SPORTING SCENE

College Basketball Gives Everyone Fighting Chance

Doug Rutter
Sports Editor

I'm convinced the National Collegiate Athletic Association has devised the best format to determine a champion.

I'm speaking, of course, of the way the NCAA crowns its basketball champion, a method commonly known as March Madness.

In an imperfect world, the NCAA Basketball Tournament is as close as you can get to fair.

This year's champion has yet to be decided. But you can bet your last dollar that whichever team wins the marbles, they will have earned them.

College basketball teams battle all season just for the right to make the tournament's field of 64.

Conference champions always get invited. Then the NCAA picks other teams that didn't win their respective conferences but still deserve an invitation to The Big Dance.

Once the tournament begins, a team must win six straight games in order to be crowned champ. It's a true test that separates the men from the boys.

The tournament is also great fun for basketball fans, especially ones who love to root for the underdog. Each year it seems there's at least one little school that makes a splash in the tournament.

Campbell University, a Southern Baptist college in Buies Creek, was the school on everyone's mind when the tournament started last Thursday. The Southern Conference champs were making their first trip to the NCAA tournament, much to the delight of several local Campbell alumni.

Campbell Coach Billy Lee, who charmed the media with his one-liners, put his Fighting Camels in the national spotlight for a few shining days. Unfortunately for the Camels, they drew Duke in the opening round of the tournament and lost 82-56.

As expected, Duke dominated Campbell from the opening tip. The outcome was never in question. "We knew the train was coming but we couldn't stop it," Lee said afterward.

Given a choice, Campbell probably wouldn't have picked the top-ranked team in the country as its first-round opponent. But getting to The Big Dance and choosing your partner are two different things.

The good news for Campbell fans, and there's plenty of it, is that the Fighting Camels will not lose anyone from this year's team to graduation.

So they're liable to contend for the Southern Conference championship again next year and earn another invitation to the NCAA tourney.

The Camels weren't a factor in this year's tournament, but it's good that the NCAA invites schools like Campbell to participate.

You never know when a team like Villanova will upset Georgetown or N.C. State will shock Houston and win it all.

That's what makes the NCAA Basketball Tournament so exciting. Anything can happen in a big tournament, and it often does.

Even though the Fighting Camels didn't win last week, I know the Campbell alumni enjoyed the attention.

I'm still waiting for my alma mater, Lock Haven University, to make it to The Big Dance. LHU will first have to change from Division II to Division I, which is highly unlikely in my lifetime.

But I can still dream. I can see it now, the Bald Eagles and Fighting Camels in the Final Four...what a game that would be.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

LINWOOD RODGERS shows off the top dog at the Dixie Deer Run held March 14 at Coastal Deer Club.

Local Hunt Club Hosts Show

Brunswick County's Coastal Deer Club hosted the Dixie Deer Run dog show March 14, with approximately 100 dogs entered.

Linwood Rodgers was the overall winner and also took third place. He picked up three trophies, $125 cash and two bags of dog food.

Steve Parrish finished second and was awarded two trophies, $50 and dog food.

Trophies and bags of dog food were awarded for fourth through 10th places. Winners, listed in order of finish, were Terry Pace, Tommy Batten, Will Garver, Carlton Pravette, Paul Graham, Brock Holmes and Jimmy Harrell.

Eleventh through 20th places received a bag of dog food. Winners in order of finish were Terry Pace, Brad Hardwick, Joey Vereen, Terry Pace, Carlton Pravette, Kenneth Livingston, Sammy Babson, Jimmy Hardee, Brad Gulliken and Dale Meadows.

Judges for the contest were DeWayne Reaves, Jamie Stone, Richard Jones, Scott Cates, David Bordeaux, Mike Sims and Charles Barnhill.

Old McDonald Farms co-sponsored the event with the hunt club. Next year's Dixie Deer Run is being planned for the third weekend in January, according to spokesman David Pridgen

RECREATION BRIEFS

Oak Island Plans Annual Run

The Oak Island Five Mile Run and One Mile Fun Run will be held Saturday, May 2. Race forms are available at the Long Beach Recreation Department and businesses in the Oak Island area.

The registration fee is $7 before April 24 and $8 after the 24th. Free T-shirts will be given to the first 135 runners to register.

Sponsors are United Carolina Bank, and the Brunswick County and Long Beach recreation departments.

For information, call Kellie Beeson at the Long Beach Recreation Department at 278-5518.

Learn Bike Safety

The Long Beach Recreation Department will sponsor a bike safety program on Saturday, April 11, at the recreation center.

Police will be registering bikes from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Following registration, there will be a skills course and a drawing for two bikes and other prizes.

