

Hass' Free Throws Vault Bison Past UMES 58-55

box score

TOLEDO, Ohio – Chris Hass scored six of his game-high 17 points in the final 23 seconds, including three clutch go-ahead free throws with 5.3 seconds left, sending Bucknell to a hard-fought 58-55 victory over Maryland-Eastern Shore in a Progressive Legends Classic subregional game on Tuesday at Toledo's Savage Arena. J.C. Show added 10 points off the bench for the Bison, who are now 2-4 heading into Friday's home game with Penn State.

This one provided a roller coaster of emotions for the Bison fans in attendance. Bucknell led by as many as 19 points in the first half, but after struggling against full-court pressure for the final 23 minutes of the game, the Bison had to get off the deck and rally late. UMES had a four-point lead and the ball in the final minute of the game, but Bucknell found a way.

The Hawks shot 58.3 percent in the second half, but the Bison came up with a key stop, forcing a shot-clock violation with 35 seconds left. At the other end Hass swished a three from the top of the key to bring the Bison within one with 23 seconds left. Devin Martin, a 90-percent free-throw shooter missed both at the line with 13.8 seconds left, but the Bison were called for another foul on the rebound. This time Michael Myers made 1 of 2 to make it 55-53.

At the other end Steven Kaspar found Hass curling around the top of the key, and he was knocked down on his 3-point attempt. Even with two extended delays for a fouled-out player and a timeout, Hass swished all three free throws with 5.3 seconds left to put the Bison back on top 56-55.

Then it was Bucknell's turn for some defensive pressure, and Stephen Brown forced Isaac Smith to step on the sideline as he chased him in the backcourt. Off the sideline out-of-bounds, Dom Hoffman hit D.J. MacLeay for a backdoor layup and a 58-55 lead with 2.7 seconds left. Devon Walker missed a desperation shot at the buzzer, and Bucknell escaped with the win.

Bucknell led 30-11 at one point, but with about three minutes left in the first half UMES went to an aggressive, full-court press, and it was effective in disrupting the Bison's momentum. The Hawks closed the first half on a 6-2 run and then outscored the Bison 16-5 in the first eight minutes of the second half.

Ishaq Pitt hit a short jumper in the lane to bring UMES within 37-33 before Ben Oberfeld countered with a tip-in for the Bison. The Hawks later tied the game at 39 on a 3-pointer by Smith with 8:07 left.

Bucknell's lead was 41-40 when Kaspar was fouled in the backcourt. Kaspar made the front end of a 1-and-1, and then Nana Foulland tipped out the missed second shot and Kaspar ran down the loose ball. That led to a Ryan Frazier 3-pointer that put the Bison back up five at 45-40. It was 46-40 after Hass made 1 of 2 at the line, but UMES rallied again behind its defense.

Iman Johnson's steal led to a transition layup, and then a turnover against the press resulted in a tying layup by Dominique Elliott. Johnson turned another steal into a breakaway jam, and UMES took a 48-46 lead with 4:19 to play.

The Bison tied it again at 48 and 50, but the Hawks went back ahead on Michael Myers' layup with 2:43 to play. After a turnover on an entry pass, Pitt hit a jumper just inside the arc at the end of the shot clock to make it 54-50 with 1:36 to go.

The Bison got out to a chilly start shooting the ball and it was a 7-7 game six minutes in before the bench gave them a big lift. MacLeay passed ahead to Brown for a breakaway layup to give Bucknell the lead, and that ignited a 23-4 run. Show hit a 3-pointer and a long two, then fed Foulland for a dunk.

Hoffman's follow made it 18-9, and a few minutes later back-to-back threes by Show and Hass made it 24-11. A short jump hook by Cory Starkey, two free throws by MacLeay and a slashing layup by Frazier gave the Bison a 30-11 lead with 3:35 left in the half.

UMES scored six straight points, four of them coming at the foul line, before Foulland closed out the first-half scoring with a seven-footer off an inbounds play. The Bison led 32-17 at the break, even though Hass was limited to three points on 1-for-7 shooting.

Bucknell shot 44.9 percent overall and 41.2 percent (7-17) from the 3-point arc. They also made 9 of 11 from the three-throw line. UMES shot 40.8 from the floor and hit 3 of 10 from long range and 12 of 20 from the line.

The Hawks received 31 of their 55 points from their bench, led by 12 points from Johnson and 10 by Pitt. Johnson also had four steals, while Myers tallied nine points and seven rebounds before fouling out.

MacLeay led all players with 10 rebounds, his second career double-digit tally, and Bucknell had a 35-25 edge on the glass and a 16-4 lead in second-chance points.

Bucknell is back in action on Friday at home against Penn State at 4 p.m. The Nittany Lions will be making their first trip to Lewisburg since 1976, and both teams will be wearing throwback uniforms. Fans coming to the game dressed in 70s garb will be eligible to win prizes and will receive a free soft drink at the Sojka Pavilion concession stand.