

Heath, Hamilton Lead Boston College Past High Point 59-33

BOSTON (AP) -- Boston College is hoping its early-season defensive success is building a model for what it wants to play like the whole season.

Jay Heath scored 14 points, Jared Hamilton had 12 and BC cruised to a 59-33 victory over High Point Wednesday night in the Gotham Classic.

Steffon Mitchell had 10 points and 10 rebounds, and Derryck Thornton scored seven with five assists before leaving with an ankle injury for the Eagles (3-0).

"I liked the defensive intensity the whole game," BC coach Jim Christian said. "It's not easy to do when you're not making shots, it's not easy to keep that intensity up the whole time, but we did it. That's getting to be our identity."

The players feel like it's becoming their staple, too.

"Yeah, I think whoever's on the court, I think everyone buys into every detail," Mitchell said. "I think everybody on the team, as soon they step on the court, they do what they can to succeed."

BC forward Jairus Hamilton missed his second straight game with a leg injury suffered in the opener. Denny Slay II led High Point (0-3) with 10 points. The Panthers shot just 25 % (12 of 48) and committed 29 turnovers.

"You look at 29 turnovers, you can't win any game that way," High Point coach Tubby Smith said. "We're not a bad defensive team. That's what's been least stopping us. We just had a tough time scoring. We did a good job defending them."

Thornton, a graduate transfer from USC and the BC's leading scorer the first two games at 22.5 per game, limped to the locker room favoring his right ankle early in the second half, but returned to the bench and seemed to be moving fine coming onto the court to cheer on his teammates during timeouts. "I think he's fine," Christian said. "The trainer's or doctors haven't said anything to me. We've had a lot of kids limp off. I can't worry every time they limp off. They're tough kids."

BC closed the final six minutes of a sloppy first half with a 17-4 run to take a 33-18 lead into intermission. Jared Hamilton scored seven points in the spree and Thornton had five.

The Eagles broke it open by scoring the first 19 points of the second half, holding the Panthers scoreless for the initial 10:31 until Cliff Thomas Jr.'s three-point play. High Point missed its first 11 shots and had six turnovers.

The game was part of the Gotham Classic, which features five teams from across the country (also Eastern Washington, Saint Louis and Belmont) playing four games apiece.