
Mean Green Season Recap Part TWO

Posted by scrappy - 2007/04/07 13:13

Conference play opened on December 16th, 2006 in the Crescent City. The Privateers and Mean Green battled in a classic double overtime thriller. Unfortunately for NT, we came out on the losing end of a 97-93 score. Bo McCaleb paced the Privateers with 39 huge points. Michael Sturns led the way for the Mean Green with 28 off the bench. Anxiety was high after this loss among much of the fanbase, with Western Kentucky next and a likely 0-2 start in league play.

The Hilltoppers had never lost to North Texas, so we had good reason to worry. Kenneth Davis was still hurt, we were playing in Diddle(perhaps the toughest arena in the Belt to play), and we were just coming off a heartbreaking defeat. North Texas held a 10 point lead in the 2nd half, but the Toppers, led by Courtney Lee's 20 – fought back. It was really a tough contest, evidenced by seven ties and 13 lead changes. When Keith Wooden banked in a lay up with 5.7 seconds left, we had beaten the historic heavyweight of the league 86-85.

After the five game road swing NT headed back to Denton with a 3-2 mark. Jumping out of Sun Belt play, we took on Jarvis Christian, destroying them 94-70. The Mean Green had five players in double figures in the confidence building contest. We ended our non conference slate by hosting Bellhaven. The biggest news was KD finally returning. He seemed rusty, only scoring two(though he led the team with four assists). Led by Watson's 23 and huge all around game by Quincy Williams, we dismantled an overmatched squad 93-66.

The Denver Pioneers came calling in our final game of 2006. Once again, a balanced attack led to the victory as the Mean Green had five players in double figures. Davis broke out with 18, but our guys in the paint; Williams and Wooden really led us to victory. Denver was hot shooting in the 1st half, draining 8 3-pointers, but the W's down low wore them out, as we prevailed 91-79. Quincy continued to rack up blocked shots, as thru this three game stretch he moved into NT's top 10 all time in that category.

Another road swing was in store as we went to Arkansas. We met the Trojans of Little Rock to open up the New Year. Though the Mean Green played well offensively, we could not stop UALR, as they hit 10 3 pointers and shot over 60% from the floor. The 11 point defeat stalled any momentum we thought we had, but the next game nearly sent Mean Green nation into panic mode. In Jonesboro, we played arguably the worst game of the season as the Indians thrashed us 84-60. ASU led by nearly 20 points the entire second half as they hit nearly 70% from the floor. It was truly a debacle in every sense of the word.

North Texas returned to Denton as he hosted the Ragin' Cajuns. What followed was another overtime struggle. Kendrick Davis led the way with 22 including 2 clutch three point plays, one to send the game into OT, and the other to win. Neither team led by more than eight, but ULL had just such a lead near the end of regulation. A furious comeback in the last five minutes forced overtime, and then Davis's heroics won the contest. It was a huge win after the Arkansas disaster, and evened our conference mark at 3-3.

Up next was a trip to Miami to play FIU. Another nail biter commenced in a game full of runs. Unlike the last game which was mostly nip and tuck, this one had wild swings of momentum till the last few minutes. In the final sixty seconds however, the contest was tied when Keith Wooden hit a bucket. Alex Galindo of FIU hit a heartbreaker from behind the arc with 15 seconds remaining and FIU stole the ball when we were trying to put up a game winner. The 67-66 defeat was frustrating, but so many of our games were decided at the wire(good and bad), it came to be expected.

The Mean Green returned home to host the Owls of Florida Atlantic. We shot horribly in the 1st stanza, and were down by four at the break. After KD put us ahead at the start of the second, we never looked back taking it 76-59. Watson hit a career high six 3's, leading the 2nd half scoring barrage(we shot 60% in the half). Also noteworthy was our defense, as we forced 20 turnovers. Next up was Middle Tennessee. We led wire to wire over the Blue Raiders, and though they closed the deficit to two 7 minutes into the second half, this was an relatively easy victory by our standards this season. Watson continued to play well, pouring in 21 on the night.

We were now halfway through conference season. We trailed Louisiana-Monroe, but we were within striking distance. Our home record was sparkling, but we couldn't beat anyone on the road, so we weren't exactly sure what was in store. Some predicted a swoon, and others the opposite. Reasonable fans took a wait and see approach.

Thankfully however, the best was yet to come...

Re: Mean Green Season Recap Part TWO

Posted by CMJ - 2007/04/11 12:57

I'm sorta tied up right now. I'll try and get Part 3 done next week though. I really hope the articles have been worth reading fellas.

=====

Re: Mean Green Season Recap Part TWO

Posted by scrappy - 2007/04/11 22:55

I enjoy them. I like the idea of multi parts (all CMJ's idea) because it covers things more completely and we get to relive a fun season.

=====

Re: Mean Green Season Recap Part TWO

Posted by CMJ - 2007/04/11 23:36

My original goal was to try and finish them by the beginning of signing(AKA today) as a kind of look ahead to next year. Granted, day one was so sparse, it's not the worst thing ever that I didn't finish. :-

=====