

FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 21 - 27, 2006



TWO FOR THE ROAD

▼ SHAW AND VIRGINIA UNION TRAVEL TO NCAA DIV. II ELITE EIGHT CHAMPIONSHIPS

ELITE TEAMS: Shaw women in Arkansas, Virginia Union men in Massachusetts for national title runs.

NCAA & NIT TOURNEY RECAPS

NCAA DIV. I - Minneapolis Region Play-In (Men)
MONMOUTH 71, HAMPTON 49

MEAC Tournament champion Hampton (16-16), playing its fifth game in eight days, shot just 30% from the field and 53% from the line to fall to Monmouth (19-14) in the NCAA Tournament Play-In game Tuesday in Dayton. The Pirates, who had to win four games in four days to take the MEAC title, shot just 23% (7 of 30) in the first half to go down 35-20 at the break and never got untracked against Monmouth's match-up zone. Rashad West had 14 points and Jaz Cowan 12 to lead the Pirates.

NCAA DIV. I - Atlanta Region (Men)
DUKE 70, SOUTHERN 54

SWAC champion Southern gave ACC champion and NCAA top seed Duke (31-3) fits for about 30 minutes before a flurry of missed shots opened the door for a Duke win. The Jags (19-13), who surrendered 29 points each to all-Americans J.J. Redick and Shelden Williams but held the rest of the Duke team to 12 points, led twice in the first half and went into halftime trailing just 39-30. They opened the second half with an 8-1 run that caused Duke to call a time out with 16:20 to play with the score at 40-37. Duke responded with a 13-1 run, all by Redick and Williams over the next six minutes, to get their first double-digit leads of the game. Southern scored on three straight possessions to cut the lead to 11 at 58-47 with 7:52 left but that was as close as they would come. Chris Alexander led Southern with 19 points. DeForest Riley-Smith added 13 points while Peter Cipriano had 12 and a team-high 10 rebounds.

NCAA DIV. I - Bridgeport Region (Women)
CONNECTICUT 77, COPPIN STATE 54

MEAC champion Coppin State threw a scare into No. 2 seed Connecticut, leading early in the game before the talent and speed of the national powers came to the fore and ended the Lady Jaguars' 21-game win streak. Coppin State (22-9), defending the talented Lady Huskies well, led 25-21 on a Sherrie Tucker basket with about five minutes left in the first half but UConn ended the half on a 15-2 run to lead 36-27 at the break. Coppin State stayed within striking distance over the first four minutes of the second half and was only down ten, at 44-34 with 13:52 left. A 16-4 UConn over the next eight minutes widened the gap. Rashida Suber and Shalamar Oakley led the Lady Eagles with 16 points while Sherrie Tucker added 10.

NCAA DIV. I - Bridgeport Region (Women)
DUKE 96, SOUTHERN 27

SWAC women's champion Southern laid an ugly egg in their first round matchup with No. 1 seed Duke. The Lady Jaguars (20-11) shot 18.3% (11 of 60) for the game, had 26 turnovers and were outrebounded 60-28 in setting a new NCAA Tournament record for scoring futility. Southern had scoring droughts of eight minutes in the first half, five minutes to open the second half and nine minutes against Duke's reserves. "We were so out of sync the whole game and their size and defensive pressure caused us problems," said Southern coach Sandy Pugh. "But, when you give up 60 rebounds, you're just not giving the effort." No Southern player scored in double figures. Tiffany Jones led Southern with seven points. SWAC player of the year Rolanda Monroe shot 2-for-7 and scored five, but Pugh said Monroe wasn't feeling well and her illness hurt the Jaguars.

NCAA DIV. II - South Atlantic Regional (Men)
VIRGINIA UNION 76, GA. COLL. & STATE 73

Defending NCAA Div II national champion Virginia Union (28-3) got great play from its trio of stars, Darius Hargrove, Duan Crockett and Chris Greene to beat back a determined effort from Georgia College and State and repeat as South Atlantic Region champs and earn a repeat trip to the Elite Eight national quarterfinals to be held in Springfield, Mass. this week. The Panthers trailed 22-10 in the early going but fought back to take a 39-34 halftime lead. The Bobcats tied the game at 57 with 6:42 left. There were four ties and six lead changes to the finish. VUU took its final lead at 66-65 with 1:45 remaining and got key contributions from each of the trio to ice the game. GCSU came out in a triangle-and-two defense to try and bottle up Crockett and Hargrove but it opened things up for Greene who finished with a career-high 26 points and 14 rebounds. He was named the tournament's most valuable player. Hargrove had 19 and Crockett 18.

