

Men's Hoops Rallies From 12 Down To Top Vermont, 67-59

[box score](#)

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. – A seasoned Cornell squad overcame a 12-point first half deficit and weathered a cold shooting night, but still handily defeated Vermont 67-58 on Saturday afternoon at the Daskalakis Athletic Center in game three of the Legends Classic. The Big Red improved to 4-2 thanks in large part to the energy of junior forward Adam Wire, who posted a career-high 13 rebounds in the win as five players were in double figures for the second straight game.

Playing without a pair of regulars in guard Max Groebe and forward Alex Tyler, the Big Red used its depth and balance to capture the victory, improving to 3-0 in the tournament. Leading Cornell offensively was the trio of Louis Dale, Jeff Foote and Ryan Wittman with 12 points each, while Chris Wroblewski and Geoff Reeves each notched 11 points. The Big Red had a season-best 14 steals and limited the Catamounts to 44 percent shooting, including 23 percent from beyond the arc. Both Wroblewski and Dale had four steals apiece. Cornell dominated the backboards with a 41-28 edge to control the lane.

The Catamounts got 21 points, seven rebounds, three assists, three steals and two blocked shots from mid-major All-American Marqus Blakely, but only had one other player, Joey Accaoui, in double figures. He scored 10. UVM hit just 3-of-13 from 3-point range (23 percent) and turned the ball over 19 times.

Vermont jumped out to a quick 11-3 lead with Blakely scoring six points in the first three minutes before the Big Red needed to call a timeout. The Catamounts made four of their first five shots, while Cornell was 1-of-5 early, but Dale got Cornell out of its early slump with a 12-footer. Vermont extended the lead to 10 at 22-12 after a feed underneath for a Fjeld layup with 12:07 left in the first half and then to 12 at 28-16 before Wittman went on a mini-run to cut the deficit to 28-21. The senior pulled up for a free-throw jumper, then drained a 3-pointer to force a Vermont timeout with 7:17 left. A nifty pass from Wire to Coury on the fastbreak made it 28-23 after a strong defensive possession for the Big Red.

After trailing most of the first half and being down as many as 12 points, Cornell inched back to within four (30-26) with the ball at the final media timeout of the first half. The two squads traded baskets in the final two minutes, with Foote's turnaround jumper sending the Big Red into halftime trailing just 32-30.

Reeves led the Big Red with eight points, while Dale had six and both Wittman and Foote notched five. Vermont shot 52 percent from the floor in the half while limiting Cornell to 36 percent shooting, including 4-of-11 from beyond the arc. Cornell held a 20-16 edge on the backboards behind six boards from Adam Wire and four from Errick Peck. Vermont was led by 12 points from Blakely on 5-of-5 shooting.

An offensive rebound by Wire and a short jumper by Dale on the team's first possession of the second half knotted the score for the first time since 3-3. Cornell took its first lead at 36-34 with 17:30 left on a 10-foot Wittman jumper. Cornell went up six after a Reeves fall-away jumper to put to go into double digits with 10 points with 14 minutes left.

Wire continued to lead the charge with his energy. He stole the ball out of Blakely's hands to force a jump ball. A tip-in off a missed shot by Coury extended the lead to nine at 51-42 and it just kept growing. The defense forced Vermont into 3-of-10 shooting to open the half in increasing its lead to 14 (63-49). The Catamounts made a quick 5-0 run, but missed a 3-pointer to keep the momentum, and Foote made the first of two free throws on the other end to push the lead back into double figures. Cornell was held scoreless in the final 3:12, but Vermont could only score five points during the span against the Big Red's lockdown defense, and Cornell rolled off with the 67-58 win.

Cornell will close out competition at the Legends Classic on Sunday when it faces Drexel at 2:30 p.m. at the Daskalakis Athletic Center.

