

North Carolina gets past Cincinnati in OT

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — A dunk didn't do it in regulation, but three-pointers in overtime did. And now, North Carolina is going to the Final Four for the ninth time under coach Dean Smith.

The top-seeded Tar Heels (32-4) had a chance to beat second-seeded Cincinnati (27-5) at the regulation buzzer Sunday, but Brian Reese missed a dunk after taking an inbound pass with eight-tenths of a second to play.

Donald Williams took care of things in overtime from beyond 19 feet, 9 inches, making consecutive three-pointers as North Carolina beat the Bearcats 75-68 and kept them from returning to the Final Four.

"Generally, you let down after a missed chance like that," Smith said. "We regrouped against an excellent basketball team, a difficult team to play against."

North Carolina will meet Kansas, winners over Indiana in the Midwest final, in the national semifinals next Saturday in New Orleans. When the two teams met in the 1991 semifinals, Roy Williams, Smith's long-time assistant, beat the Tar Heels when Smith was ejected late in the game.

"We won a tournament this weekend, and we'll go and try to win another one," Smith said in his usual, low-key way.

The Tar Heels were in trouble

in the first half when Cincinnati guard Nick Van Exel snapped out of a tournament-long shooting slump with 21 points, all but three on three-point field goals. The Bearcats led by as many as 15 points in the opening 20 minutes.

But the Tar Heels rallied to take a lead late in the half, and then clamped down on Van Exel, holding him to two points after halftime.

"We knew they were going to make a run," Van Exel said. "We just didn't expect it in the first half. I knew they wouldn't crash, not with that coach."

"They went into their zone, but not because of me," Van Exel said. "I probably wasn't looking for my shot in the second half as much as I should have, but I was trying to get everyone else involved in the scoring. Down the stretch, I didn't hit the big ones."

Williams believed North Carolina guard Derrick Phelps had a lot to do with it.

"He got a lot of good open looks at the basket in the first half," Williams said. "In the second half, we wanted to make sure we ran at him, but we have to give credit to Derrick Phelps. He did an outstanding job on him, wearing him down and getting him tired."

Williams, North Carolina's only legitimate perimeter threat,

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NCAA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament

EAST REGIONAL

First Round
Thursday, March 18
At L.B. Joel Memorial Coliseum
Winston-Salem, N.C.
St. John's 85, Texas Tech 67
Arkansas 94, Holy Cross 64
Rhode Island 74, Purdue 68
North Carolina 85, East Carolina 65

Friday, March 19
At The Carrier Dome
Syracuse, N.Y.
Massachusetts 54, Pennsylvania 50
Virginia 78, Manhattan 66
New Mexico State 93, Nebraska 79
Cincinnati 93, Coppin State 66

Second Round
Saturday, March 20
North Carolina 112, Rhode Island 67
Arkansas 80, St. John's 74

Sunday, March 21
Virginia 71, Massachusetts 56
Cincinnati 92, New Mexico State 55

Regional Semifinals
Friday, March 26
At The Meadowslands
East Rutherford, N.J.
Cincinnati 71, Virginia 54
North Carolina 80, Arkansas 64

Regional Championship
Sunday, March 28
North Carolina 75, Cincinnati 68

SOUTHEAST REGIONAL

First Round
Thursday, March 18
At Orlando Arena
Orlando, Fla.
Florida State 62, Evansville 70
Tulane 55, Kansas State 53
West Kentucky 55, Memphis St. 52
Seton Hall 81, Tennessee State 59

Friday, March 19
At Memorial Gymnasium
Nashville, Tenn.
Wake Forest 81, TN-Chattanooga 58
Iowa 82, Northeast Louisiana 69

Kentucky 96, Rider 52
Utah 86, Pittsburgh 65

Second Round

Saturday, March 20
Florida State 94, Tulane 63
Western Kentucky 72, Seton Hall 68

Sunday, March 21
Wake Forest 84, Iowa 78
Kentucky 83, Utah 62

Regional Semifinals
Thursday, March 25
At Charlotte Coliseum
Charlotte, N.C.
Florida State 81, W. Kentucky 78, OT
Kentucky 103, Wake Forest 69

Regional Championship
Saturday, March 27
At Charlotte Coliseum
Charlotte, N.C.
Kentucky 106, Florida State 81

MIDWEST REGIONAL

First Round
Thursday, March 18
At The Horizon
Rosemont, Ill.
Kansas 94, Ball State 72
Brigham Young 80, S. Methodist 71
Duke 105, Southern Illinois 70
California 66, Louisiana State 64

Friday, March 19
At The Hoosier Dome
Indianapolis
Oklahoma State 74, Marquette 62
Louisville 76, Delaware 70
Xavier, Ohio 73, New Orleans 55
Indiana 97, Wright State 54

Second Round
Saturday, March 20
Kansas 90, Brigham Young 76
California 82, Duke 77

Sunday, March 21
Indiana 73, Xavier, Ohio 70
Louisville 78, Oklahoma State 63

Regional Semifinals
Thursday, March 25
At St. Louis Arena
Indiana 82, Louisville 69
Kansas 93, California 76

Regional Championship

Saturday, March 27
At St. Louis Arena
Kansas 83, Indiana 77

WEST REGIONAL

First Round
Thursday, March 18
At The Jon M. Huntsman Center
Salt Lake City
Illinois 75, Long Beach State 72
Vanderbilt 92, Boise State 72
Santa Clara 64, Arizona 61
Temple 75, Missouri 61

Friday, March 19
At The McKale Center
Tucson, Ariz.
Geo. Washington 82, New Mexico 68
Southern Univ. 93, Georgia Tech 78
Michigan 84, Coastal Carolina 53
UCLA 81, Iowa State 70

Second Round
Saturday, March 20
Vanderbilt 85, Illinois 68
Temple 68, Santa Clara 57

Sunday, March 21
Geo. Washington 90, Southern U. 80
Michigan 86, UCLA 84, OT

Regional Semifinals
Friday, March 26
At The Kingdome
Seattle, Wa.
Michigan 72, George Washington 64
Temple 67, Vanderbilt 59

Regional Championship
Sunday, March 28
Michigan 77, Temple 72

THE FINAL FOUR

At The Superdome
New Orleans
Semifinals
Saturday, April 3

First game starts at 2:42 p.m.
Kentucky (30-3) vs. Mich. (30-4), TBA
N.C. (32-4) vs. Kansas (29-6), TBA

Championship
Monday, April 5

Semifinal winners, 6:22 p.m.



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