

NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL FINAL FOUR SET

Coach K makes 13th Final Four, Duke beats Arkansas 78-69

BY JOSH DUBOW

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Mike Krzyzewski slowly climbed up the ladder, bowed to the adoring Duke fans and then pointed to his players to give them the credit before cutting the final string of the net.

Coach K's farewell tour will end at his record-setting 13th Final Four.

The Blue Devils delivered their most complete performance of this NCAA Tournament run to extend the career of their Hall of Fame coach for one more weekend after beating Arkansas 78-69 on Saturday night, March 26, in the West Region final.

"To see the joy, I can't explain it, because, you know, I'm a grandfather, I've lived through my daughters, I'm living through my grandchildren but now I'm living through these guys," Krzyzewski said on the court before cutting down the net. "Holy mackerel!"

A.J. Griffin scored 18 points, West Region MVP Paolo Banchero added 16 and second-seeded Duke (32-6) frustrated fourth-seeded Arkansas (28-9) on the offensive end to get back to the Final Four for the first time since Krzyzewski won his fifth championship in 2015.



Arkansas' Jaylin Williams, left, dunks against Paolo Banchero (No. 5) during the second half in the NCAA Tournament's Elite 8 at Chase Center on Saturday, March 26, 2022, in San Francisco.

Coach K will try to follow the path of the only coach to win more NCAA men's titles as John Wooden won his 10th championship in his final season at UCLA in 1975. Krzyzewski broke the tie he had with Wooden for most Final Four appearances with the commanding win over the Razorbacks.

"It's an honor. Coach

Wooden, if he kept coaching, would probably have 24," Krzyzewski said. "But it's a heck of a thing. We've won a lot in the tournament, and we've won a lot of games, but Final Fours are big, obviously, then national championships. That's what you put banners up for."

Duke's upcoming matchup in New Orleans next Satur-

day will be historic for its first NCAA Tournament meeting with archrival North Carolina.

"There's no greater day in college basketball than when those four regional champions, four champions, get in one arena and play. It's the greatest day for college basketball, and we're honored to be a part of it," Krzyzewski said.

The Blue Devils were in control for most of the second half, using an 10-0 run after Arkansas had cut the deficit to five points early in the half to open up a big cushion. The spurt came following a timeout when Krzyzewski once again switched his team to an uncharacteristic zone after having success doing that in the Sweet 16 against Texas Tech.

"I think going zone helped," said defensive anchor Mark Williams, who had 12 points, 12 rebounds and three blocks. "I think it gave them a different look, slowed them up a little bit."

Jaylin Williams ended that run with an emphatic dunk over Banchero for a three-point play but it wasn't nearly enough for the Razorbacks, who didn't cut the deficit into single digits until the final minute of the game.

Williams led Arkansas with 19 points and 10 rebounds and JD Notae had 14 points before fouling out. The Razorbacks shot 41.9% for the game but felt proud after turning their season around following an 0-3 start in the Southeastern Conference.

"We all wanted to get further in this, but the fight this team has showed all year has

BHS Sports Schedule

Tuesday, March 29

- Softball: Home, vs. Marsing, Idaho, 5 p.m.
- Tennis: Boys only, at La Grande, 4 p.m.

Wednesday, March 30

- Baseball: Home, vs. Homedale, Idaho, varsity and JV both start at 4 p.m. if both fields are playable.

Thursday, March 31

- Tennis: Girls only, at Pendleton, 4 p.m.
- Softball: JV Home, vs. Pendleton, doubleheader, 2 p.m.

Friday, April 1

- Baseball: At Astoria, JV and varsity, doubleheader, 4 p.m.
- Softball: Home, vs. Burns, varsity, 2 p.m.
- Track and field: At Mac-Hi, 10 a.m.
- Golf: JV, at Mac-Hi

Saturday, April 2

- Baseball: At Seaside, JV, 10 a.m., varsity, noon
- Softball: JV Home vs. Grant Union, doubleheader, noon

been incredible," Williams said. "For the way that we started off conference, nobody would have expected us to get this far. So I just think that this team just kept fighting the whole year, the whole year, but, of course, we didn't get where we wanted."

Duke closed the first half on an 8-0 run to take a 45-33 lead at the break with Banchero hitting a 3-pointer to start the spurt. Trevor Keels hit another 3 from long range just before the buzzer.

