

# BC3's Joel Stutz scores career-high 50, breaks 1,000-point mark

Sophomore is college's second basketball player to reach milestone in month

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(Monroeville, PA) Butler County Community College sophomore guard Joel Stutz scored a career-high 50 points Saturday and eclipsed 1,000 for his career in the Pioneers' 88-68 victory over the Community College of Allegheny County-Boyce in Monroeville.

Stutz becomes the second BC3 basketball player within a month to score a 1,000th career point, following Mackenzie Craig, a sophomore forward on the college's women's team who Dec. 15 tallied 25 points and passed the milestone against Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold, Md.

Stutz entered Saturday's Western Pennsylvania Collegiate Conference game 44 points shy of joining three other BC3 men's basketball players to pass the mark in the program's 52-year-history.

The 6-foot-1 sophomore scored his first of five 3-pointers, from the left corner and on his first shot, and finished with four more. Stutz was 13 of 16 from 2-point range, 5 of 11 from 3-point range, and 9 of 10 from the foul line. He recorded his 1,000th career point on a layup late in the second half.

The 2017 Butler Senior Area High School graduate joins Bryant Lewandowski, Austin Miller and Matt Lobaugh as BC3 men's basketball players to have scored 1,000 career points.

Lewandowski, a 1999 National Junior College Athletic Association All-American and 2018 inductee into BC3's Pioneer Hall of Fame, scored 1,303 from 1997 to 1999; Miller, 1,159 from 2014-2016; and Lobaugh, a 2005 NJCAA All-American, 1,088 from 2004-2006.

"It's humbling," Stutz said. "To score 1,000 points in less than two years at a school, that's insane. It's not a solo performance by any means for 1,000 points. It is a whole team effort,



Joel Stutz, left, a sophomore guard on the Butler County Community College men's basketball team, scored a career-high 50 points Saturday and eclipsed 1,000 in his career during the Pioneers' 88-68 victory over the Community College of Allegheny County-Boyce in Monroeville. Sophomore forward Mackenzie Craig, right, became the second player in the BC3 women's basketball program to score more than 1,000 career points when she tallied 25 on Dec. 15 against Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold, Md.

game-in and game-out. Plus it is also the coach's trust in me, calling so many plays for me. It is really, really special."

As was Stutz's performance Saturday, BC3 coach Dick Hartung said.

"He was making basket after basket," Hartung said of Stutz. "He is our go-to guy. He has the green light. One of the strengths of this team is we have more than one guy who can shoot the ball. We are able to spread everyone out all over the floor. The question is whether the defense is able to cover that much space and recover."

The Pioneers were spreading CCAC-Boyce defenders on Saturday, sophomore guard Josh Campbell said, and finding the open shots.

"And Joel was hitting them," Campbell said. "It wasn't like he was isolating up and trying for that 50. It fell to him and he took advantage of it. He wasn't missing."

Craig, of Karns City, is 74 points shy of breaking BC3's all-time women's scoring record of 1,093, held by Julia Baxter, of Butler, and set from 2016-18. Baxter is the only other women's basketball player in BC3 history to score more than 1,000 career points and in 2017 was named the program's first NJCAA All-American.

Stutz, who has 1,006 career points, is 298 away from breaking Lewandowski's record with nine regular-season games and the WPCC playoffs remaining. His scoring average of 29.9 points leads players on all 104 National Junior College Athletic Association Division III squads.

His previous high game was 38 points, also against CCAC-Boyce, on Feb. 16, 2018.

**"He is just very difficult to guard"**

"We played them three times last year, and (Stutz) had 38, 28 and 24, and you throw this 50 in, you better send me some roses because I am personally responsible for 140 of those (career) points," joked Dave DeVenzio, CCAC-Boyce's coach.

"The thing that makes it tough to guard him is that most people (in the WPCC) can do one thing or another. Usually, if you are a shooter, you can't take it to the hoop. So we just take away the shot. But for him, he can do both. It is very tough when a guy can take it to the hoop and shoot, and shoot from different spots on the floor. He is just very difficult to guard."

Jaleel Gilliam, a sophomore forward for Jamestown (N.Y.) Community College, was among those defenders finding that out last Wednesday night.

"He is able to shoot and he can also drive," Gilliam said after Stutz scored 18 against the Jayhawks. "It makes it really tough to guard him. Because if he is on, you have to chase him off the line. With his ability to drive, it almost makes him unguardable in a sense."

Community College of Beaver County coach Bryen Spriggs said “It is hard for anyone to put the ball in the basket at that rate,” after Stutz scored 22 points against the Titans on Jan. 5. “He has done it for two years.”

Andrew Yonker added 17 points and Josh Knochel 11 on Saturday for BC3, which is 5-9 overall and 2-1 in the WPCC. Joel Stutz led the Pioneers with 15 rebounds, followed by Jace Stutz, his twin brother, with 11.

CCAC-Boyce falls to 2-9, 0-1.

Craig’s 25.5 points per game average is eighth among players on all 91 NJCAA Division III women’s squads. She was named in December as BC3’s seventh NJCAA All-American in volleyball since 1999.