NOTRE DAME, Ind. – On the eve of Thanksgiving Notre Dame and George Washington played through a sleepy game in a 65-48 Fighting Irish win on Wednesday night at Purcell Pavilion at the Joyce Center. The crowd was even thinner than a typical November non-conference night, with no band in attendance and fewer than 20 green t-shirt clad students on hand with classes out of session for Thanksgiving break.

Fortunately for the Irish (4-1) Garrick Sherman had his second consecutive big home game. The Michigan State transfer scored 18 points off the bench just nine days after registering a career-high 22 points in Notre Dame's last previous home game. He was coming off a disappointing showing over the weekend though, with a combined 11 points against St. Joseph's and BYU at the CVS Classic in New York.

"I talked to coach earlier in the week and just needed to be more patient (after) looking back on the film in Brooklyn," Sherman said of the key to his big performance. "That was just what I tried to come out and do. Just be more patient and just take what's there instead of trying to predetermine my move."

"Garrick needed a game like that," head coach Mike Brey said of his big man. "He really needed a game to bounce back. He didn't play as well as he wanted in New York and he gave us a good lift off the bench."

Sherman shot a more than efficient 8-for-10 from the field in 18 minutes of work. He pulled-down seven rebounds as well.

The two teams each hit early buckets, but turnovers were more prominent than field goals in the game's opening minutes. The Irish held George Washington (1-2) to 1-of-8 shooting from the field over the first 4:26, but had more turnovers (3) than field goals of their own (2-for-4), but one of the baskets was a Jerian Grant 3-pointer to give ND an early 5-2 advantage. Grant would finish as ND's only other player in double figures with 13 points.

Grant swished another trey just before the shot clock expired coming out of the first media timeout for an 8-2 Irish lead, but Lasan Kromah matched it with a three of his own on the Colonials. Garrick Sherman, who had just checked-in for the first time during the media timeout, scored Notre Dame's next eight points. He converted three-point plays twice after being fouled on layups and spun another short shot in to see the Fighting Irish lead climb to 16-9 at the 12:43 mark.

With the Irish shooting at a 53-percent clip the lead moved all the way to 11 points two different times. The first was after a Sherman layup in transition and the second was on Grant's third field goal of the half. Those two combined for 18 of the team's 24 points with 6:53 to play before halftime.

Notre Dame led 28-15 just seconds later after Scott Martin drove the right baseline for a layup. He had the chance to make it a 14-point lead, but missed the free throw. Notre Dame was 12-for-22 (54%) from the floor at that point, with five of the misses coming from behind the 3-point line.

Joe McDonald hit a pair of free throws for the Colonials after Scott Martin's first foul to cut the ND lead to 28-19. Another basket by Sherman, who had gone to the bench and come back in with 4:55 left in the half, gave the Irish a 32-21 lead at the intermission.

Sherman and Grant shared the game-high with 12 first half points. Sherman was 5-for-7 from the field, while Grant shot 5-for-9, including 2-for-3 from 3-point range. Isaiah Armwood led the Colonials with six points in the half.

The Irish shot 48-percent (14-for-29) in the game's first 20 minutes. Grant's two treys were their only long range shots in nine attempts (22%). George Washington was a meager 9-for-34 (26%) from the field and 1-for-3 from behind the arc. Notre Dame held a slight 22-19 rebound advantage at halftime.

Jack Cooley took just two shots and scored just two first half points, but he found his shot early and often to start the second half. Cooley hit Notre Dame's first three shots in the first 2:12 of the second and also drew a charge to help push to a 40-25 lead. Afterward, Cooley was feeling the wear on his body after playing a third game in a five-day span.

"Pretty good," Cooley said of how his legs felt. "It is what it is, but I mean I just need to rest a little bit and just get out there and do it again on Saturday."

George Washington cut the Irish lead down to nine before a three from Pat Connaughton put the lead back to double-digits. Sherman then hit shots on consecutive trips down the floor to make it 49-35 ND with 11:07 remaining.

As if the pace of the game was not sluggish enough, George Washington committed six fouls in a span of 2:15 late in the second half. Just two of those fouls sent the Irish to the free throw line, where Connaughton and Cam Biedscheid combined to shoot just 1-for-4. The Irish were in cruise control by that point anyway. They led 57-41 at the last media timeout after leading by as many as 19 at one point.

"It was definitely physical," Sherman said of the game that saw the Colonials commit 17 fouls. "That's typical and I don't mind it. I think we handled it pretty well tonight."

Notre Dame shot 14-of-29 in both halves for a 28-for-58 finish (48%) from the floor. They were just 3-for-13 from 3-point range and 6-for-11 from the free throw line. GW shot 22-for-67 (32%) from the field, 2-of-8 (25%) on 3-pointers and 2-for-4 at the foul line. The Irish outrebounded the Colonials 41-38.

Scott Martin led ND with nine boards. Cooley had eight.

Notre Dame snapped a two-game losing streak to Atlantic-10 opponents with the Wednesday night victory. They fell 79-70 in overtime to St. Joe's over the weekend after bowing out in the second round of last season's NCAA Tournament with a 67-63 loss to Xavier.

"Before the game I said all I know is we haven't beaten an A-10 team in our last two shots," Brey said. "Let's see if we can beat an A-10 team. I got after them about that a little bit, but I think they were ready to play. We're looking at this segment and we like that there's a lot of games coming."

Keep On Keeping On

Despite the sparse announced crowd of 8,133, Notre Dame won for the 103rd time in their last 110 home games. The .936 home winning percentage over the last six-plus seasons is second only to Kansas' .964 home mark nationally.

"I really respect our guys, because through this win streak we've had a lot of different atmospheres in here," Brey said of ND's recent wins on the home floor. "Through 103-7 there's been a lot of different atmospheres. They just always play and figure it out and provide their own energy, so I'm proud of that."

Brey has never lost a November home game as Notre Dame's head coach. The Irish are now 43-0 in such games since Brey took over in the 2000-'01 season. Since losing to Miami (OH) on Nov. 13, 1998 the Fighting Irish have won 46 consecutive November games at Purcell Pavilion at the Joyce Center.

Two more home games against St. Francis and Chicago State await before Notre Dame finishes this November's home sate with a Nov. 29 matchup against defending national champion Kentucky.

George Washington

Tonight's matchup was the first ever between Notre Dame and Brey's alma mater. Brey has deep ties to the GW program. He finished his collegiate playing career there in the 1981-'82 season after playing his first three seasons in Louisiana at Northwestern State. Brey was so proud to be facing his old school that he sported an authentic George Washington jersey at his post game press conference.

"I had the equipment manager bring it out," Brey joked. "Man, I said I gotta try it on one more time for everybody."

Brey's wife, Tish, played volleyball at George Washington. His mother, Betty, was the school's women's swim team coach and his father, Paul, also earned his master's degree at George Washington.

Brey and current George Washington head coach Mike Lonergan's relationship goes back to their high school days in the Metro Washington D.C. area. Brey attended DeMatha High School, while Lonergan went to Archbishop Carroll High.

In Black & White

The officials for Wednesday night's game were James Breeding, Brent Hampton and Chris Beaver