

Villanova, Duke Gain N.C.A.A. East Final

By GORDON S. WHITE Jr.

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PROVIDENCE, R.I., March 17—Rory Sparrow, who usually plays basketball some distance from the hoop as a 6-foot-2-inch guard, made an inside shot at the baseline with 14 seconds remaining and gave Villanova a surprising 61-60 victory over Indiana tonight in the East Regional semifinals of the National Collegiate Athletic Association tournament.

Memories of 1971

Then Duke rallied from 8 points back in the last 9 minutes and beat Penn, the Ivy League champion, 84-80, before 10,689 in the Providence Civic Center. Duke, champion of the Atlantic Coast Conference, will meet Villanova, the Eastern 8 Conference champion, in the East final Sunday. The winner will go to St. Louis for the national semifinals March 25.

Sparrow, a sophomore from Paterson,

N.J., made his big shot from directly under the basket and over the outstretched hands of taller Hoosier defenders. His shot was on the end of a 6-second, blackboard-perfect inbounds play that started when Sparrow threw the ball in and ended at the left side of the key from where he sank the "most important shot I ever made."

Villanova's victory, achieved in what amounts to the N.C.A.A. tournament's second round, moved the Wildcats farther along than they have been since 1971 when they lost to the University of California, Los Angeles, in the final at Houston. However, that Villanova team had to forfeit the runner-up trophy and tournament revenue because Howard Porter, one of its stars, had signed an agreement with an agent before the tournament.

There was no thought of those bad times tonight, however, as Villanova staged a strong comeback from an 11-point deficit in the second half to beat

Indiana, which won the national title two years ago.

Rollie Massimino, Villanova's coach, who is going through his first N.C.A.A. tournament said, "On our last possession we set up for Keith Herron [Villanova's leading scorer] and he [Herron] found Rory underneath for the good shot. This was the third or fourth game that Rory has won for us on the last-second shot."

High Praise from Knight

Herron scored 23 points, but 19 were in the first half and were the main reason Villanova was only 8 points back at intermission. Indiana obviously expected the Wildcats to try to feed Herron for the last shot, but the blackboard play had alternatives, and Sparrow was the man in the right spot at the right second when the Hoosiers blocked Herron from taking the pass.

Bobby Knight, the Indiana coach who has tasted the national title and was in the N.C.A.A. tournament scramble twice as a player and four times as

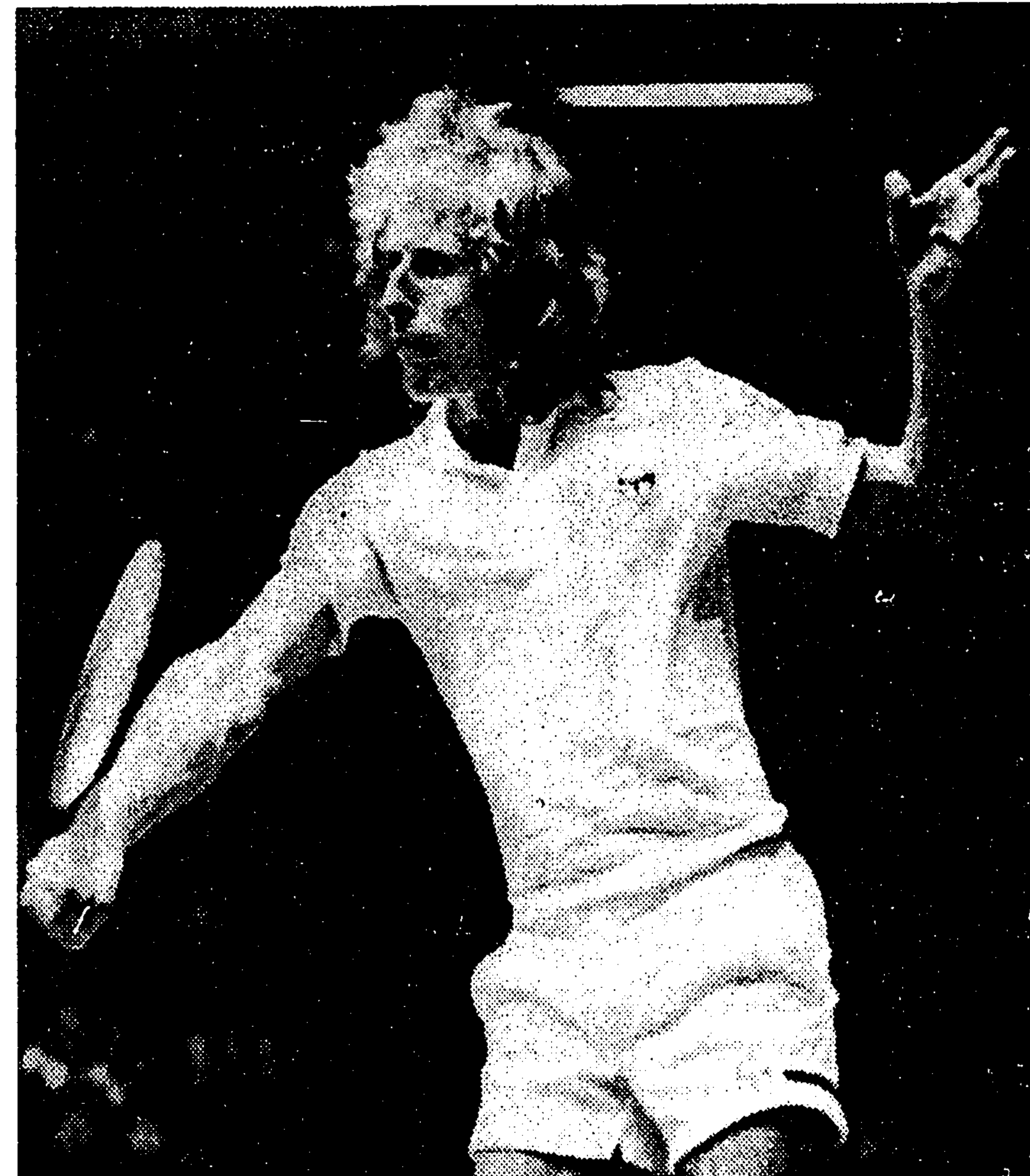
a head coach, said realistically: "Villanova was 11 down and did a hell of a job in coming back. They should be very proud. I think we came about as far as we could."

