

UCF Knights lose at the buzzer against Quenton DeCosey, Temple Owls

UCF took control of its game against Temple on Saturday afternoon. But that control quickly slipped with missed free throws and missed shots.

By **Timothy Briggs** - February 6, 2016



It was a heartbreaking loss for the UCF Knights as the Temple Owls narrowly defeated the Knights in the matinee at CFE Arena 62-60 on Saturday.

Down by two points with seven seconds left, A.J. Davis' 3-point attempt clanged off the front of the iron into the frantic hands of Shaheed Davis, who hurried another three that dropped to the aforementioned A.J. Davis. His tip-in fell and was initially called good, but after review, the lay-up proved to not be quite quick enough for the buzzer.

"We had our opportunities and I thought we came out in the second half and played really tough defensively," head coach Donnie Jones said. "They've got the spirit to feel like they belong up there with the top teams."

The Knights had multiple chances throughout the game to solidify their momentum and garner control, but overall, fell short at the line and from the field. UCF has lost three games this

season in which its scored at least 85 points and possesses the worst scoring defense in the American Conference.

But against Temple, it was not the defense that was the problem.

UCF were just 7 for 14 from the free throw line and shot just 36 percent from the field. The Knights were led in scoring by Matt Williams and Tanksley Efiyanayi with 11 points each. Efiyanayi made his second consecutive start **in place of the injured Adonys Henriquez** and Williams sunk three 3-pointers, which is his primary asset.

It was a back and forth affair from the tip as UCF led by as many as five at one point during a defensive first half and the contest came down to the last possession.

Temple's Quenton DeCosey came into the game as the American Conference's second leading scorer at just more than 16 points per game, and executed a crucial hoop-and-harm with 1:46 remaining to put the Owls in front for good.

For the Knights, Tacko Fall played 18 minutes and was a great contributor with 10 points and seven rebounds to go along with three blocks. When on the floor, Fall makes a tremendous difference on both ends of the floor for the UCF team that is missing some key pieces and needs a player that makes a true impact, rather than many who just play a specific role.

"All I have to focus on [is] going out there and playing." Fall said. "Go and play hard, block shots, rebound and do all that I can do."

As Fall develops, so will this UCF unit, but with three straight home losses to some of the American Conference elite, the Knights will be hard-pressed to make a run at an AAC crown and need an awful lot of momentum heading into the conference tournament at Amway Center in order to salvage something from the 2015-2016 campaign.

UCF is now 11-10 and drops back to 5-5 in American Conference play. They play on Tuesday against the Cincinnati Bearcats with another chance to get a win at CFE Arena against a top American Conference foe.

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