

LONGHORNS MEN'S BASKETBALL

Longhorns top Pittsburgh in tournament title game

James, Balbay lead Texas victory.

By [Mark Rosner](#)

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Dogus Balbay will not allow himself to become marginalized by an influx of talent to the Longhorns basketball program.

Balbay, a junior point guard, flourished Tuesday night, contributing 10 points, 8 rebounds and 7 assists as the third-ranked Longhorns defeated Pittsburgh 78-62 to win the O'Reilly Auto Parts CBE Classic at the Sprint Center.

Damion James led Texas (4-0) with 20 points, including three critical ones — a layup and free throw — with 3:58 left to give Texas a 13-point lead.

They came courtesy of a pass from Balbay, who made a steal at the other end.

James, who had 9 rebounds in the game, was named the tournament's most valuable player. Dexter Pittman (10 points Tuesday) joined him on the all-tournament team.

Pittsburgh (4-1) was led by guard Brad Wanamaker, who scored 13.

The game was tied at 51 with less than 11 minutes left. Then the Longhorns made a 14-3 push that began with a layup and free throw by James, the recipient of a pass inside from Dexter Pittman.

Freshman Jordan Hamilton contributed a mid-range jump shot and a long 3-pointer to the streak.

Coach Rick Barnes changed his starting lineup for the second straight game, but this time not by choice.

Sophomore guard Varez Ward suffered an injured right knee during pregame warm-ups. He was carried off the court on a stretcher. A team spokesman said the extent of the injury was unknown.

Ward was replaced by freshman J'Covan Brown, a starter for the first two games but a reserve on Monday against Iowa.

Brown scored 12 points, and guard Avery Bradley had 10.

Pittsburgh, regarded as a middle of the pack team in the Big East, is without its only returning starter from last season. Jermaine Dixon has a broken foot.

A probable starter, forward Gilbert Brown, is on academic suspension this semester.

Pittsburgh, trailing by nine in the first half, finished the period with an 11-0 push, taking a 34-32 lead to the locker room. Freshman reserve Lamar Patterson made consecutive 3-point baskets during the run.

The Longhorns went scoreless for the final 4:44.

Texas blew a 14-point first-half lead Monday against Iowa. The Longhorns trailed by three at the half but won 85-60.

Pittsburgh was tougher.

Texas played much of the second half without Pittman, who sat down with three fouls at the 19:23 mark and didn't return for nearly nine minutes.

When he did return, Pittman beat a Pittsburgh double team by passing to James for the layup that started the critical 14-3 run.

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