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Culpepper comes off bench to score 24 and lift UTEP past Michigan 65-56 in Legends Classic

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ATLANTIC CITY, N.J (AP) — Randy Culpepper responded to his demotion with 24 points to lead UTEP to a 65-56 win over Michigan on Saturday night in the consolation game of the Legends Classic.

Culpepper, the reigning Conference USA player of the year, played like he should come off the bench more often. He was the C-USA sixth man of the year as a freshman so the rare call off the bench wasn't totally unique for him.

He responded in a big way, making 10 of 16 shots and igniting a 13-0 run to start the second half that won the game for the Miners (4-2).

Darius Morris scored 20 points for Michigan (3-2).

The Wolverines did not score a field goal in the second half until there was 8:35 left. By then, the Miners had pulled out to a 15-point lead to put this win away.

Led by Culpepper, the Miners stunned the Wolverines with a decisive charge to open the second half.

Culpepper converted a quick three-point play and a had a thunderous dunk during the game-changing run to make it 42-29 before the Wolverines even scored a free throw.

Culpepper, who started all 33 games last season, hadn't come off the bench since the 2008-09 season.

Whatever reason coach Tim Floyd had for his decision, the move worked.

Culpepper was aggressive offensively and had several fastbreak dunks off turnovers that took the Wolverines right out of this one. Michigan looked nothing like the team that tested No. 9 Syracuse until the final minutes in a three-point loss on Friday night.

Michigan's offensive funk started in the first half, when it missed 12 of 14 3s. The Wolverines had the advantage at the free-throw line and capitalized off nine UTEP turnovers to at least keep the score tied at 29 at the break.

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The Wolverines surely could have used the scoring touch of their former star, Glen Rice.

Rice cheered on the Wolverines from the sideline while another former NBA All-Star, Tim Hardaway, had to split his rooting interests between UTEP, his former team, and his son, Tim Hardaway Jr., who scored six points for Michigan.

Julyan Stone and Isaac Gordon each scored 10 points for UTEP and Jeremy Williams had 10 rebounds.

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