Kansas races past Miami in 2nd half

BY JAY COHEN

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Ochai Agbaji, David McCormack and Christian Braun powered a dazzling second half for Kansas, and the top-seeded Jayhawks pounded Miami 76-50 on Sunday, March 27, to advance to the program's 16th Final Four.

Agbaji scored 18 points, McCormack had 15 and Braun finished with 12, helping Kansas rally after a lackluster start. The Jayhawks trailed by six points at halftime but outscored Miami 47-15 in the final 20 minutes.

Kansas (32-6), the only No. 1 seed left in the NCAA Tournament, won the Midwest for the 13th time with its ninth consecutive victory overall. Next up is the national semifinals and a matchup with Villanova on Saturday in New Orleans.

It's the fourth Final Four for coach Bill Self in his 19 seasons

at Kansas. The last time the Jayhawks made it to the semis, they lost 95-79 to coach Jay Wright and the Wildcats in 2018.

Remy Martin, the most outstanding player in the Midwest Region, finished with nine points and six rebounds for Kansas.

Kameron McGusty scored 18 points and Isaiah Wong had 15 for No. 10 seed Miami in the program's first appearance in the Elite Eight. The Hurricanes (26-11) were bidding to get coach Jim Larrañaga back to the Final Four for the first time since he led 11th-seeded George Mason there in 2006.

McGusty spent two seasons at Oklahoma before transferring to Miami, averaging 13.5 points in four games against Kansas. And he looked comfortable playing against the Jayhawks again.

The redshirt senior guard scored 14 points to help the Hurricanes to a 35-29 halftime lead.

But everything changed after the break.

With McCormack asserting himself inside and Braun and Ogbai picking up their play on the perimeter, Kansas outscored Miami 25-7 over the first 10 minutes of the second half.

Jalen Wilson made two foul shots and Agbaji connected from 3 to lift the Jayhawks to a 54-42 lead with 10:14 left. And the Big 12 champions just kept rolling.

A dunk by Agbaji capped a 10-0 run and made it 67-46 with 4:35 left, delighting the pro-Kansas crowd at the United Center. A 3 by Agbaji extended the lead to 23 points with 1:58 remaining.

The second-half numbers told the story of Kansas' dominance. Miami shot 21.4% (6 for 28) after the break, compared to 59.3% (16 for 27) for Kansas. The Jayhawks also outscored the Hurricanes 25-11 in the second half.

N. Carolina ends St. Peter's Cinderella run

BY EDDIE PELLIS

AP National Writer

PHILADELPHIA —

America's favorite underdog, Saint Peter's, shouldn't feel all that bad. North Carolina has crushed lots of dreams over the decades.

The Tar Heels ended all hope of a March Madness miracle on Sunday, March 27, getting 20 points and 22 rebounds from Armando Bacot in a wire-to-wire 69-49 runaway over 15th-seeded Saint Peter's.

No. 8 seed Carolina (28-9) made its record 21st Final Four, and this one will be a scene like no other. Next Saturday, April 2 in New Orleans, it's North Carolina vs. archrival Duke and its soon-to-be-retiring coach, Mike Krzyzewski. Three short weeks ago, the Tar Heels fractured a different sort of fairy tale — Coach K's final home game — in a

94-81 beatdown of the Blue Devils at Cameron Indoor Stadium.

"We want Duke! We want Duke! We want Duke!" the Tar Heels fans shouted as the team cut down the nets in Philly, the same city where Carolina won the East region back in 2016.

"I don't think anything can be as crazy as the leadup to that game over in Cameron," coach Hubert Davis said. "We just keep our eyes straight ahead and we ignore all the noise."

While Coach K's winding road to retirement has been a beauty to watch this March, nothing has captured more imaginations during this NCAA Tournament than the run put on by Saint Peter's.

The entire basketball budget for this scrappy group from Jersey City, New Jersey, is \$1.6 million — or

around \$400,000 less than what Davis makes in a year. The first-year coach was sobbing as his players enveloped him after the buzzer.

"It was something that I just desperately wanted for them," Davis said. "This is probably the most nervous I was before a game, because I just really wanted them to go to the Final Four."

