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(Neb.)- WNCC Men Top Trinidad In OT, Cougar Women Topple Trojans 53-49



By: Jeremy Anderson Posted at: 02/07/2014 10:43 PM

(Trinidad, CO.) – The Western Nebraska Community College men's and women's basketball teams traveled to Trinidad, Colo., and picked up two impressive south subregion road wins Friday night.

The Cougar women received 12 points from Ashley Stevens and held Trinidad to just 33 percent shooting and just 3 of 15 from beyond the 3-point arc to register the 53-49 win.

The Cougar men had a bigger win, earning a tough-fought 100-97 overtime win over the Trojans.

WNCC coach Russ Beck said this is a big win for his squad, who is trying to stay on pace to host the regional tournament in March.

"Trinidad is as tough a place to play as anywhere I have coached," Beck said. "The game came down to the wire but we went into overtime confident and unified. It was a great team win. We were aggressive and converted at the free throw line. The Cougars are focused on getting better one game at a time."

Trinidad held a 46-43 lead at halftime. Both teams were back and forth in the second half. Tied at 86-86 late in regulation, the Cougars had a chance to win the game but couldn't convert.

In the extra period, the Cougars received big buckets from Youssoupha Kane and clutch free throw shooting to win the game. WNCC held a 99-93 lead in the extra period, but saw the Trojans claw back to cut the lead to 99-97. Derrick Bowers then hit one of two free throws with 21 seconds to play. Trinidad had a chance to tie the game and actually did, but the ball hit the shot clock before going through the hoop and the Cougars picked up their 15<sup>th</sup> win of the season.

WNCC was outstanding from the free throw line, converting on 38 of 45 free throws for 84 percent. The home-standing Trojans were just 6 of 10 from the charity stripe. WNCC also out-rebounded Trinidad 45-44. Brandon Morley had a double-double of 11 rebounds and 12 points.

Diante Mitchell led the team in scoring with 25 points, including making 13 of 15 free throws.

Also hitting for double figures on the night were Joel Einfeldt with 17 points and four 3-pointers, Tyler Crosbie with 16 points, and Preston Christensen with 14 points, including going a perfect 8 of 8 from the free throw line.

The women's contest was just as exciting. The WNCC women opened the contest with a 9-2 lead but saw

Trinidad come back to tie it at 17-17. WNCC would bounce back to lead 27-24 at halftime.

In the second half, WNCC had a 52-40 lead on a Stevens bucket with 4:21 to play but then saw the Trojans come storming back to slice the lead to 52-49. Trinidad had a chance to tie the game with 10 seconds to Laurin Rivera was then had an intentional foul and converted one free throw to seal the win.

The Cougars pulled down 40 rebounds compared to 32 for Trinidad. Stevens and Lile Havili each had seven boards. The Cougars also had four blocks, led by Shalisa Moffit with two.

Havili also had a double-digit scoring game, finishing with 11 points, while Rivera and Moffit each had eight points.

The Cougars will continue the road swing with a subregion contest at Otero Junior College Saturday afternoon.