

Eastern Kentucky Holds on For 73-65 Win at Liberty

[box score](#)

LYNCHBURG, Va. – Senior Joshua Jones scored a team-high 15 points and the Colonels converted eight key free throws down the stretch as the Eastern Kentucky University men's basketball team held on to defeat host Liberty, 73-65, on Friday night at the Vines Center.

The game was part of the 2K Sports Classic benefitting Coaches vs. Cancer.

EKU (2-2) shot 47 (27-of-57) percent from the field and a season-high 45 percent (10-of-22) from three point range, as six different Colonels connected from behind the arc. EKU's perimeter defense, meanwhile, stifled Liberty (2-2) to 18 percent (2-of-11) shooting from deep.

Senior Jaron Jones and freshman Eric Stutz both tallied 14 points in the win, while juniors Mike DiNunno and D'Mitri Riggs and freshman Timmy Knipp all contributed eight points. Sophomore Jeff Johnson only scored three points, but played a huge role as he came off the bench to spell Stutz and finished the night with team highs in rebounds (8) and assists (5).

Jesse Sanders and David Minaya paced Liberty with 19 points apiece.

After hitting just one three-pointer in its last game at Presbyterian, EKU knocked down its first three on Friday night, as Joshua Jones, Knipp and senior Jeff Allgood all connected from deep in the first five minutes of the game to give the Colonels an 11-8 lead at the initial media timeout.

Another trifecta by Knipp with 10:07 on the clock expanded the Colonels' lead to 18-14; however, the Flames chipped away at that advantage and took a lead of their own, 20-18, when Tavares Speaks sunk a jumper with 6:13 left in the half. The last six minutes went back-and-forth and featured five ties, the last of which came when Liberty's Jared Vander Pol scored in the paint to send the game into halftime tied at 28-28.

Liberty scored a bucket to take the lead out of the break, but EKU responded with an 8-0 run – highlighted by three pointers by Joshua Jones and Jaron Jones – to go ahead 36-30 at the 17:03 mark. After the Flames retook the lead, 37-36, the Colonels exploded on another run, this one 15-4, and grabbed their first double-digit advantage of the night, 51-41, when Jaron Jones buried another three-pointer with 10:40 on the clock.

Liberty did not go away, however, as a pair of jumpers by Speaks pulled the Flames to within three, 65-62, with 1:28 remaining in the game.

On the Colonels' next possession, Stutz was fouled and made both ends of a one-and-one. Joshua Jones then came up with a big steal also made both of his free throw attempts.

EKU converted 8-of-8 free throws down the stretch to secure the road victory, and the Colonels finished the night a perfect 9-of-9 from the charity stripe.

The Colonels return to action tomorrow night when they face William and Mary at the Vines Center at 4:30 p.m.

