

At the start of the second half, the Flames led by as much as 14, but the Bulldogs fought back, going on an 8-2 run to bring the lead into single digits. The aggressive play of the Flames landed the Bulldogs at the line, and they capitalized going 20-24 in free-throw attempts, including 7-8 shooting



CLINT LATHINGHOUSE - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Brittany Hendley drives on the Flames' Allyson Fasnacht. Hendley led the Bulldogs with 13 points in the loss against Liberty, her first game since an injury sidelined her in early January.

for freshman guard Rachael Williams.

"We didn't quit, we fought, fought, fought," Blose said. "We just had a few turnovers that cost us, but these girls didn't quit."

With 1:35 left, a layup by Jones brought the Bulldogs behind by just three and Amanda Elder cut the lead to two with 19 seconds left after she blocked a shot, grabbed the rebound and scored on

a drive.

After a quick foul, the Flames' Michelle Parker knocked down both clutch free throws to put the game out of reach.

"Give our kids some credit, they didn't quit at the end," Blose said. "We were down 14 and chipped away those last four minutes."

Senior point guard Brittany Hendley and Williams led the Bulldogs with 13 points each.

Jones added 11 points and clutched eight rebounds. The Flames took Barton and Elder, the Bulldog's leading scorers, out of their game, as they combined for just nine points between the two of them.

"People are going to take Ashton and Amanda out of their game," Blose said. "That's where you have to have people step up on the team."

Hendley, after being out for two weeks with a rib injury, controlled the ball for the Bulldogs and showed no signs of rustiness, according to Blose.

"I thought we played with passion and fire," Hendley said. "Even though we came up short, in the end it is something for us to build on."

Williams and Jones came off the bench to create depth for the Bulldogs, according to Blose.

"Rachel and Kyla have no fear," Blose said. "They don't understand the mystique of Liberty."

Williams tallied three of the Bulldog's 10 steals to help the ladies cut Liberty's 14 point lead.

"We came back from 14 down," Williams said. "I was really happy that we gave it all we got, but we could have played harder. We did some things in the game that we could have changed that could have changed the outcome."

Though displeased by Saturday's loss, the Bulldogs have a chance for revenge on Feb. 23 when they face Liberty at Lynchburg.

"We were obviously disappointed to lose," Hendley said. "We felt we were the better team, but we played hard and showed some character and in the end that will be beneficial to us."

Despite the loss, the Bulldogs remain in contention for the regular season title, according to Blose.

"We have to learn from this," Blose said. "There are a lot of things we can work on. We are still fighting for first or second seed. It's not over because of this loss."

The Bulldogs go on the road for the next two games traveling to Coastal Carolina and Charleston Southern next week. Coastal Carolina is the only Big South opponent besides Liberty to defeat UNC Asheville this season.



### Basketball Rankings

#### Men's

1. Winthrop (10-0)
2. High Point (7-2)
3. Coastal Carolina (6-4)
4. Liberty (5-5)
5. VMI (4-6)
6. UNCA (3-6)
7. Charleston Southern (2-8)
8. Radford (2-8)

#### Women's

1. High Point (6-1)
2. Liberty (6-1)
3. Radford (5-2)
4. Coastal Carolina (4-3)
5. UNCA (4-3)
6. Charleston Southern (1-6)
7. Birmingham-Southern (1-6)
8. Winthrop (1-6)

"We have to move on from this one," Blose said. "This stretch of games coming up is going to determine whether we are a top seed or whether we are in the middle. It's going to be a test of our character."

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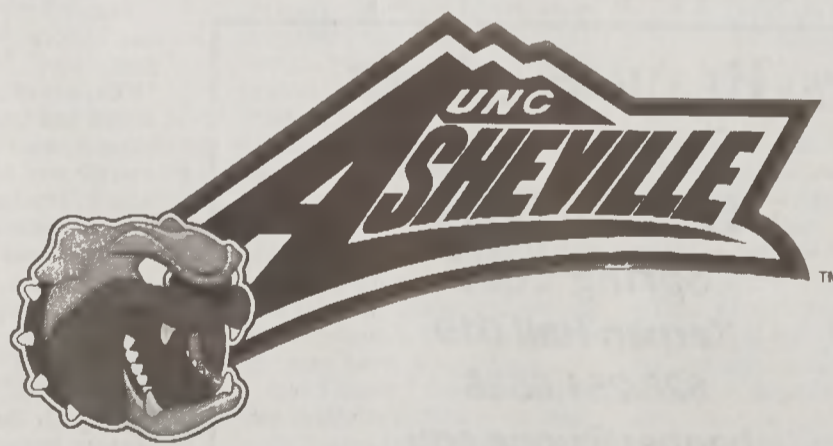
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Men v. High Point  
February 14 7:00 p.m.

Women v. Winthrop  
February 17 2:00 p.m.

Men v. Radford  
February 17 4:30 p.m.