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Owls Win Wild AMC Contest With Park

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PARKVILLE - The Owls held a comfortable lead for most of Saturday's contest, but it came down to a 10-minute stretch at the end of the game as the William Woods snatched a 61-58 win over Park. Blake French (St. Charles, Mo.) led the charge for WWU, racking 4-of-5 from distance en route to a 14-point outing.

Although the offense took a bit to get rolling, WWU took care of the business on the defensive end, holding Park to just one field goal in the first ten minutes of the contest to take a 17-5 lead.

A short cold spell for the Owls allowed Park to narrow the gap to 21-12 with just under eight to go, but a quick seven-point turn pushed the lead out to 16. Miranda Loesch (Lohman, Mo.) drew a foul, but missed her second free throw. A charging Andrews picked up the offensive rebound and finished off the second-chance possession with a three from the left wing. The Owls forced a turnover, and Katie Scherder (Bowling Green, Mo.) racked a triple to push the WWU lead to 28-12 with 5:40 on the clock.

Park was able to narrow the gap down the stretch, but the Owls took a 32-22 lead into the halftime break.

Despite a pair of quick buckets, both teams got rolling a bit slowly out of the break, with the Owls pushing to a 41-28 lead with 15:00 to go.

The Pirates stepped into a full-court press, mounting a 19-9 run to pull within three with

just under seven minutes to play. The Owls broke the press with a long-range bomb to Andrews with 6:40, but the Pirates were able to respond and a steal and a fast-break bucket by Oasha White put Park in front 54-52 with 4:58 to go.

With the Owls trailing for the first time since the first minute of the game, Loesch responded with a jumper in the lane, but Park racked a bucket on the next possession and forced a shot clock violation on the Owls' next offensive trip.

With just over two minutes to go, the Owls were able to return the favor and force a shot clock turnover, with Blake French knocking down a deep trey to put WWU back in front 57-56. Two defensive stops from the Owls wrapped around a transition bucket from Andrews left Park with no choice to foul, and Ashlee Taylor calmly swished both to put WWU in front 61-56 with 44 seconds.

Park scored on its next possession and forced a WWU timeout on the inbounds. After the timeout, the Pirates fouled Andrews before the ball could be put in play to keep time on the clock.

Although Andrews missed the front end of the bonus, WWU picked up a huge defensive stop on the Pirate possession. Park fouled Andrews just 0.8 before the clock expired, and even though Andrews missed the front end of the bonus, the desperation heave was way off the mark and the Owls held on for the win.

WWU moves to 11-5 on the year, 1-1 in conference play as the Pirates fall to 11-4 and 1-3 in AMC action. The Owls were solid from the floor, shooting at a .418 clip and recorded a season-best .615 mark from 3-pt range. The Owls held Park to a .411 mark from the floor and a .375 pace from long range. Aubuchon and Andrews finished in double-figures for the Owls as well, with 11 and 10 points respectively. Nicole Wilhite led all scorers with 15 points for Park, with White adding 12 and Kristian Dodds notching 11.

William Woods is back in action next Thursday night, as they finish out the two-game road swing at Columbia. Tipoff for the AMC battle between the Cougars and the Owls is set for 5:30 p.m.

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