Volleyball Tourney Set

The Long Beach Recreation Department will sponsor a coed adult volleyball tournament the week of April 13.

Matches will be played in the evenings the entire week, depending on the number of teams. Each team must have at least six players, including two women.

Registration is free and closes April 9. Schedules will be posted by 3 p.m. April 10 at the recreation center.

For more information, call Kellie Beeson at 278-5518.

Spring Cleaning

Spring cleaning shouldn't be limited to homes and yards. Why not clean the beaches too?

Long Beach Parks and Recreation is encouraging individuals and clubs to help clean the beach the week of April 20-25.

Trash bags will be available at the recreation center and can be left at beach accessways for pickup by the town.

The cleanup is planned as part of the Keep North Carolina Clean and Beautiful campaign in conjunction with the National Celebration of the Outdoors.

Softball Meeting Set

The Brunswick County Men's Softball League will hold an organizational meeting Thursday, April 2, at 7 p.m. at the county parks and recreation office in Bolivia.

Any team interested in competing this year should have a representative at the meeting. For information, call Joe Rosselli at 253-4357.

Wrestlers Win

Ten wrestlers from the Brunswick County Youth Wrestling League competed in a tournament March 15 in Matamoras, Pa.

Michael Jackson of Leland captured a first-place award. Walter Burckhalter, Casey Kennedy and Brett Hobbs, all of Leland, finished in third place. Lee Sellars of Leland placed fourth.

Tryouts Slated

Any coed at South Brunswick High School who is interested in trying out for the varsity cheerleading squad should pick up an application, available after April 9 at the school.

Tryout practice will begin April 27.

For more information contact Pam Basnight at the school, 845-2203 or 457-5765.

Women Honored

Six Brunswick County women were recently honored as outstanding women in sports in the area.

The Brunswick County and Long Beach recreation departments recognized the women as part of National Women in Sports Day.

Selected were Annie Toomer, Vera Larson, Jan Reichenbach, Kay Brannon, Wendy Vereen and Rita Hatcher.

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NEWS FROM THE LANES

Inman Rolls High Series

Shelton Inman rolled the high scratch and handicap series in the Woodmen of the World League last Friday at Brunswick Bowling Center in Shallotte.

Inman rolled a 554 scratch series and 644 handicap series to lead the men in both categories.

Other men posting high scratch series scores were Jimmy Robinson with 524 and Jack Howell with 500.

High scratch series scores among the women were Lois Ramsey, 508; Wanda Evans, 478; and Debbie Sellers, 470.

Men's high handicap series scorers were Jimmy Robinson, 632; Jim Ramsey, 623; Harold Bland, 607; and Tony Clayton, 601.

For the women, handicap series scores included Lois Ramsey, 634; Debbie Sellers, 620; Mary Russ, 607; Wanda Evans, 598; Martha Inman, 587; Bobbie Mumford, 571; Linda Fluegel, 568; and Benita Hernandez, 566.

The men's high games were posted by Michael Russ, 225; Shelton Inman, 211; and Travis Williams, 204.

High game scorers among the women were Wanda Evans, 199; Sis Howell, 192; Debbie Sellers, 186; and Lois Ramsey, 177.

Sunday Night Mixed

Jay White posted the men's high series of 524 and Marcia Kirby had the women's high series of 518 this week in the Sunday Night Mixed League.

Other high series scores were Jim Hagler, 515; Travis Downer, 513; Joe Mairana, 507; Gerry Simoni, 507; and Dennis Harpster, 500.

Posting the high games this week were Jay White with 224, Jim Hagler with 217 and Marcia Kirby with 203.

"Emerald Adventures" took all team categories this week with a 679 scratch game, 888 handicap game, 1,892 scratch series and 2,519 handicap series.

Hardball On Hold At West Brunswick

After a paperwork problem wiped out West Brunswick's baseball opener on March 16, Mother Nature did the job last week.

The Trojan game with James Kenan was rained out last Thursday, putting the season opener off another six days.

West Brunswick had to cancel its first game against Acme-Delco because eligibility forms weren't turned in on time.

Barring further problems, West Brunswick was scheduled to open its season Wednesday at James Kenan in Kenansville.

The Trojans open the Waccamaw 2-A Conference season on the road. They travel to Whiteville Friday to face the defending state champs and play at Fairmont next Tuesday.

West Brunswick's third annual 100-inning game was rained out Saturday. It will be played April 4.

Register To Vote

RON TAYLOR

Reminds you to vote . . .

You may register through Monday, April 6, at any public library or at the Brunswick County Board of Elections.

If you have any questions, call 253-4338.

Thank You For Registering To Vote

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