

Pitt outlasts UC Santa Barbara for first win of season

By ALAN SAUNDERS

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Ryan Luther had 13 points, including three 3-pointers, and 10 rebounds to help Pittsburgh its first win of the season Wednesday night, a 70-62 victory over UC Santa Barbara in the Progressive Legends Classic.

It didn't come easily, as the Panthers (1-2) led for just six minutes, 58 seconds, and were outplayed by the Gauchos (1-1) for much of the evening.

Jared Wilson-Frame hit four consecutive free throws to give Pitt its first lead with 16:17 to play and there were seven lead changes and five ties before Luther's tip-in of his own miss gave the Panthers a 58-57 advantage with 2:37 left. After an offensive foul on UCSB's next possession, Wilson-Frame put-back his own missed 3. The Gauchos missed a 3-pointer on the other end and Wilson-Frame hit another trey to make it 63-57 with 54 seconds to go. Pitt hit 7 of 8 from the free-throw line from there to seal it.

UCSB shot just 23.5 percent from the field in the second half.

"We closed out well and we tried to box out a lot better in the second half," Pitt guard Jonathan Milligan said. "I think that's ultimately what got us the 'W' today."

Wilson-Frame and Milligan had 14 points apiece, Parker Stewart finished with 12 points and Shamiel Stevenson scored 11 for the Panthers. Stewart

Despite shooting just 32.3 percent from the floor, the Gauchos were able to control the game by outrebounding Pitt 43-35 advantage, including 11-5 on the offensive glass, and committing just eight turnovers.

Leland King II had 22 points and eight rebounds for UCSB (1-1). Jalen Canty added 10 points and 11 rebounds for his third career double-double.

MISSING PIECE

The Gauchos played without starting point guard Marcus Jackson, a graduate transfer from Rice, who is day-to-day with a hip injury. Jackson also missed the season opening-win against North Dakota State. He averaged 12.2 points per game with the Owls in 2015-16.

BIG PICTURE

UCSB: The Joe Pasternak era looks promising for the Gauchos. The first-year head coach, hired from the Arizona staff over the offseason, had his squad play nearly level with an ACC team on the road after going 1-12 away from home last season.

"Our guys have worked so hard installing our man-to-man defense and rebounding principles." Pasternak said. "I couldn't be more happy with how they competed. The ball didn't go in."

Pitt: Though young, the Panthers have had a bleak start to the 2017-18 season, dropping their first two games to teams from the Patriot League and Big Sky Conference. After getting into the win column against the Gauchos, the schedule will toughen significantly going forward.