



POSTGAME NOTES

USC vs. UNC Asheville
Galen Center • Los Angeles, Calif.
NIT First-Round Game
Tuesday, March 13, 2018

Final: USC 103, UNC Asheville 98 (2 OT)

- With the win tonight, USC improved to 24-11 and UNC Asheville fell to 21-13.
- USC has reached 24 wins for the seventh time in school history.
- USC led 19-17 after the first quarter. Jordan McLaughlin scored 12 of USC's 19 first quarter points. USC led 39-34 at halftime. USC made 57.1 of its first-half shots and UNC Asheville shot 37.5 percent from the floor in the first half. USC led 56-55 after the third quarter, being outscored 21-17 in the quarter. The game was tied at 70 after the fourth quarter, as Jordan McLaughlin hit a pair of free throws with 25 seconds remaining. The game was tied at 85 all after the first overtime when McLaughlin hit a 3-pointer with 6 seconds remaining. Elijah Stewart scored the last 7 points of the game to put the game away for the Trojans.
- Nick Rakocevic had a career-high 19 rebounds, his previous high was 12 vs. UC Santa Barbara on Dec. 17, 2017. He also scored a career-best 24 points for his fourth career double-double. Rakocevic's previous high for points was 19 vs. California on Jan. 4, 2018. He came up one rebound short of becoming the first Trojan to post a 20-rebound, 20-point game since Derrick Dowell scored 24 points and grabbed 21 rebounds vs. UCLA on Feb. 1, 1985. Rakocevic's 19 rebounds were the most by a Trojan since David Bluthenthal tied the school record with 28 rebounds vs. Arizona State in 2000.
- Elijah Stewart finished with 22 points, his most since scoring a season-high 28 points vs. Oregon State on Feb. 17.
- Jordan McLaughlin scored 26 points and had 13 assists tonight and has had 7 or more assists in 23 of the 35 games. It was his fifth double-double of the season and eighth of his career.
- It was USC's third overtime game of the season and they improved to 2-1, defeating Vanderbilt 93-89 on the road on Nov. 19 and losing to Princeton 103-93 at home on Dec. 19.
- USC's 103 were its most in a game since also scoring 103 vs. Arizona on Jan. 9, 2016 (4 OT).
- Enfield on Chimezie Metu deciding not to play tonight, "Chimezie Metu made a personal decision not to participate in the NIT as a precautionary measure to eliminate the risk of injury leading up to the NBA Draft."
- Charles O'Bannon and Kurt Karis missed tonight's game with sickness.
- **Rules changes in effect for the NIT...**The three-point line will be extended by approximately 1 foot 8 inches to the same distance used by FIBA for international competition (22 feet 1.75 inches).
 - The FT lane will be widened from 12 feet to 16 feet, consistent with the width used by the NBA.
 - The games will be divided into four 10-minute quarters as opposed to two 20-minute halves. Teams will shoot two free throws beginning with the fifth foul of each quarter.
 - The shot clock will reset to 20 seconds after an offensive rebound instead of the full 30 seconds.
- USC's next game will be vs. Western Kentucky (25-10) at the Galen Center on Monday, March 19 at 8:30 p.m. on ESPN2.

ANDY ENFIELD QUOTES:

"What an entertaining game. I'm really impressed with UNC Asheville and their coach and program. They've done a great job building that program. Congratulations to them. I know how hard it is to win a league like theirs and how hard it is to come in second in a league like ours. So that was two good teams.

"Chimezie made a personal decision to not play to prevent injury and prepare for the NBA Draft. He hasn't missed a practice or game yet and he graduated in 3 years. He deserves to make his own decision. We support him.

(On the rule changes)—"The quarters were challenging. It took some adjustments.

"Nick played exceptionally well and Victor gave us good minutes.

"Our defense was average or poor tonight. We have to play better if we want to win the next game."



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JORDAN McLAUGHLIN QUOTES:

(On Sunday's NCAA decision)--"It was tough. Life moves on. We talked about it in the lockerroom. We came out and played.

"I'm glad it's over. I'm tired. It was fun. UNC Asheville is a tough team. They kept fighting.

"Winning is always important. We said that since we were in it, we might as well win it.

"We got off to a slow start. Once we got to overtime, we kicked it up a notch and started to win."

NICK RAKOCEVIC QUOTES:

"I thought we had a good resume. It happens to be one of the biggest snubs in NCAA history.

"I tried to do everything I could to win the game."

UNC ASHEVILLE HEAD COACH NICK McDEVITT QUOTES:

"I know the last couple of days had to be difficult for Coach Enfield and his group... the shock factor, so to say. Obviously we were conference champions, in the regular season, that's why we are here. That disappointed, we had a little bit more time to get over it. For Coach Enfield and his group, the shock factor, not playing in the NCAA Tournament just hit them recently and that's a tough thing. So, congratulations to them for fighting that and moving on."

"I told our guys that I was extremely proud [of] what they did here today. Played a very good team and got a lot of guys who played well. [We] got down double digits, about 11 at one point, and just kept battling, showed a lot of toughness. Although we are disappointed in the loss, you never want to lose, but you can't fault them for their effort and how well they played."