

## **MOORE LEADS THE CITADEL TO SIGNATURE VICTORY OVER WOFFORD**

By Danny Reed

CHARLESTON- The Citadel's Ashton Moore and Wofford's Karl Cochran both proved Thursday night why they are two of the best that the Southern Conference has to offer.

But it was Moore who laughed last. At Cochran's expense.

Moore scored a season-best 29 points and stole the ball from Cochran with five seconds left, as the Bulldogs erased a 14-point second half deficit and closed the game on a 10-2 run in toppling the mighty Terriers, 69-66, in front of 1,971 fans at McAlister Field House who were treated to a more than memorable 40 minutes of action.

"That's one of the best atmospheres we've had since we've been here," said Bulldog head coach Chuck Driesell, whose team is now 7-1 at McAlister Field House in continuing the best home start since the 2004-05 season. "Shout out to the Cadets and the fans. What a great atmosphere and what a great college basketball game."

At one point, Moore scored 25 of The Citadel's (8-9, 3-3 SoCon) 29 points as part of a 10-for-17 performance from the field and 6-for-10 from distance in forging past Wofford (13-5, 4-1 SoCon) for just the second time in the last 17 series meetings.

"To come back like that against a team like Wofford shows the kind of heart and fight that we have," said Moore, who registered his 20<sup>th</sup> career 20-point game. "They beat NC State earlier this year, so to beat a team of that caliber is a great feeling."

Cochran finished with a team-best 23 points – 18 of which came on six three-pointers over the final 7:38 of the first half, but the preseason Player of the Year was held to just five second-half points on 2-of-10 shooting largely due to a Citadel defensive switch that saw the lengthy Quinton Marshall pose a more-than-capable adversary.

"We did everything we could against him in the first half but he made some unbelievable shots," Driesell said. "There's no defense for what he was doing. Putting Quinton on him in the half gave him a different look."

After a pair of Spencer Collins free throws with 3:29 to play gave the Terriers a 64-59 edge – and put the Easley, S.C. over 1,000 career points – The Citadel rose to the challenge and put forth a storybook finish against the preseason SoCon favorite.

Freshman Jake Wright scored the next six Citadel points – four of which came when he buried a left-corner three while being fouled by Collins with 3:13 left and knocked down the free throw for a 64-63 Wofford advantage.

Collins responded with a jumper on the other side, but the Minnesota native then shook Collins out of his sneakers and drilled a step-back two-point jumper which hit the backboard and every part of the rim, but Wofford still led 66-65 with 2:22 to play.

Following a tie-up on Cochran that forced a jump ball and gave possession back to the Bulldogs, Moore cleaned up his own missed three with a contested putback amongst the trees for a 67-66 lead at the 1:26 mark, The Citadel's first lead since 4-2 with 16:22 in the first half.

Cochran's three on other end popped out of the cylinder, forcing the Terriers to foul Marshall with 25 seconds left, setting up the junior for a one-and-one.

Marshall misfired on the front end which was rebounded by Wofford's CJ Neumann. Predictably, Wofford isolated Cochran on the ensuing possession, but Moore provided the unpredictable counter, ripping the ball away from the dynamic guard and from the floor passed off to Marshall Harris who was fouled and made the corresponding free throws in the double bonus increasing the Bulldog margin to 69-66 with two seconds left.

"I'll give credit to Cochran he played a heck of a game," Moore said. "At that moment, I knew he was going to be in position to take the shot. I had to step up for my team, and I'm so thankful that it worked out."

Collins' off-balance, running three-point attempt at the horn was too strong, as the exuberant Corps of Cadets rushed the court in the signature victory of the Driesell era.

"That's one of the best Wofford teams I've seen since I've been here," Driesell said. "It should give our guys confidence that they can play with anyone in the league."

Cochran's borderline ridiculous first-half shooting coupled with Wofford's penchant for timely offensive rebounds made for a 37-28 halftime lead, as the senior guard scored all 18 of his points – as part of Wofford's final 22 as a team – over that last 7:38.

On the other side, the Terriers constantly hounded Moore doubling him off of ball screens and holding him without a field goal until the 2:06 mark of the half. That three-pointer, though, ignited a spark for Moore, as he scored the last eight Citadel points and 17 of the Bulldogs first 21 of the second half to cut a 45-31 deficit with 18:31 to play to 49-45 at the 12:21 mark.

Wofford was unable to shake the scrappy and motivated Bulldogs who shot 59 percent from the field in the second half and drained 5-of-7 from downtown.

Overall, The Citadel finished 56 percent shooting – its fifth straight contest over 50 percent for the first time this century – and affirmed its position as the league's best three-point shooting team (9-of-14) and free-throw shooting team (14-of-18).

"Our guys will enjoy this but they have to understand how they did it," Driesell said. "I'm really happy for those guys in the locker room."

Saturday afternoon, The Citadel renews the longest standing rivalry in SoCon history entertaining arch-rival Furman in the 201<sup>st</sup> all-time meeting. Tipoff at McAlister Field House is set for 1 p.m.

## **NOTES**

\*During halftime of Saturday's game against Furman, The Citadel will unveil three new banners in McAlister Field House rafters in honor of the 1959, 1960 and 1961 Southern Conference Championship Track and Field teams.