

St. John's, Penn Upset A.C.C. Fives

By GORDON S. WHITE Jr.

Special to The New York Times

RALEIGH, N.C., March 11 — The University of Pennsylvania, champions of the lightly regarded Ivy League, and St. John's University, the 40th and last team picked for this year's National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball tournament, posted two of the biggest upsets in the 41-year history of the tournament today.

To the surprise of most of the 12,400 fans at Reynolds Coliseum in the territory of the proud Atlantic Coast Conference, the upstarts combined to eliminate North Carolina and Duke, the two top-seeded teams in the East regional.

Penn came from behind for a 72-71 decision over North Carolina, the team picked by Las Vegas oddsmakers to win the N.C.A.A. championship. Then St. John's, which beat Duke last December in Madison Square Garden, proved it could do it again as Reggie Carter hit a soft jumper from the right baseline with five seconds remaining to defeat the Blue Devils, 80-78.

'That 10 Percent of Luck'

Duke, which was runner-up to Kentucky in last year's N.C.A.A. tournament, was seeded No. 2 in the East after North Carolina beat the Blue Devils eight days ago in the A.C.C. playoff. Today, however, an Ivy League team and one from Jamaica, Queens, played better defense and, as Coach Lou Carnesecca of St. John's said, "maybe got that 10 percent of luck."

Penn, playing in its ninth N.C.A.A. tournament, will meet Syracuse in the third round of the tournament at Greensboro, N.C., on Friday, while St. John's, playing its 11th National Collegiate tourney, meets Rutgers the same night.

North Carolina became the first of the four top-seeded regional teams to be eliminated as the other three — Notre Dame, Indiana State and

Continued on Page C7

Blocked due to copyright.
See full page image or
microfilm.

Associated Press

Duke's Eugene Banks losing ball to Ron Plair, right, and Wayne McKoy of St. John's

The New York Times

Published: March 12, 1979

Copyright © The New York Times

St. John's, Penn Register Upsets

Continued From Page C1

the University of California, Los Angeles — won their games today.

Duke played without the services of two starters during the past eight days. Bob Bender, a guard, had an appendectomy March 3, and Kenny Dennard, a forward, sprained his right ankle last Wednesday in practice.

There were striking similarities in the Penn and the St. John's victories. For one thing, Tony Price, Penn's star forward and leading scorer, played the entire second half with three personal fouls as did Wayne McKoy, St. John's important 6-foot-8-inch center. Both Price and McKoy had to sit out much of the first half because of the fouls.

Price came on to score 15 of his game-high 25 points in the second half, and McKoy, who had a streak of good long shots, scored 14 of his 18 points in the second half. Neither man fouled out.

In each game, the winning teams from the East utilized magnificent changing zone defenses to inhibit their opponents from driving inside. Penn, in particular, forced North Carolina to shoot from the perimeter and the Tar Heels kept missing.

The winning team's high scorer — Price for Penn and Carter for St. John's — got the basket that put his team ahead to stay. Price accomplished that with 5 straight points to give Penn a 55-50 lead with nine minutes remaining. Carter, who scored 21 points, put in his jumper with seconds to go.

Salters Wraps It Up

Although North Carolina never caught Penn after Price's 5 points in a row, Penn did not nail down the victory until James Salters, the smallest player in the doubleheader, sank a free throw with two seconds to go for a 3-point

Penn lead. That made meaningless Pete Budko's dunk shot at the buzzer.

In the second game, Duke's Mike Gminski took a 30-foot shot at the buzzer that bounced off the rim.

Carnesecca admitted he was scared when the ball sailed toward the basket on Duke's last, long shot. But he said he was more worried going into the game about what Gminski, Duke's strong 6-11 center, might do to his team.

"We had to play zone because if we went man-to-man Gminski would have fouled out everyone — including my team manager," Carnesecca said.

McKoy, however, said he took advantage of some of Gminski's loose defense in the second half to hit regularly from as far out as the top of the key.

