

PENN OVERCOMES ST. JOHN'S, 62-61, IN N.C.A.A. TOURNEY

Quakers Lose 9-Point Lead in 2d Half, Then Rally Behind Sophomores

By **GORDON S. WHITE JR.**

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WILLIAMSBURG, Va., March 10—The University of Pennsylvania, Ivy League champion for the last four seasons, defeated St. John's, 62-61, in an exciting opening-round game of the 35th annual National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball championship tonight.

John Jablonski, a sophomore who averages only 10 minutes a game, hit from the right corner for the deciding shot with 1 minute 48 seconds to go. Then another Penn sophomore, John Beecroft, connected on two foul shots and Penn moved to the Eastern Regional semi-finals at Charlotte, N. C., Thursday night.

It was a major disappointment for the Redmen, who stormed back from a 9-point deficit with 8½ minutes to go to take the lead by 2 points

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N.C.A.A. Basketball

UNIVERSITY DIVISION

EAST REGIONALS

At Williamsburg, Va.

Pennsylvania 62 St. John's 61
At Philadelphia

Syracuse 83 Furman 82
At Jamaica, N.Y.

Providence 89 St. Joseph's 76

MID-EAST REGIONALS

At Dayton, Ohio

Marquette 77 Miami, Ohio 62

Austin Peay 77 Jacksonville 75

MID-WEST REGIONALS

At Wichita, Kansas

Southwestern Louisiana 102 ... Houston 69

South Carolina 78 Texas Tech 70

WEST REGIONALS

At Logan, Utah

Arizona State 103 Oklahoma City 78

Long Beach State 88 Weber State 75

with five minutes to go. But Penn's patience on defense paid off in a game that was fast and physical.

A crowd of only 3,250 in the 9,000-seat William and Mary Hall watched Penn, which led the nation in defense against scoring, make things difficult for St. John's at times. The outstanding defensive job was by Bob Bigelow, another of the Quakers' many sophomores.

Exit Pressing

This 6-foot-7-inch guard had to cover Billy Schaeffer, averaged 25.1 points a game during the season. After Schaeffer got 12 of the Redmen's first 21 points, Bigelow virtually cut him off, allowing Schaeffer 4 points during the last 28½ minutes.

Schaeffer, a senior in his final game for St. John's, said, "I was pressing and not following through as I should on my shots. Bigelow did a good job."

When Schaeffer was hitting, mostly on his favorite soft jumper from the left side, the Redmen moved out to a 21-16 lead. Suddenly things changed and Penn came back to lead at half-time, largely on a 12-2 scoring edge over four minutes late in the period.

When Penn moved to a 56-47 lead, it appeared that St. John's was finished. The Redmen had lost four of their last six games and the favored team was leading comfortably.

But Ed Searcy and Frank

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PENN SOPHOMORES SUBDUE ST. JOHN'S

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Alagia led an 11-0 spurt for St. John's. Searcy, the jumping transfer student from Duquesne University, got 6 points on two 3-point plays. Alagia, the 5-9 freshman guard, scored 3 points and became the floor general as St. John's went into a spread offense, hoping to hold the slim lead and wait for good shots.

But Penn waited, also, and forced a turnover that led to two foul shots by Ron Haigler, the sophomore from Brooklyn who led Penn with 20 points. That tied the count at 58.

Mel Utley, another St. John's guard, hit one of two free throws and Penn took over with 2:19 remaining. The ball was worked around by the Quakers until Jablonski found himself alone with the ball in the corner.

He let fly and his basket gave Penn a 60-59 lead. Shortly after, Alagia drove in as St. John's couldn't get the ball to Schaeffer. Alagia fell, missing his shot and Becroft took the ball. He was fouled and made both shots of a one-and-one situation.

Those points with 30 seconds to go settled the issue.

Searcy tapped in a rebound with 2 seconds to go for St. John's final points.

Coach Frank Mulzoff of St. John's, unhappy with the officiating, said, "I thought Alagia was tripped[by Becroft] on that last drive. But two officials saw it better than I did, I guess."

Mulzoff also said the 34 personal fouls called were less than should have been in a "very physical" game. St. John's committed 16 personal fouls, Penn 18.

Chuck Daly, Penn's coach, said, "I didn't think the game was that physical from what I expected."

ST. JOHN'S (61)				PENN (62)			
	G.	F.	P.		G.	F.	P.
Schaeffer	9	0-0	16	Hankinson	8	0-0	16
Prince	1	0-0	2	Haigler	7	6-6	20
Searcy	6	7-8	19	Becroft	3	2-3	8
Utley	2	2-4	6	Bigelow	3	2-2	8
Cluess	3	0-0	6	Littlepage	0	0-0	0
Alapia	4	4-6	12	Finger	0	0-0	0
Jenkins	0	0-0	0	Varga	0	0-0	0
Smith	0	0-0	0	Lewis	1	0-0	2
				Jablonski	3	2-3	8
Total	24	13-18	61	Total	25	12-14	62

Half-time score—Penn 38, St. John's 32.

Fouled out—Utley, Littlepage.

Attendance—3,250.