

Carr's 16 points leads Penn State to 85-54 win over Pitt

By DENIS P. GORMAN

NEW YORK (AP) — Pat Chambers' message to his team could have been distilled to two words: Just. Play.

"I go back to the term 'mental conditioning,'" Chambers said after Penn State's 85-54 rout of Pittsburgh Monday night in the second game of the Progressive Legends Classic.

"We have to win the next possession and the next possession. Don't even look at the score. I'm trying to teach them how to be an elite team," Chambers said. "Big 10 teams that are elite take care of business and I felt we did that in the second half."

Tony Carr scored 16 points to lead six Nittany Lions in double figure scoring. Mike Watkins and Shep Garner had 13 apiece, while Lamar Stevens, Josh Reaves and Nazeer Bostick each scored 10 for Penn State (5-0).

"I'm proud of my team. We were dialed in and focused," Chambers said.

While there was precious little for Chambers to criticize, Pitt (1-3) coach Kevin Stallings was stunned at what had transpired.

"It was a little bit shocking to me," Stallings said. "I didn't have our guys ready to play like I thought I did." Jared Wilson-Frame led the Panthers with 17 points.

Despite the lopsided nature of the game, it was neither the biggest win in Penn State history nor was it the worst loss ever for Pittsburgh. The Nittany Lions' largest margin of victory was 74, in an 86-12 win over Susquehanna on Jan. 25, 1919, while Pittsburgh dropped a program-worst 106-13 decision to Westminster on Feb. 24, 1906.

Penn State's largest margin of victory against Pittsburgh was 84-44 on Jan. 14, 1967.

"We got punched right at the start of the game and we just didn't respond," Stallings said. "They just got into such a rhythm at the beginning of the game offensively that they played (in) a complete comfort zone and we never did anything to take them out of there."

Garner's opened the game with a 3-point jumper and Nittany Lions never trailed. Carr knocked down a straightaway 3 to make it 47-21 at the break. Bostick threw down a breakaway one-handed jam and Garner drilled another 3 to push the lead to 63-29.

"Our approach was: Win every possession. Every possession matters," Chambers said.

BIG PICTURE

Penn State: It may be a fun winter in Happy Valley, and not just because of the nationally ranked football team. Penn State has returned 80.8 percent of its scoring, 87.8 percent of its rebounding and 81.8 percent of its assists from last season.

Pitt: By comparison, it is likely a good thing Pittsburgh has the Stanley Cup Champion Penguins and the possible Super Bowl contender Steelers, because it may be a long season for Panthers fans. Pitt's roster has players who combined for three starts and 648 minutes in 2016-17.

NOTABLE

Penn State: Penn State improved to 76-72 all-time against Pitt. The Nittany Lions snapped a seven-game losing streak to their in-state rivals.

Pitt: Jared Wilson-Frame's 17 points marked the third straight game he finished in double figure scoring.

IN ATTENDANCE

Stephen Curry arrived midway through the second half of the game. The Golden State Warriors star saw Penn State outscore Pittsburgh, 31-25.