

# Lehigh never trails in 67-63 win over Texas Southern

[box score](#)

**BROOKINGS, S.D.** - The Lehigh men's basketball team jumped out to a 6-0 lead and never trailed as the Mountain Hawks had an answer to every Texas Southern run, holding on to a 67-63 win in the Legends Classic on Monday. Freshman Tim Kempton finished with 20 points for a second straight game while junior Corey Schaefer scored a career-high 16, including a clutch jumper with 3:38 remaining to give the Mountain Hawks a three-point lead. That was Lehigh's last field goal as the Mountain Hawks knocked down 13 free throws down the stretch for their second victory of the season.

"I was very pleased to walk away with a victory in this particular game," said Lehigh head coach Brett Reed. "Coming here under these circumstances, especially with as many road games as we've had and against a team as talented as Texas Southern, I'm pleased that we came out with the right type of focus and corrected some mistakes from the past. We played solid defense in the first half which put us in a position where we built a lead and ultimately iced it from the free throw line."

Kempton added a career-high eight rebounds (seven coming in the first half) and was 6-of-12 from the field and 8-of-11 from the charity stripe including a number of clutch free throws down the stretch. Schaefer shot 7-of-13 from the field, including 2-of-4 from three-point range.

"Corey stepped up and played very well for us today," said Reed. "His family was here and was able to watch him play. It was nice he was able to play with the poise and confidence that he did. He knocked down shots and was secure with the basketball. He's traditionally always in the right spots, and I was glad he stepped up with confidence and made shots."

Senior Mackey McKnight scored nine points and added four assists to pull within 10 points of 1,000 for his career. Sophomore Justin Goldsborough was strong off the bench with six points and six rebounds. All nine Mountain Hawks who played were able to score.

After holding former La Salle and West Virginia standout Aaric Murray to six points in the first half on 2-of-10 shooting, Murray exploded for 22 in the second half, but a deep Mountain Hawks' forward line had just enough.

Lehigh used strong defense in the early going to take a 6-0 lead with 17:28 remaining in the first half. After a stop on the first possession, Schaefer found McKnight for an easy layup. The Mountain Hawks followed with a Kempton layup and McKnight jumper for the early six-point lead.

Murray scored Texas Southern's first points, knocking down a three with 16:49 on the clock, but Schaefer answered on the other end with a trey to make it 9-3 with just over 15 minutes left in the first.

Lehigh's lead hovered between four and six over the ensuing minutes until consecutive offensive rebounds and putbacks by freshmen Shane Whitfield and Kempton gave Lehigh a 19-11 lead with 6:51 remaining.

The Tigers responded with a Murray three and Madarious Gibbs layup to pull within 19-16. However, Lehigh closed the half on a 10-1 run to take a 29-17 lead into halftime. Sophomore Jesse Chuku began the run with a three-pointer then a Schaefer trey made it 25-16 with 2:24 remaining. A Goldsborough dunk and Schaefer jumper closed the half with momentum in the Mountain Hawks' favor.

Kempton led the way with eight points and seven rebounds in the first half. Schaefer also had eight on 3-of-5 shooting and 2-of-3 from three-point range. The Mountain Hawks shot 42 percent (13-of-31) to the Tigers' 19 percent (5-of-26) as Lehigh's defense and overall energy was evident from the get-go.

Texas Southern started the second half by scoring nine of the first 11 points. A Murray layup forced a Lehigh TO up 31-26 with 16:47 remaining.

Another Murray layup extended the run to 11-2 but an Austin Price three gave Lehigh a 34-28 lead with 15:40 on the clock.

Schaefer scored seven of Lehigh's first 11 second-half points as a layup made it 40-34 with 12:13 on the clock. Kempton then hit four free throws in less than a minute to help Lehigh regain an eight-point, 46-38 lead with 9:55 on the clock.

Texas Southern continued to chip away, pulling within one after a Murray free throw then dunk with 3:57 on the clock. Schaefer answered with a clutch fallaway jumper which made it 54-51 with 3:38 remaining.

Lehigh opened up a five-point lead after two Kempton free throws but the Tigers chipped away, pulling within two after a Ray Penn three-point play with 32 seconds remaining. Earlier, Kempton took a charge and Texas Southern head coach Mike Davis was assessed a technical foul with just over a minute remaining.

The lead hovered between two and five over the final minute, but the Mountain Hawks hit their free throws to walk away victorious.

Lehigh shot 42 percent for the game (22-of-52) and 27 percent from three-point range (4-of-15). The Tigers finished at 36 percent (21-of-58) and 23 percent from long distance (5-of-22). Texas Southern held a 40-36 edge in rebounds.

The Mountain Hawks will now face South Dakota State in the championship game of this Legends Classic subregional on Tuesday at 9 p.m. ET. The host Jackrabbits are coming off two straight Summit League Championships.