

Utah 81, UTEP 69

[box score](#)

EL PASO, Texas (AP) – Luke Nevill scored 16 points and had 12 rebounds to lead Utah past UTEP 81-69 in the first round of the inaugural College Basketball Invitational on Wednesday night.

Johnnie Bryant added 17 points for the Utes (18-14), who beat UTEP for the 14th consecutive meeting.

The Utes advance to play Tulsa in the second round Monday.

Stefon Jackson led UTEP with 20 points, and Tavarais Watts and Randy Culpepper both had 14 points. The Miners struggled early, hitting just seven of 34 shots in the first half.

The poor shooting helped put Utah ahead 34-24 at halftime, and the Miners never led. UTEP did cut a 21-point deficit down to seven with 1:29 left in the second half, but the Utes sealed the win by hitting nine of 10 free throws down the stretch.