NIT - First Round (Men)

DELAWARE STATE 58, NORTHERN ARIZONA 53

MEAC regular season champ Delaware State got its first-ever post season win as it travelled to Flagstaff, Arizona and knocked off the Big Sky regular season champs. MEAC Player of the Year Jahsha Blunt rebounded from a poor MEAC tournament final to score 23 points, 17 and all four of his three-pointers after halftime, to lead the Hornets (21-13) to the victory. The win set a new school record for victories in a season. Darrin Shine added 16 points and six assists and Tracy Worley had 12.

NIT - Second Round (Men)

LOUISVILLE 71, DELAWARE STATE 54

DelState (21-14) could not slow down the uptempo attack of Louisville and saw its season end come to an end Friday before 14,132 hostile fans at legendary Freedom Hall in Louisville. Tracy Worley had 18 points off the bench to pace the Hornets. Jahsha Blunt had 12 points but was just 4 of 14 from the field.

Just two left standing

CIAA champions took to courts Wednesday in quests for national championships



Shaw coach Jacques Curtis



Virginia Union coach Dave Robbins

LUT WILLIAMS
BCSP Editor

After losses by five black college Div. I teams in the NCAA and NIT Tournaments (See TOURNEY RECAPS), CIAA men's basketball champion Virginia Union and women's champion Shaw are all that's left to carry the black college banner in national basketball tournaments.

VUU and Shaw, both hosting their NCAA Div. II South Atlantic Region tournaments, came away as repeat winners last week to earn spots in the national quarterfinals for the second consecutive year. Elite Eight play began for both men and women on Wednesday.

Jacques Curtis's Shaw Lady Bears (29-4), looking to advance beyond the national quarterfinals for the first time in its history, took on North Central Region champion St. Cloud (Minn.) State (28-4) Wednesday at 12 noon CST at the Summit Arena in Hot Springs, Arkansas, site of this year's Elite Eight. A win Wednesday would have put the Lady Bears into Thursday's 7 p.m. semifinal vs. the winner of Wednesday's Emporia State/American International game. The semifinals were to be carried live on ESPN.

The women's championship game is set for Saturday at 5 p.m. and will be carried live on ESPN2.

Dave Robbins' Panthers (28-3), the defending men's national champion began their quest for a repeat Wednesday at 2:30 p.m. vs. Southern Illinois-Edwardsville (25-7) at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, Mass., site of this year's men's Elite Eight. If the Panthers won on Wednesday they played live on CSTV in the 6 p.m. national semifinal on Thursday vs. the Montevallo/Seattle Pacific winner.

The men's Div. II championship game will be carried live on CBS Saturday, March 25 at 1 p.m.

Shaw

The Lady Bears got passage to Hot Springs Monday via one of Shaw graduate Willie Gary's two private 'Wings of Justice' jets. They're hoping the ride on the Florida attorney's luxury plane won't spoil them for the tough task ahead. The Lady Bears made it to the national quarterfinals last year but lost to Central Arkansas, 87-73.

Like Shaw, St. Cloud State under head coach Dr. Lori Ulfert is returning to the Elite Eight after

falling in last year's quarterfinals to Merrimac, 79-78. The Huskies finished second in the regular season North Central Conference race and were defeated by Augustana in the semifinals of the league's tournament. Entering the North Central Regional as a No. 3 seed, they knocked off Augustana, Concordia and national power and No. 2-ranked North Dakota to earn a repeat trip to the Elite Eight.

The Huskies, who led the nation in scoring at 83.6 points per game, are led by junior all-America forward Erika Quigley who averages 22.5 points, sixth best in the nation, and 12.3 rebounds per game, fourth best nationally. Quigley is also among the nation's leaders at 3.1 blocks per game. Three other Huskies score in double figures - senior forward Sascha Hansen (15.3 ppg.), junior point guard Shannon Francis (13.0 ppg) and sophomore forward Kayla Rengel (12.2 ppg.).

Shaw, sporting a 26-game winning streak that began after getting its full compliment of players in mid-December, has a guard-oriented attack led by CIAA Player of the Year, point guard Nastassia Boucicault (15.5 ppg.). Fellow guards Chanee Early (13.7 ppg.) and Region MVP Carletha Harrell (12.0 ppg.) are the other double-figure scorers.