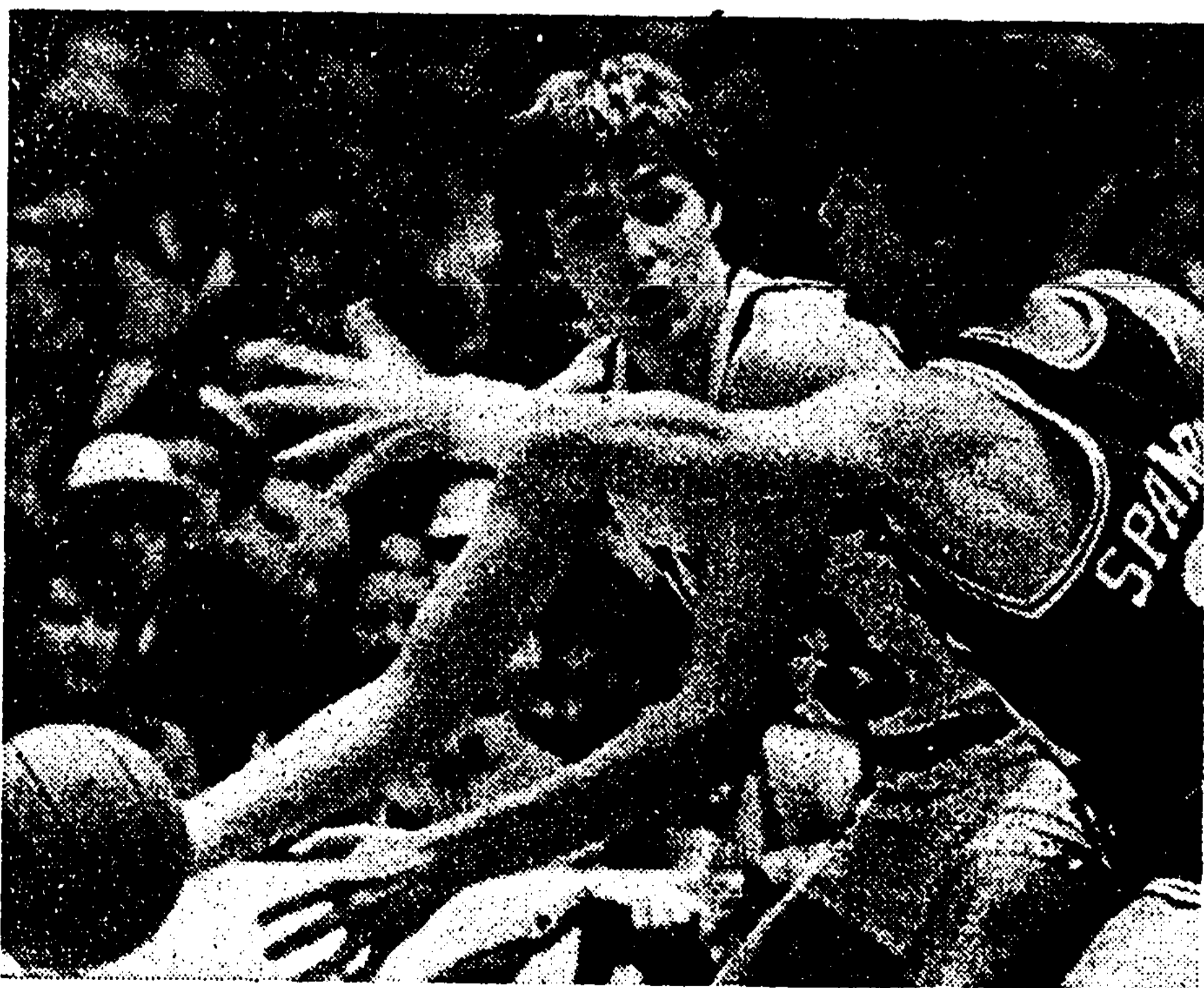
'Felt I Could Make Them'

McKoy, who usually gets his points from the low post or under the basket, hit four baskets at 12 to 18 feet away in the middle of the second half. "Coach really doesn't want me shooting out there," the big sophomore said, "but Gminski gave me those shots by falling back when I got the ball. So I felt I could make them and I decided to take those shots."

Before today's second-round games, a member of the N.C.A.A. Basketball Committee said that last Sunday, when the nine-man committee picked the 40-team field for this tournament, St. John's was the last team to get into the tourney. He said it came down to St. John's or Furman, and the Redmen got the bid.

There was joy for Penn, too. "This has to be one of the greatest feelings I ever experienced in my life," said Price. "And we come from the so-called weak Ivy League."

Bob Weinbauer, who is in his second season as the head coach at Penn, said, "We absolutely fear no one."



St. John's Frank Gilroy, left, eluding Duke's Jim Spanarkel to complete pass

The New York Times

Published: March 12, 1979

Copyright © The New York Times