

No. 4 Pitt Tops WSU for Legends Classic Championship

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box score

NEWARK, N.J. – Sam Young scored 15 points and Levance Fields added 14 to lead No. 4 Pittsburgh to a 57-43 victory over Washington State on Saturday night in the championship game of the Legends Classic.

The Panthers (7-0) were able to win despite shooting 35.4 percent from the field (17-of-48). They did it with solid inside defense over the final five minutes, holding the Cougars (5-1) to three points in that span.

Pittsburgh forced 15 turnovers and turned them into 17 points, while Washington State was able to get just two points off the Panthers' eight miscues.

Daven Harmeling had 12 points for Washington State, which had won 21 straight games against nonconference opponents dating to 2006-07.

DeJuan Blair had seven points, 10 rebounds and three blocks for the Panthers, who are off to a 7-0 start for the seventh straight season.

Fields struggled from the field, missing eight of his first 10 shots before hitting two straight attempts when the Cougars got within six with 4:59 to play.

The senior guard hit a jumper with 4:29 to go, then put the Panthers up 51-40 with his only 3-pointer of the game. Young made two free throws with 1:53 remaining to match Pittsburgh's biggest lead.

Young, who also had eight rebounds, was selected the tournament MVP.

Pittsburgh led 26-23 at halftime despite shooting just 33 percent from the field, while the Cougars hit 52.6 percent. The Panthers made two of nine shots from 3-point range in the opening half, but had eight offensive rebounds to just one for the Cougars, who had 10 turnovers in the first half.

A dunk by Gilbert Brown capped an 11-0 run that gave Pittsburgh a 40-27 lead with 13:33 to go. Washington State got within six points twice, the last time at 46-40 on a 3 by Harmeling with 4:59 left, the Cougars' only points until Harmeling hit another 3-pointer in the final seconds.

Pittsburgh has won 11 of its last 12 games in the New York-New Jersey area, which is home to four of its players.

The loss dropped Washington State to 1-72 against teams ranked in the top five, the only win against No. 4 Oregon State on Feb. 16, 1980.

Neither coach had ever lost a game in November as a head coach. Jamie Dixon improved to 31-0 in his six seasons at Pittsburgh, while Tony Bennett dropped to 19-1 in his third season.

This was the first meeting between the schools.

