

Oklahoma State outlasts Pittsburgh 73-67 behind Carroll

By DENIS P. GORMAN

NEW YORK (AP) — As his postgame press conference wrapped up, Mike Boynton casually mentioned he was going to the world-renowned Junior's Cheesecake in Brooklyn to enjoy the delicacy the restaurant is heralded for.

That Oklahoma State's first-year coach will be able to enjoy a slice has much to do with the performance of his bench, most notably Jeffrey Carroll.

"He's a good player," Boynton said of Carroll, who scored 29 points to lead Oklahoma State to a 73-67 win over Pittsburgh in the consolation game of the Progressive Legends Classic on Tuesday in New York.

"Jeff coming off the bench - I don't expect him to get 30 (points) every night - but he gives us a different element people don't usually prepare for.

Thomas Dziagwa added 12 for Oklahoma State (4-1).

"We do have a lot of guys who can help us," Boynton said.

Despite having four players finish in double-figure scoring, Pittsburgh dropped to 1-4 with its second straight loss and its third in its last four games. Shamiel Stevenson led the Panthers with 16 points. Jared Wilson-Frame finished with 13. Marcus Carr added 12, and Ryan Luther had 10.

"We competed really hard today," coach Kevin Stallings said. "There were some really good things. ...There was some real growth on the part of some of our guys.

"Again, we didn't do enough (to win) and we know our margin (of error) is small. In terms of effort, in terms of energy, getting the job done, in terms of trying to do what they need to do to be successful we got a very good effort from our team."

The first of two games at Brooklyn's Barclays Center was close throughout. Neither team was able to build a double-digit lead in the first half. Pittsburgh's largest advantage was five points, while Oklahoma State was only able to open up an eight-point lead.

"I am extremely proud of my team for showing everybody the kind of character that I know they have," Boynton said. "The tight affair carried over into the second half, as Jonathan Milliagan's layup at 3:05 allowed the Panthers to tie at 38. Oklahoma State responded by outscoring Pittsburgh 15-7 over the next 4:50 to go into the television timeout with a 53-45 lead.

Pittsburgh cut the deficit to 53-49 following consecutive layups from Kene Chukwuka and Stevenson. However, Oklahoma State pushed the advantage to 57-49 with two Carroll layups within a 45-second span.

"Literally every possession is a learning lesson for us right now," Stallings said. "It's all a learning situation right now."

The Panthers closed to within three in the final minutes, the Cowboys didn't let them closer. Carroll knocked down six free throws and made a jumper. Brandon Averette and Lindy Waters each made two free throws, and Kendall Smith added a free throw in the final 1:24.

"Staying poised was our mindset," Carroll said.

BIG PICTURE

Oklahoma State: The Cowboys left Brooklyn with a win due in part to their free-throw shooting. Oklahoma State shot 16 for 19 from the stripe. In the second half, the Cowboys made 10 of 11.

Pittsburgh: Following Monday night's 85-54 blowout loss to in-state rival Penn State, Pittsburgh coach Kevin Stallings acknowledged the 2017-18 season would be "uneven," and added he was caught off-guard by his team's effort and execution against the Nittany Lions. But neither was an issue against Oklahoma State.

NOTABLE

Oklahoma State: The Cowboys improved to 5-6 all-time against Pittsburgh. With the win, Oklahoma State snapped four-game losing streak against the Panthers dating to Dec. 15, 2007.

Pittsburgh: The Panthers fell to 9-3 all-time in Legends Classic games.