The key to the game could be whether Curtis can get the Huskies to play at a pace more to the Lady Bears' liking.

"They play a lot of man-to-man but most teams haven't been willing to do that against us," said Curtis Tuesday from Hot Springs. "Newberry played man-to-man all year but they went zone (in the Regionals). We want to see if we can speed them up and see how their legs hold up in the second half."

Virginia Union

Dave Robbins ran his record to 8-0 in Regional finals with last Tuesday's 76-73 win over Georgia College and State in Richmond. Three times his Panthers have gone on to win national titles including last year's 63-58 triumph over Bryant College. Robbins and the Panthers also won national crowns in 1980 and 1992 making him the only coach with national titles in three decades and only the third with three D2 crowns overall.

In SIU-Edwardsville, Robbins and the Panthers will be facing a team that is a near mirror image. They rely on a patient half-court offense that aver-

NCAA DIV. II ELITE EIGHTS

MEN'S
March 22, 23 and 25
at MassMutual Center, Springfield, Mass

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22 (all times EST)
12 p.m. - Montevallo (29-4) vs. Seattle Pacific (25-5)
2:30 p.m. - SIU Edw. (25-7) vs. Va. Union (28-3)
6 p.m. - Winona State (29-4) vs. Barton (28-3)
8:30 p.m. - Stonehill (26-6) vs. Tarleton St. (27-6)

THURSDAY, MARCH 23 (CSTV)
6 p.m. - M'vallis/SP winner vs. SIUE/VUU winner
8:30 p.m. - WS/Barton winner vs. SIUE/VUU winner

FRIDAY, MARCH 24
Championship game - 1 p.m. (CBS)

WOMEN'S
March 22, 23 and 25
at Summit Arena, Hot Springs, Ark.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22 (all times EST)
1 p.m. - St. Cloud State (28-4) v. Shaw (29-4)
3 p.m. - Emporia St. (28-4) v. American Intl (24-7)
7 p.m. - Chico St. (27-3) v. Henderson St. (29-4)
9 p.m. - Charleston (31-2) v. Grand Vall. St. (30-3)

THURSDAY, MARCH 23 (ESPN)
8 p.m. - SC/SHU winner v. ES/Amer Intl winner
10:30 p.m. - CS/HS winner v. Ch./ston/GV/USU winner

FRIDAY, MARCH 24
6 p.m. - National Championship Game (ESPN2)

ages 70.2 points per game and a zone defense.

SIU-Edwardsville coach Marty Simmons is leading the Cougars to their first NCAA appearance in 16 years. SIUE finished third in the West Division of the Great Lakes Valley Conference with a 14-5 record and bowed out in the conference tournament semifinals to Quincy. They entered the Great Lakes Regional as a No. 7 seed and knocked off Grand Valley State, Quincy and No. 4 seed Southern Indiana, 64-60 in overtime to take the regional title.

The Cougars, who give up just 60.7 points per game, 11th best in the nation, are led by Ty Johnson (12.8 ppg.). J. B. Jones (11.3 ppg.), Mike Hardiek (10.6 ppg.) and Ryan Belcher (10.3 ppg.)

Virginia Union, who gives up 58.8 points per game (fourth best nationally) while scoring at a 77.3 clip, returns key senior swingmen Duan Crockett (16.9 ppg.) and Darius Hargrove (17.3 ppg.) from last year's championship team. Hargrove was the CIAA player of the year while Crockett took home the CIAA Tournament's most valuable player trophy. Frontcourters Chris Greene (11.4 ppg.) and Brad Byerson (12.3 ppg.) give the Panthers four players averaging double-figure scoring. Greene was the MVP of the South Atlantic Regional.

BCSP Notes

Hampton's Collins resigns

Embattled Hampton University men's basketball head coach Bobby Collins resigned from his position on Wednesday, March 22, one day after his Pirates lost in the NCAA Play-In game to Monmouth, 71-49. The school said the resignation is effective immediately. Assistant head coach Richard Morgan will oversee the men's basketball program until a successor is named. Collins's two other assistants were released.

Collins, who was in his fourth season at the helm of the Pirates' program, led his team to this year's MEAC Tournament title on March 18 in Raleigh as they upset regular season champion Delaware State, 60-56 in the championship game. Hampton had entered the tournament as a sixth seed with a 10-8 conference mark.

Speculation had swirled during the tournament that the team was playing to save Collins's job and many felt his job was safe after they claimed the title. Collins was in three MEAC tourney finals in his four years at the helm.