Two nights earlier, the Peacocks (21-12) looked like Final Four material. They beat Purdue to become the first 15th seed to advance to an Elite Eight.

Their hopes ended quickly in this one. They are hardly the first team to see grand plans undone by one of the country's top-line power programs.

"I didn't really recognize my team for the first 10 minutes of the game," Peacocks coach Shaheen Holloway said.

Villanova to 7th Final Four, beats Houston

BY STEPHEN HAWKINS

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Villanova coach Jay Wright has won national championships with well-balanced and fundamentally sound teams, yet even he knew staying in contention for another title was going to take a rugged and exhaustive effort.

Ugly at times, the final result was beautiful for the Wildcats, who are going to their third Final Four in the past six NCAA Tournaments.

Jermaine Samuels had 16 points and 10 rebounds as Villanova grinded out a 50-44 victory over a gritty and athletic Houston team in the South Region final Saturday, March 26.

"You just knew watching this team defensively, like you weren't going to come out and just outscore them," Wright said. "We really weren't talking as much at the end about how we were going to score. We were talking about how we were going to stop them."

Caleb Daniels added 14 points for the Wildcats (30-7), and fifth-year senior Collin Gillespie's only made field goal was a clutch shot late, even though Villanova led throughout to clinch the first spot in this year's Final Four in New Orleans.

"It was like playing against our own selves. They were just as physical as we were," Daniels said. "It was a literal street fight, every possession trying to get a rebound."

Villanova shot 28.8% from the field (15 of 52). The Cou-

gars were only slightly better at 29.8% (17 of 57), missing their last five shots and 10 of 11 overall after cutting an 11-point second-half deficit to two. They made only one of their 20 attempted 3-pointers in their lowest-scoring NCAA tournament game ever.

"We had it turned, we kept getting stops. We were getting stop, stop stop, we just weren't scoring on the other end," Houston coach Kelvin Sampson said. "I remember telling them in the huddle, I think it was a four-point game there ... and we kept getting stops that somebody's going to make a big shot. But we didn't. Credit Villanova."

The Wildcats, seeing their fourth championship overall, play Kansas, the only No. 1 seed remaining, in a national semifinal next Saturday. They have won two championships in Wright's 22 seasons, in 2016 and 2018.

"We couldn't get Justin (Moore) or Collin in ball screens. They just took it away. We couldn't get Justin and Col-

lin in post-ups. They took it away. It was hard to even get them backdoor cuts," Wright said. "They took away our two leading scorers, and other guys had to step up."

Taze Moore had 15 points and 10 rebounds for the Cougars (32-6), who were denied making consecutive Final Four appearances for the first time since 1982-84 during the Phil Slama Jama era. The starting five was completely changed from last season, including Moore and two other senior newcomers.

After Villanova missed three shots on the same possession — and was still without any second-chance points in the game — Moore got the long rebound on the break. After initially slowing things down, Moore scored on a drive against Gillespie, getting Houston within 42-40 with 5:25 left.

It was the closest the Cougars had been in the game at AT&T Center, only about 200 miles from their campus, and the crowd was in a frenzy when Wright called timeout.

Houston never got a chance to take the lead.

Gillespie, who played in the championship game for the Wildcats in 2018, was 1-of-6 shooting. But his only field goal came on the possession after the timeout when he waved off Samuels, stepped inside the 3-point line and hit a jumper with 5:02 left.

"It was an in-the-moment decision. They were soft-blitzing me basically the whole game. That time they just happened to switch," Gillespie said. "So I wanted Jermaine to go down into the post. I had a mismatch ... then Jermaine had a guard on him so he could rebound."

There was a nearly two-minute scoring drought before Justin Moore made two free throws — the Wildcats were a perfect 15-of-15 from

the line. A foul by J'Wan Roberts bailed them out with the shot clock about to run out. Those were Villanova's first and only second-chance points.

Villanova had scored the first five points of the game, including a 3-pointer by Samuels on the first shot.

Samuels was also on that 2018 title team as a freshman

with Gillespie, but the 6-foot-7 forward logged only one minute total while making late-game appearances in those two Final Four games.

As a senior, Samuels goes into the Final Four after being named MVP of the South Region. He is averaging 17.5 points a game in this NCAA tourney — so far.

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