Indiana was riding a nine-game winning streak that took the Hoosiers to a second-place tie in the Big Ten and a 1-point victory over Furman in the first round last Sunday. A month ago few expected Indiana would be in the tourney, let alone reach a regional semifinal.

But Villanova was a surprise, too, by winning the Eastern 8 playoff, that Rutgers was supposed to win.

Villanova was not out of the woods after Sparrow's final shot. Indiana had time to get in a last effort, but on the first attempt, Herron intercepted a Hoosier pass and slapped the ball out of bounds with 2 seconds to go. Indiana tried desperately for the final shot inbounds from midcourt, and Wayne Radford let fly a 35-foot shot

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The New York Times/Tyrone Dukes

Vitas Gerulaitis defeating Bernie Mitton, 2-6, 6-2, 6-1, 7-5, in opening match of Davis Cup play last night.

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Associated Press

Keith Herron of Villanova trying to dissuade Indiana's Mike Woodson from shooting in first period of N.C.A.A. game at Providence, R.I.

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that hit the backboard and rim and fell away.

Radford scored 22 points and the Hoosiers' Mike Woodson got the game-high total of 24.

Alex Bradley, the strong, 6-9 freshman from Long Branch, N.J., was important in Villanova's comeback with seven of his 12 rebounds during the last 15 minutes. Indiana led, 48-37, with 15 minutes to go. Bradley was particularly effective during the last 8 minutes because the Hoosiers' big freshman center, Ray Tolbert, fouled out with 7:53 to go. That left Bradley master of the boards.

Mike Gminski, a 6-11 sophomore from Monroe, Conn., was the hero of the Duke comeback. He stopped Penn dead when the Quakers were threatening to pull another of the big upsets that have marked this 40th N.C.A.A. tournament. Gminski simply slammed three successive Penn layup attempts back at the Quakers.

Following each of those blocked

shots, Duke came up with the ball and scored for a total of 6 points. The defense helped Duke to run 12 straight points and gain a 70-66 lead with 5 minutes to go. Duke never trailed again.

Penn was hampered through the second half because Keven McDonald, the Ivy League's leading scorer, was playing part of the time with four fouls. McDonald, who had a career high of 37 points in Penn's 92-83 victory over St. Bonaventure in the first round last Saturday, got only 10 points tonight.

Gene Banks, the freshman from Philadelphia who decided to play at Duke instead of Penn (his second choice) had a game-high 21 points.

After the Duke victory, Banks said, "When Mike [Gminski] starts blocking shots, he really intimidates them."

Bob Weinbauer, who became Penn's head coach last November 10, just three weeks before the season began, said: "That Gminski is an unusual person. Not only did he make those great rejections, but he managed to control the ball each time."