Collins spent the past 11 years at Hampton, four as head coach, where he compiled an overall record of 65-57. He took over in 2002 after the Pirates won back-to-back tournament titles and NCAA appearances under Steve Merfeld in 2001 and 2002.

"We appreciate all of his contributions to the men's basketball program," said Joe Taylor, Hampton's head football coach and interim athletics director. "We wish him well in his future endeavors."

Hill new women's coach at Virginia State

Virginia State has named James Hill, Jr. as the University's new women's head basketball coach. Hill comes to VSU from Shaw where he served as an assistant men's coach during the 2005-06 season and an assistant women's coach for the four seasons prior.

"I am excited to be at Virginia State," says Hill. "There is a lot of pride at this institution and I will work hard to continue that legacy."

In 2004 and 2005, the CIAA named Hill Assistant Coach of the Year. In both of those seasons, Shaw won the CIAA championship. The school was the CIAA Eastern Division women's champions all four years Hill was assistant and conference tournament champions three of those seasons.

Hill is a native of Macon, GA and received his undergraduate degree from Shaw.

VUU's Crockett and Hargrove named Div. II all-Americans

Virginia Union seniors Duan Crockett and Darius Hargrove have been named All-Americans by the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC). The two seniors are the first All-Americans for VUU since William "Tel" Davis earned All-American honors in 1998.

Hargrove led the CIAA and South Atlantic Region repeat champion Panthers (28-3) in scoring at 17.3 points per game while Crockett is averaging 16.9 points per game. Both were named all-CIAA, all-CIAA Tournament and all-South Atlantic Region performers.

Savannah State head football coach resigns

Richard Basil announced his resignation as the Savannah State University head football coach last week.

While at SSU, Basil compiled an overall record of 2-26 over a span of two and a half seasons. He began his career as a head coach by stepping in



COLLINS

HILL

CROCKETT

BASIL

LEWIS

as interim head coach midway through 2003, finishing that season with a 0-7 record. In 2004, SSU finished 2-8 with wins over Division I-AA foe Norfolk State and NAIA opponent Allen University. In 2005 the Tigers finished with a 0-11 record.

SSU will launch a nationwide search immediately to identify a new head coach for Tiger football.

Hampton's Lewis wins national title; Track coach Pierce named coach of the year

Hampton track star Yvette Lewis became the national champion in the triple jump on Saturday March 11, leaping a personal best 45 feet, 11/2 inches during the NCAA indoor track and field championships in Fayetteville, Ark.

Lewis, a Newport News native and graduate of Menchville High School, joined teammate Kellie Wells of the Richmond area as indoor all-Americans. Wells became an all-American by virtue of making the final of the 60-meter hurdles, in which she finished sixth. She finished No. 5 in the same event a year ago.

Lewis came into the triple jump ranked No. 1 in the country by virtue of a 45-1 leap in March at Virginia Tech. But she said she wasn't sure whether other competitors might come to the meet bringing a peak performance. "Coming into nationals I was ranked No. 1 by far," Lewis said. "So I knew if I put everything together, I could win it. It feels really good, I guess, to be national champion."

HU women's track coach Maurice Pierce said Lewis's achievement is particularly significant because "I think she's one of the few from a historically black college to win a national championship in a long time."

Lewis, a junior at HU and a sophomore as a competitor, has two more years to compete for the Lady Pirates.

Also, this week, Pierce, also a Newport News native, was named Division I women's indoor track and field coach of the year for the Southeast Region by the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association. A graduate of Warwick High School and Norfolk State, Pierce guided Hampton to its fourth consecutive Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference indoor championship this year, setting a meet record with 168 points. "Now that's big, and it's big for all historically black schools," said Pierce, in his fourth year as head women's coach after serving three years as the women's assistant coach. "I'm just glad that my peers in the coaching world are finally acknowledging what I'm doing and what we're doing here at HU."

Fang Mitchell gives up AD post

Ron "Fang" Mitchell has announced his resignation as director of Athletics at Coppin State the university announced last week. Mitchell will remain at the university as the men's basketball head coach.

"I just felt this was the right time," said Mitchell of his decision. "I still love coaching basketball and will continue to serve Coppin State in that capacity." Mitchell was named the Director of Athletics in 1996 replacing Dr. Clayton McNeill. Assistant AD Alecia Shields-Gadson will handle the athletic department until a replacement is named.