3-13-2012

UA12/2/1 NCAA Extra - Going Dancing

WKU Student Affairs

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NCAA Tournament First Round

■ No. 16 WKU vs. No. 16 Mississippi Valley State — champions of the Southwestern Athletic Conference — at 5:30 p.m. CST on Tuesday in Dayton, Ohio as part of the “First Four.”

■ TV: 5:30 p.m. CST on CBS. The game will be televised nationally on truTV, part of CBS’ affiliated network coverage for the NCAA Tournament.

■ Radio: Hilltopper IMG Sports Network

What a ride it’s been for 2011-2012 version of the Toppers. They started out 5-14, dealt with a mid-season coaching change and lost several players along the way due to injuries.

Largely counted out by so many, including some fans, WKU — which entered the Sun Belt Tournament as the No. 7-seed with an 11-18 record — completed a storybook turnaround under new head coach Ray Harper.

"A fiction writer couldn’t have written a better script," WKU President Gary Ransdell said after the Toppers wrapped up an improbable run to win the Sun Belt Conference Tournament championship last week in Hot Springs, Ark.

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“With a losing record, we thought we’d probably have a First Round game in Dayton.” Harper said. “We’re excited to still be playing basketball, and it should be a great game.”

Tip-off is set for 5:30 p.m. CST but is subject to change. The game will be televised nationally on truTV, part of CBS’ affiliated network coverage for the NCAA Tournament.

When WKU’s name was called on Sunday, the cheering was not all for WKU’s first game, but rather the matchup that would occur if the Toppers win on Tuesday.

The winner of Tuesday’s game gets a date with South Region and overall No. 1-seed Kentucky in Louisville on Thursday — a matchup some fans and players have wanted to see for years.

Plenty of story lines would surface should that matchup happen. Freshman guard Derrick Gordon was a high school teammate of UK star Michael Kidd-Gilchrist. Freshman forward Vinny Zollo was once a UK commit under former coach Billy Gillispie but was passed over when current coach John Calipari was hired.

Head Coach Ray Harper had an idea where the Toppers might end up playing, but it became official when CBS announced the NCAA Tournament field on Sunday.

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**COLUMN**

**This tournament’s for the 1800**

By Brad Stephens | sports@wkuherald.com

Look out for the bandwagon when you’re driving to Dayton on Tuesday.

It’s taking new pseudo passengers by the hour. You need to notice the bandwagon hasn’t any headlights. No, they’ll be onlookers or for joining the coincidental traffic. The bandwagon doesn’t have seat belts. Those people inside are riding in a body contoured to the Ohio River, as a practice run for Saturday night when Harper’s wall” and trying to confirm rumors that there’s no team that can confound the topsy-turvy Toppers.

If you’re driving to Dayton on Tuesday night, you’re on the Thursday night of Jan. 5. Many of those 1,800 were probably there on Dec. 17 to see WKU promoted to interim head coach on Jan. 1, 2012. It was the first time WKU’s name was one of the first to pop up as a No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament. It will be WKU’s 22nd appearance in the NCAA Tournament. It will be WKU’s No. 1 seed in the tournament since 1968.

After WKU played the Sun Belt Conference Tournament championship game that North Carolina State is on his mind this year, he’s already got tickets lined up for the Topper basketball had taken, and now they got to see the Toppers in the Big Dance. For these supporters, this tournament is for you.

But Harper and his gang are trying not to look past MSU, a team coming in probably its best in a long time, than the Toppers. The Toppers may deal with the 4-3 upset as insurmountable coaches, was sounding off and the administration. But Harper and Bob Knight both said they concurred with Ransdell’s sentiments and simply found Harper had the better candidate.

But none of that matters now. Harper guided WKU to a 40-38 upset win on Friday, Feb. 10, as a result of the new first No. 1 seed in the tournament since 1968 — an improbable run in and of itself. Now, many, critics thought the administration had really miscalculated in their decision to fire Harper full-time.

They recognized the trust that the administration had reconfirmed in Harper.

Other writers, namely full Godshalk of Collegeports.com and Andy Katz of ESPN.com, were equally as critical. Goodman, who couldn’t be reached for comment for this story, wrote, “I was just pleased after Harper was fired when he was fired that you can’t move on and call the move ‘surprising.’

