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Taylor Leads Owls To Senior Day Win

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FULTON - In a game that turned out to have absolutely zero playoff implications, the William Woods University women's basketball team rolled to a 78-65 win over Missouri Baptist and gave head coach Dan Chapla his 100th career win for WWU.

The Owls shot a season-high .609 from the floor and saw three scorers finish with 20 points in the romp, with Ashlee Taylor (Dexter, Mo.) leading the way with 23 points. Megan Aubuchon (Old Monroe, Mo.) also picked up her third double-double of the season with 20 points and 12 rebounds.

The Owls started the game up 2-0, as Aubuchon made both free throws for a technical foul assessed during the pre-game, following up with a bucket off the opening tap to give WWU a quick 4-0 cushion. The Owls continued to push, with Aubuchon and Sharron Andrews (Oakland/Hayward, Calif.) combining to give William Woods a 13-4 lead by the 16:44 mark.

Missouri Baptist responded with a six-point spurt to close to 13-10, but the Owls extended the lead back to nine, with a Destani Stensrud (Exeter, Mo.) bucket off an assist from Blake French (St. Charles, Mo.) putting WWU back on top 26-17 with just under 10 to go.

The Spartans were able to battle back, even taking a 32-33 lead with 3:14 left in the half. With the shot clock winding down, Mandy Kirby was able to draw contact from French as she was hurling up a desperation three, but the MBU junior was able to make all three

free throws for the Spartans.

The foul seemed to fire up WWU, as Andrews answered with a wide-open 3-pointer on the next possession, sparking the Owls to a 11-2 run to close out the half.

The Owls started the second half exactly as they started the first, with an Aubuchon bucket in the first 20 seconds. WWU stretched a 43-35 halftime margin to a 57-44 cushion with 16:07 to go in the game.

MBU was able to take advantage of a short cold snap for William Woods, closing to a 66-61 deficit with just over six minutes to play, but a 3-pointer from Katie Scherder (Bowling Green, Mo.) off an Andrews assist took the wind out of the sails for the Spartans.

William Woods pulled away to a 78-63 lead before Chapla made a sweeping substitution with 30 seconds left, allowing his five seniors to take a final regular-season curtain call as the baton was passed to the underclassmen. MBU hit a consolation bucket with 20 seconds to go for the final margin.

In addition to outshooting MBU by nearly 20 percent - .609 to .417 - William Woods dominated the rebounding battle, grabbing 36 boards to just 26 for the Spartans. The Owls also handed out 14 assists on the night, led by six for Andrews, who also joined Aubuchon and Taylor with 20 points. Kirby led the Spartans with 17 points on the night.

With the win, Chapla becomes the fastest head coach to earn 100 wins at William Woods, doing so in his 128th game at the helm and in just his fourth season. He also becomes the first coach since Roger Ternes to record four consecutive 20-win seasons.

The Owls host the first round of the AMC Postseason Tournament on Wednesday night, taking Missouri Baptist at 7 p.m.

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