

Vincennes wins 4th NJCAA championship

From Local Sources

HUTCHINSON, Kan. — The Vincennes University men’s basketball team flexed some muscle and reminded everyone on Saturday of its status as a national powerhouse.

The Trailblazers handled Ranger (Texas) College 87-77 to win the NJCAA Division I men’s basketball championship. The Blazers won their fourth national championship, and first since 1972.

In its first national title game appearance since 1986, VU jumped out to a 23-5 start, and the Trailblazers showed off their school colors of blue and gold on national television. In the process, VU coach Todd Franklin cemented his place in the history of one of the nation’s top programs. “Since ‘72, there have been

a lot of great players that have played at Vincennes,” Franklin said. “We know all those people are incredibly proud and happy and no longer have to listen about we can’t get it done.”

After the Trailblazers were awarded the championship trophy and cut down the nets, Franklin received the Coach of the Tournament award, and freshman Kevin Osawe was presented with the William B. French Most Valuable Player Award.

Osawe scored 22 points and grabbed 10 rebounds in the championship game.

Sophomores Keith Clemons and Kevin Kangu were among 12 players presented with All-Tournament medals.

Clemons collected 17 points and seven assists against Ranger. Kangu added 14 points and six

assists. Sophomore Lony Francis Jr. scored 10 points before fouling out with 6:47 left.

The Trailblazers started out on fire in a game that was broadcast on CBS Sports Network. They were ahead 34-13 midway through the first half. They led by as many as 22 points before taking a 50-34 lead into the locker room at halftime.

“We came out, played well, and hit shots,” said Franklin, who has coached the Trailblazers for nine seasons.

Ranger made it a game in the second half. The Rangers’ Keyshaad Dixon hit a 3-pointer that cut VU’s lead to 63-60 with 7 1/2 minutes remaining.

At the 6:19 mark, the Trailblazers were ahead 65-64, but Franklin wasn’t worried. He recognized his team was poised to close out the victor and win the

national championship.

“You could see that the script flipped,” Franklin said. “It was we’re not fighting off anymore. We are in closure mode. I felt pretty good about it once you could see it on the floor that we were in closure mode. We did it this whole tournament. Moberly pushed up on us. Early in the second half, South Plains pushed up on us. Odessa pushed up on us in the second half.

“You saw Craig Porter click in, take it to the basket and drop it off because we needed somebody do that. Then I had George (Dixon) in there asking for the ball. Osawe wanted the ball. At that moment, I thought we are going to be all right.”

Clemons buried a 3-pointer to put VU ahead 77-72 with 3:55 to play. In that last 3:55, the Trailblazers closed the game on a 13-5

run.

Then the celebrating began. The players put on shirts with “National Champions” printed on them. They cut down the nets, posed for photographs, signed autographs and kissed the championship trophy.

“Playing with this team has been the best two years of my life,” Dixon said.

The Trailblazers are now four-time national champions. They won national titles in 1965, 1970, 1972 and 2019.

VU holds the record for most national championship appearance with 34. They also hold the record for most consecutive tournament appearances in the modern era. This season was their seventh straight trip to the national tournament.

The Trailblazers finish the season with a 34-2 overall record.

SCOREBOARD

Local schedule

TODAY, MARCH 25

No events scheduled

THURSDAY, MARCH 28

Prep Baseball

Forest Park at Warren East (Ky.) (V) 5:30 p.m.

Martinsville at Southridge (V) 6:00 p.m.

Prep Softball

North Posey at Forest Park (V/JV) 5:00 p.m.

Archery

AT ST. ANTHONY

MARCH 23

St. Anthony Conservation Club 3D Expo Results

Open — 1. Curtis Dent - 303, 2. Craig Voges - 298, 3. Joe Brown - 293.

Release — 1. Scott Mattingly - 311, 2. Joe Williams - 291, 3. Logan Morton - 282.

Hunter — 1. Dario Barron - 320, 2. Austin Bromm - 310, 3. Jared Beckhart - 306.

Women — 1. Melanie Beckhart - 314, 2. Autumn Hemmerlein - 245, 3. Tiffany Hensley - 241.

Traditional — 1. Chris Vowels - 246, 2. Ronald Nix - 232, 3. David McKnight - 232.

Youth — 1. Jaden Schuetter - 295, 2. Danielle Willis - 293, 3. Ashlie Garrison - 291.

Cub — 1. Brayton Fromme - 257, 2. Bryson Sheemaker - 198, 3. Richard Willis - 197.

Prep basketball

AT INDIANAPOLIS/IHSAA STATE FINALS

CLASS 4A

Carmel 60, Ben Davis 55

Mental Attitude Award Winner — Michael Mulloy (Carmel)

Leading scorer — Jalen Windham, 22 (Ben Davis)

CLASS 3A

Silver Creek 52, Culver Academies 49

Mental Attitude Award Winner — John Cohen (Culver Academies)

Leading scorer — Ethan Brittain-Watts, 23 (Culver Academies)

CLASS 2A

Andrean 59, Linton 54

Mental Attitude Award Winner — Evan Slover (Linton)

Leading scorer — John Carrothers, Kyle Ross - 16 (Andrean)

CLASS 1A

Fort Wayne Blackhawk 60, Barr-Reeve 43

Mental Attitude Award Winner — Quentin Yoder (Barr-Reeve)

Leading scorer — Frank Davidson, 20 (Fort Wayne Blackhawk)

Prep softball

AT PETERSBURG

VARSITY

Jasper 7, Pike Central 3

Jasper 200 010 4 — 7 13 5

Pike Central 000 003 0 — 3 6 0

Pitchers and catchers: (J) Werner and Heim; (PC) Padgett and Johnson.

