

Navy beats Loyola 73-61

Greg Sprink led Navy with 21 points

[box score](#)

NEW YORK (AP) - T.J. Topercer scored 15 of his 17 points in the second half as Navy rallied from a 13-point deficit to beat Loyola of Maryland 73-61 Friday night in the opening round of the New York regional of the Coaches vs. Cancer tournament.

The Midshipmen (1-0) will meet the winner of the North Florida-St. John's game in Saturday's finals.

The semifinals and finals are scheduled for Nov. 16-17 at Madison Square Garden.

"This performance tonight was a testament to these kids," said Navy head coach Billy Lange. "They stuck with the plan, were disciplined and didn't give up. Their commitment to Navy basketball really showed tonight."

Greg Sprink led Navy with 21 points, while Trey Stanton also had 17.

"They responded very well when things got tough and when we needed to make plays, especially in the second half," said Lange. "Corey (Johnson) and Greg (Sprink) were very steady and really kept us composed when things didn't look too great. Their leadership was evident tonight.

"Win or lose, this is an exciting group of guys to coach," added Lange. "Everyone contributed tonight in some way. We made some mistakes early, but we didn't wilt and stayed resilient."

Gerald Brown's 24 points topped the Greyhounds (0-1), who held a 34-25 lead at halftime. Marquis Sullivan followed with 16.

A free throw by Brown gave Loyola its biggest lead of the second half, 38-25 with 17:58 remaining. Still holding a 52-41 advantage after a pair of free throws by Sullivan with 9:06 to go, Loyola was then outscored 32-9 the rest of the way, fueled by the Navy freshmen Topercer and Stanton.

The pair scored 22 of Navy's final 32 points, with Topercer scoring 15 of his 17 in the last nine minutes. Topercer's third three of the night gave Navy the lead for good at 57-54 with 5:59 to play. Corey Johnson was fouled on the play, and the junior guard connected on both free throws for a five-point play and a five-point cushion.

Brown's layup got Loyola within 62-61 with 1:37 left. Stanton then made a 3-pointer with a minute left and the shot clock winding down and blocked a Brown lay-up attempt with 40 seconds left to keep the Navy lead at four. Navy went on to score the final eight points from the foul line.

The Mids finished the game 27-of-28 from the line, including making their last 22 attempts. The performance from the free throw line set school and 2KSports Coaches vs. Classic records.

"We spend a lot of time at the free throw line in practice and it shows in games," said Lange. "It's all about focus and poise."

Besides Sprink's 21 and Topercer's and Stanton's 17, Kaleo Kina tallied 10 and Johnson contributed eight points. Johnson also added seven rebounds, three assists, three steals and two blocks in a fine all-around performance. Stanton added eight rebounds, while Sprink hauled down five. Kina led the Mids with five assists. Navy outrebounded Loyola, 29-27, including 20-9 in the decisive second half.

