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Arcidiacono and Bell lift Cats Past Marshall 80-68

Freshman guard scored 25 points and added six assists

[box score](#)

VILLANOVA, Pa. - Freshman [Ryan Arcidiacono](#) scored 25 points and his assist set up a pivotal 3-pointer from [James Bell](#) in the closing minutes to help lift Villanova past Marshall 80-68 in the second game of the 2K Sports Classic today at the Pavilion. VU improves to 2-0 on the young season while the Thundering Herd falls to 1-1.

"That was a really good effort by our team," stated Villanova head coach [Jay Wright](#). "We watched a lot of film on Marshall from last year. I know (Marshall) Coach (Tom) Herrion real well. We played his College of Charleston team, (which) was small and quick. Now, he has taken a new program and is winning with a completely different kind of team."

"This was one of the top rebounding teams in the country last year and we knew coming in that if we didn't rebound the ball, we were going to be in a lot of trouble. I was really pleased with how we rebounded."

The Wildcats owned a 37-23 advantage on the glass as nine of the 10 players who saw action grabbed at least one rebound. What's more, VU limited Marshall to just three offensive rebounds.

"I'm not sure if we've ever had one of our teams get only three offensive rebounds in a game," stated Herrion. [JayVaughn Pinkston](#) led the `Cats with seven caroms, including five of the offensive variety. [Achraf Yacoubou](#) and [Maurice Sutton](#) came off the bench to each contribute five defensive rebounds.

As he did on Friday night, Arcidiacono set an early scoring tone for the Wildcats. The 6-3 guard gave the Wildcats their first basket of the afternoon on a 3-point field goal and then added two more in the game's first eight minutes. He tossed in a pair of assists to help VU build a 17-12 advantage with 11:57 remaining in the first half.

Marshall responded with a 5-0 run capped by a triple from D.D. Scarver that tied the game at 17 with 10:24 to go in the first half.

But Arcidiacono and junior [James Bell](#) kept the offense humming for the Wildcats. VU built a 43-35 edge at intermission on the strength of 20 points from Arcidiacono and nine more from Bell. The `Cats connected on .565 of their first half field goal attempts, including 5-of-12 from beyond the arc.

"I thought Ryan was great at the point for us," stated Wright. "Tahj is our leader out there - he's so focused on what we are doing. I was really proud of those guys."

"I felt good shooting the ball in warm-ups and then a couple went down early," stated Arcidiacono. "Coach wants us to be aggressive and fortunately I got a few to fall for me."

Marshall, though, stayed within striking distance by converting .520 of their own field goal attempts, including four triples. Scarver set the pace with 12 points for the Thundering Herd.

The Wildcats never trailed in the second half but Marshall kept the heat on. The Thundering Herd converted 8-of-17 from beyond the 3-point arc in the period to keep the pressure on Villanova, which leaned primarily on Bell (19 points on the day) and [Darrun Hilliard](#) (15 points, two assists and zero turnovers) for offensive production.

The Thundering Herd closed to within 70-68 when Chris Martin drained a triple with 4:01 left to play in the contest. But Martin's basket would be the last of the afternoon for Marshall, which was outscored 10-0 in the final minutes.

No play was larger in that stretch than one that Arcidiacono and Bell teamed up on with 3:36 to play. The freshman guard drew a defender to him and fed the Florida native for a good look at a 3-pointer. Bell calmly dropped it through the net and the `Cats were on their way to their second consecutive victory.

"I received a great pass from Ryan," stated Bell. "It was just effortless."

"I was trying to score," added Arcidiacono, "and that drew his man in. I knew that he would knock it down if I got him an open shot. He's a deadly shooter."

"Arch hasn't been in a game like that (here) so I was just really watching to see what happened," noted Wright.

"Either they're going to take the lead and we'll see if we have the guts to fight back, or we'll keep the lead. Everything we go through now with Ryan at the point working with some of the young guys is good for us."

Now, Villanova heads to Madison Square Garden where it will meet Purdue in the second game of Thursday night's doubleheader in the 2K Sports Classic benefiting Wounded Warrior Project. The game will air on ESPN2.