WP: Werner (3-1). LP: Padgett.

Home runs: (J) Megan Matheis (7th, 1 out, 1 on)

JUNIOR VARSITY

Jasper 6, Pike Central 3

Jasper 210 03 — 6 9 4

Pike Central 010 20 — 3 6 1

Pitchers and catchers: (J) Morton and K. Matheis; (PC) Hillyard and Stafford.

WP: Morton. LP: Hillyard.

Home runs: (PC) Englert (2nd, 2 out, solo).

College basketball

Men’s NCAA Tournament

All Times EDT

EAST REGIONAL

First Round

Friday, March 22

At Colonial Life Arena

Columbia, S.C.

Duke 85, North Dakota State 62

UCF 73, VCU 58

At SAP Center

San Jose, Calif.

Liberty 80, Mississippi State 76

Virginia Tech 66, Saint Louis 52

Second Round

Saturday, March 23

At Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena

Jacksonville, Fla.

LSU 69, Maryland 67

At Wells Fargo Arena

Des Moines, Iowa

Michigan State 70, Minnesota 50

Sunday, March 24

At Colonial Life Arena

Columbia, S.C.

Duke 77, UCF 76

At SAP Center

San Jose, Calif.

Virginia Tech 67, Liberty 58

At Capital One Arena

Washington

Regional Semifinals

Friday, March 29

Duke (31-5) vs. Virginia Tech (26-8)

Michigan State (30-6) vs. LSU (28-6)

Regional Championship

Sunday, March 31

Semifinal winners

SOUTH REGIONAL

First Round

Friday, March 22

At Colonial Life Arena

Columbia, S.C.

Oklahoma 95, Mississippi 72

Virginia 71, Gardner-Webb 56

At Nationwide Arena

Columbus, Ohio

Iowa 79, Cincinnati 72

Tennessee 77, Colgate 70

At SAP Center

San Jose, Calif.

UC Irvine 70, Kansas State 64

Oregon 72, Wisconsin 54

Second Round

Saturday, March 23

At The XL Center

Hartford, Conn.

Purdue 87, Villanova 61

Sunday, March 24

At Colonial Life Arena

Columbia, S.C.

Virginia 63, Oklahoma 51

At Nationwide Arena

Columbus, Ohio

Tennessee 83, Iowa 77

At SAP Center

San Jose, Calif.

Oregon 73, UC Irvine 54

At KFC Yum! Center

Louisville, Ky.

Regional Semifinals

Thursday, March 28

Virginia (31-3) vs. Oregon (25-12)

Tennessee (31-5) vs. Purdue (25-9)

Regional Championship

Saturday, March 30

Semifinal winners

MIDWEST REGIONAL

First Round

Friday, March 22

At Nationwide Arena

Columbus, Ohio

Washington 78, Utah State 61

North Carolina 88, Iona 73

At BOK Center

Tulsa, Okla.

Houston 84, Georgia State 55

Ohio State 62, Iowa State 59

Second Round

Saturday, March 23

At Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena

Jacksonville, Fla.

Kentucky 62, Wofford 56

At Vivint Smart Home Arena

Salt Lake City

Auburn 89, Kansas 75

Sunday, March 24

At Nationwide Arena

Columbus, Ohio

North Carolina 81, Washington 59

At BOK Center

Tulsa, Okla.

Houston 74, Ohio State 59

At The Sprint Center

Kansas City, Mo.

Regional Semifinals

Friday, March 29

North Carolina (29-6) vs. Auburn (28-9)

Kentucky (29-6) vs. Houston (33-3)

Regional Championship

Sunday, March 31

Semifinal winners

WEST REGIONAL

First Round

Friday, March 22

At BOK Center

Tulsa, Okla.

Texas Tech 72, Northern Kentucky 57

Buffalo 91, Arizona State 74

Second Round

Saturday, March 23

At The XL Center

Hartford, Conn.

Florida State 90, Murray State 62

At Wells Fargo Arena

Des Moines, Iowa

Michigan 64, Florida 49

At Vivint Smart Home Arena

Salt Lake City

Gonzaga 83, Baylor 71

Sunday, March 24

At BOK Center

Tulsa, Okla.

Texas Tech 78, Buffalo 58

At Honda Center

Anaheim, Calif.

Regional Semifinals

Thursday, March 28

Gonzaga (32-3) vs. Florida State (29-7), TBA

Michigan (30-6) vs. Texas Tech (28-6), TBA

Regional Championship

Saturday, March 30

Semifinal winners

FINAL FOUR

At U.S. Bank Stadium

Minneapolis

National Semifinals

Saturday, April 6

East champion vs. West champion

South champion vs. Midwest champion

National Championship

Monday, April 8

Semifinal winners

NCAA Women’s Basketball Tournament

All Times EDT

GREENSBORO REGIONAL

First Round

Friday, March 22

At Charlotte, N.C.

South Carolina 74, Belmont 52

Florida State 70, Bucknell 67

At Iowa City

Iowa 66, Mercer 61

Missouri 77, Drake 76, OT

Saturday, March 23

At Waco, Texas

California 92, North Carolina 72

Baylor 95, Abilene Christian 38