Northern Illinois' Cinderella run never got started.

The Huskies, who entered the 2012 First Energy MAC Tournament as the #13 seed at 4-25, pulled off the upset Monday when they dispatched MAC West regular season champion Eastern Michigan in Ypsilanti.

This win earned NIU a trip to Cleveland and a date with No. 8 seed Western Michigan at Quicken Loans Arena.

Midway through the second half of this contest the bells chimed and the Huskies' short-lived magical run was over.

Mike Douglas scored 11 of his game-high 19 points during a 17-1 WMU run that turned a tight contest into a rout. The Broncos led just 31-28 at halftime, but put 40 points on the board in the second 20 minutes in a 71-54 win.

"The first 20 minutes I think we were like a lot of teams when they first take the floor in Cleveland," WMU coach Steve Hawkins said. "We weren't as aggressive as we needed to be, but I think we settled down in the second half and our defense and rebounding really picked up."

Douglas, a 6-foot senior guard, struggled with his shot in the first half. He connected on just 2-of-9 in the first 20 minutes as the Huskies led for most of the half. Junior guard Tony Nixon and freshman guard Marquavese Ford scored nine and six first-half points respectively for NIU,

who led by as many as five points early in the contest.

The Broncos did not capture the lead until the 7:11 mark of the first half when Demetrius Ward nailed a 3-pointer to put WMU up 21-18. They pushed the lead out to six at 31-25 late in the half, but Nixon connected on a deep 3-pointer at the buzzer to slice the lead in half heading into intermission.

The second half was all WMU.

Antone Christian hit a deep triple to pull the Huskies within a basket at 39-37, but a Tyler Storm free throw was the only point NIU would score over the next 6:38 as the Broncos pulled away. Abdel Nader ended the NIU drought with a driving lay-up with 9:48 remaining in the game, but by then the issue was decided as WMU sported a 56-40 lead.

“It was an incredible first half by us. I thought Western Michigan just kind of wore us down in the second half,” NIU coach Mark Montgomery said. “We needed our perimeter shots to fall and, unfortunately, they didn’t go in. But I liked the energy and effort from our guys, especially in the first 25 minutes of the ballgame. And you have to give Western Michigan credit; they had some players step up…especially Mikey Douglas. He didn’t make many shots in the first half, and in the second he was able to penetrate and shot the ball very well.”

After shooting a miserable 34.5 percent in the first half, the Broncos connected at a 58.3 percent clip in the final 20 minutes. After his woeful first half, Douglas was 4-7 in the second and connected on all six of his free throws.

“We missed a lot of shots in the first half, but in the second half were able to pick things up,” Douglas said. “My teammates gave me a lot of help with some great passes. I got some confidence and was able to hit some shots.”

Despite the loss, Montgomery thinks the unexpected trip to Cleveland will help his freshman-laden Huskies.

“I think this gives them some confidence and, further than that, they now know what it’s like to be here,” he said. “You have to start somewhere, and getting to Cleveland will boost the confidence of our whole program. It’s been awhile since we’ve been here and now they know what it takes. Now we have to take the next step.”