



UMKC ATHLETICS

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UMKC Erases 16-Point Deficit, Tops USC Upstate 79-77

SPARTANBURG, S.C. – The UMKC men’s basketball team (5-11) overcame a 16-point deficit with 2:44 remaining in the first half to secure its second-consecutive win on Tuesday evening with a 79-77 victory over the USC Upstate Spartans (5-12).

Forward **Jordan Giles** (Tuscaloosa, Ala.) knocked down a pair of free throws at the charity stripe to open up scoring for the Roos. **Broderick Robinson** (Grand Junction, Colo.) scored eight-consecutive points to put UMKC ahead 10-6 at the 15:40-mark.

Three-point specialist **Isaiah Ross** (Davenport, Iowa) knocked down his first of the game with just under 15 minutes remaining in the half, before Robinson banged home his third of the contest, to push UMKC out to a seven-point lead.

At the midway point, USC Upstate responded to UMKC’s hot streak, going on a 17-3 run of its own to take a 27-20 lead with 8:41 remaining in the opening half. A layup by Giles brought the Roos within five, before tip-in by **Aleer Leek** (Juba, South Sudan) helped revitalize UMKC’s offense.

After being down by 16 points with just under three minutes to play, a pair of free throws by **Marvin Nesbitt Jr.** (Chicago, Ill.) opened up a 13-2 run by the Roos to close the half. A jumper Ross – followed by three-consecutive treys by the sophomore – brought the Roos within five going into the locker room.

It was the Robinson-Ross show in the first half, as the duo combined for 30 of UMKC’s 42 first-half points. As a team, the Roos were shooting 59.1 percent from the field and 61.5 percent from 3-point range.

Back-to-back layups from Leek in the opening two minutes of the second half forced an Upstate timeout. Ross continued to stay hot from downtown, sinking another to knot the game at 49-all.

The Spartans jumped back out to a six-point lead, but three-consecutive made free throws by Giles helped the Roos creep back within three points of the home team.

A pair of baskets by both ends kept the game close with at the midway point, before **Xavier Bishop** (Springfield, Ill.) laid in his first points of the game to tie the game at 62.

Robinson drained his fifth 3-pointer of the game to help UMKC regain the lead for the first time since the 10:28-mark of the first half. Nesbitt Jr. checked back into the game and forced a turnover, while converting a 3-point play at the other end of the court, to put the Roos up eight with 4:19 left to play.

The Spartans came within two points of the Roos with less than 30 seconds left in regulation, but a pair of free throws from Ross, and one from Robinson, helped UMKC grab the 79-77 victory in its final nonconference road game of the season.

Robinson and Ross each connected from behind the arc five times, as the pair finished with 20 and 21 points, respectively. Leek added 13 points, while Giles provided 15 points, including a career-high 11 from the charity stripe.

The Roos will open Western Athletic Conference play at Municipal Auditorium on Saturday against UT Rio Grande Valley. Tip-off between UMKC and the Vaqueros is set for 7 p.m. CT. Tickets can be purchased at www.UMKCKangaroos.com or by calling 844-UMKC-FAN.

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