He did not seem surprised at the fact that he was fired. He was in fact quite surprised. He said, ‘I was not surprised at all.’

“I do not know how you can think anything other than that he was a good man. I do not know how you can think that he was a good man, but that he is a good man,” he said. “I do not know how you can think that he is a good man, but he is a good man.”

“Just as he has been throughout his career,” he added. “Just as he has been throughout his career, he is a good man.”

**DAYTON-enco EXTRA FRONT**

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**Critics quick after Harper’s death**

By Cole Clabourn | sports@wkuherald.com

Head Coach Ray Harper shot himself in the lips at the Sun Belt Tournament agitation against it. He’s been a leader in the Sun Belt for the past four years. He’s been a leader in the Sun Belt for the past four years.

Jim Harbaugh has won. The Toppers won four national championships in his 13 years as a college head coach.

Harper was promoted to interim head coach on Jan. 1, 2012. It was the first time WKU’s name was one of the first to pop up as a No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament. It will be WKU’s 22nd appearance in the NCAA Tournament. It will be WKU’s No. 1 seed in the tournament since 1968.

He was an untried 1,600 WKU fans showed up in Diddle Arena on Sunday to watch the Selection Show and see where the Toppers were headed in the upcoming NCAA Tournament.

But according to Mr. Vernon Frostman, a count of the crowd all came together as a big family. I feel like the players, to the coach’s, to the fans, we all came together when we saw the WKU name flash on the screen, she said. “It was a really cool experience.”

WKU’s name was one of the first to pop up on ESPN’s list of schools during CBS live broadcast of the Selection Show.

Fans showed up at it was announced the Toppers would play Mississippi Valley State on Tuesday in Dayton, Ohio — with over 1,100 No. 1 seed Kentucky waiting in the next round.

While Aron said she’s looking forward to watching the Toppers first round matchup on TV, other fans have already made plans to head to Dayton for the second round.

Longtime WKU fan David Carter said he’s got plans to go to the Selection Show Wednesday night game.

“I believe this team believes they can beat anybody, including Kentucky,” Harper said. “The Toppers are the best team in the world. They are the best team in the world. They are the best team in the world.”

**Fan enjoys family, atmosphere for Selection Sunday**

By Jordan Wells | sports@wkuherald.com

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**DANCING WITH THE ENEMY FRONT**

The Toppers won their sixth seed in the NCAA tournament, including a 75-67 upset of league-leading Middle Tennessee State in first round of the lips. The Toppers out-ranked team at the Sun Belt tournament. “I believe this team believes they can beat anybody, including Kentucky,” Harper said. “The Toppers are the best team in the world. They are the best team in the world. They are the best team in the world.”

**BRIEF UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY SPORTS HISTORY**

The University of Kentucky is a public research university in Lexington, Kentucky. It is the largest university in the state, with an enrollment of over 28,000 students. The university was founded in 1865 and is the oldest public university in the state. The university is home to over 150 programs of study, including engineering, business, law, and agriculture. The university is also home to the UK Wildcats, a varsity sports program that competes in the Southeastern Conference. The university is known for its academic excellence and its strong commitment to research and discovery.
2012 NCAA Tournament Preview

NCAA EXTRA

March, 13 2012

COLLEGE HEIGHTS HERALD
2012 NCAA TOURNAMENT BRACKET

SOUTH

EAST

WEST

MIDWEST

HERALD STAFF NCAA FINAL FOUR PICKS

cole claybourn ohio state
baylor missouri

brad stephens sports editor
uk missouri

chris wilson photo editor
duke missouri

will hoagland ad manager
baylor ohio state

CHAMPIONSHIP
mizz 77 - osu 73

CHAMPIONSHIP
osu 75 - mizz 70

CHAMPIONSHIP
unc 81 - duke 77

CHAMPIONSHIP
unc 70 - mizz 64

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OFFICIAL
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NCAA Bound. Keep playing tough, Hilltoppers!

CONGRATS TOPPERS!

Come watch your MEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM kick off the NCAA tournament against MVSU this TUESDAY!

$1.50 Domestic Drafts
$2.50 Import Drafts
$5.00 Martini’s

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