

Akron Downs Mississippi State 68-58

[box score](#)

STARKVILLE, Miss – The University of Akron men's basketball team, behind a career-high 19 points by Quincy Diggs, opened the 2011-12 season with a 68-58 win over Mississippi State on Wednesday as part of the 2K Sports Classic.

Diggs finished the game 8-of-13 from the floor with four rebounds in 33 minutes on the court. Zeke Marshall finished with 10 points, six rebounds and five blocked shots before fouling out. Brian Walsh added nine points in his first action for the Zips.

For the game, Akron shot 48.4 percent from the floor (30-of-62) and 20 percent from behind the 3-point arc. Mississippi State closed the contest shooting 34.5 percent from the field (19-of-55) and 15.4 percent from long range (2-of-13).

The Zips forced 19 turnovers and converted them into 26 points while turning the ball over 15 times. Akron also held the advantage in points in the paint (44-28), fast break points (16-4) and bench scoring (21-6).

The Zips continued to control the tempo, but the Bulldogs would cut the Akron lead to 62-56 with 3:17 to go in the game. The Bulldogs would again cut the lead to six (64-58) with 52 second to go, but two free throws by Diggs would ice the game.

MSU scored the first five points of the second half, the Zips held strong. A Marshall dunk courtesy of an Alex Abreu pass gave Akron a 46-44 lead with 11:33 on the clock.

Both teams came out looking to score as MSU opened up an early 11-6 lead with 16:20 to go in the first half. The lead would be short-lived thanks to seven-straight points by Diggs and a Nick Harney bucket gave the Zips a 15-15 with 12:17 on the first-half clock.

The Zips kept the pressure on as both teams traded buckets but it was Akron that came out on top in the half thanks to a stout defensive effort. The Zips' defense held the Bulldogs without a field goal over the final 7:05, outscoring MSU 16-6 to take a 37-29 lead at the intermission.

Akron closed the half shooting 17-of-33 from the field (51.5 percent) while holding MSU to just 9-of-27 (33.3 percent) from the floor. The Zips held a 22-17 rebounding advantage and turned eight MSU turnovers into 13 points. Diggs led all scorers with 11 points.

The Zips will open their home season on Saturday, Nov. 12, when they play host to Hiram as part of the 2K Sports Classic. Tip-off from Rhodes Arena is set for 7 p.m. ET.

Zips Notebook: With the win, Akron improves to 67-44 in season openers ... the Zips are 2-3 all-time against the Southeastern Conference, 2-0 under head coach Keith Dambrot ... Quincy Diggs' previous high of 18 points came against Western Michigan in the Mid-American Conference semifinals (March 11, 2011) ... Akron is now 117-18 (.867) when holding opponents to 65 points or less ... Alex Abreu had a career-high six steals, bettering his previous mark of five against Arkansas-Pine Bluff (Dec. 29, 2010).

