

Fresno State, DePaul win; NIT title game Wednesday

United Press International
NEW YORK — Fresno State came to Madison Square Garden Monday night with two objectives: to advance to the National Invitation Tournament finals and to gain respect.

The Bulldogs' impressive 86-62 victory over Wake Forest in Monday Night's NIT semifinal accomplished the first goal. National recognition might have to wait, however, until Fresno State battles DePaul, a 68-58 winner over Nebraska in the other semifinal.

The NIT's 46th championship game is Wednesday at 9 p.m. EST.

DePaul is obviously the better-known of the finalists. Coach Ray Meyer's Blue Demons are in their third NIT final (the first since winning the title in 1945),

while Fresno State is playing in its first NIT.

"We want the country to know where Fresno State is," the Bulldogs' Bernard Thompson said. "We lost seven seniors last year and this was supposed to be a rebuilding year, but we got it together in January and we really came on."

Forwards Ron Anderson and Thompson provided a strong inside game that lifted the Bulldogs, who out-rebounded Wake Forest 36-22 and shot 67 percent from the field.

Fresno State, 24-10, lived up to its defensive reputation by hounding Wake Forest, 20-12, from the start. Anderson, Thompson and center Desi Barmore each scored 6 points as the Bulldogs moved to an 18-7 lead and never lost control of the

game.

Anderson, a 6-foot-7-inch junior, and Thompson, a 6-foot-6-inch junior, scored 10 points apiece as Fresno State moved to a 38-24 halftime lead. A 13-2 spurt midway through the second half gave the Bulldogs a 59-36 advantage and the Deacons never came within 19 points.

Barmore scored 13 points and tied Anderson for the team lead with 7 rebounds.

Wake Forest got 16 points from Delaney Rudd and Anthony Teachey added 14.

DePaul, 21-11, bounced the Cornhuskers despite shooting 37 percent and losing its high scorer when Tony Jackson fouled out with 7:25 left after scoring 17 points.

"I thought we didn't play as

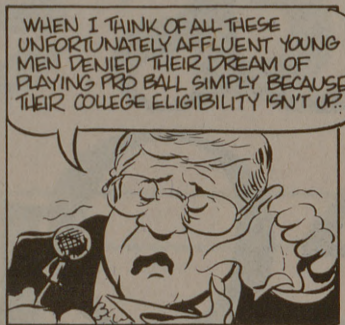
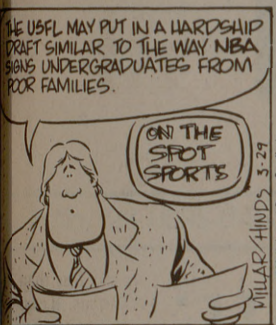
well as we normally do but you have to credit Nebraska's defense for that," the 69-year-old Meyer said. "They played us very well and took us out of our offense. Sometimes I thought we couldn't throw the ball in the ocean if we were standing on the beach."

DePaul hit only 21-of-56 shots from the floor but Nebraska did even worse with 22-of-62 shooting.

Center Dave Hoppen scored all 15 of his points in the second half as the Cornhuskers came back from a 36-31 halftime deficit to tie the game 52-52 with 8:39 left.

Jackson, who had 16 points at halftime, fouled out with DePaul leading 56-52.

BANK McNAMARA



by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds

Brown

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team, which was the first ever to go undefeated (12-0) in District 14-5A play. One of those games, he said, was a victory over Houston Yates in December.

"We had never beaten a giant as far as basketball goes — Yates, Kashmere, Wheatley," Brown said. "We've been playing them ever since I came here and we've been beaten every time by one or two points. But we'd never been beaten any of them."

"When we won that tournament and beat Yates by 15, our guys knew we could play. And that gave us a little bit of confidence when we did play stronger teams in the playoffs."

Another key game, he said, came when the Vikings played miserably but still managed to defeat Round Rock Westwood in double overtime by two points in an early district game.

"We really played badly," Brown said. "I tried everything to get the players motivated, but nothing worked. We were very fortunate to win by two points, but from that point on, we had to make a commitment."

"So we billed the next game — against Temple — as the biggest game of the year for us. And I really believe that it was, because we had to make a decision as to whether we were going to play or just go through the motions. We blew Temple out by 26 points in that game."

"So we went on and kept winning," he said, "but we didn't really start dominating until we got into the playoffs. We just sort of caught fire."

By using the word "dominating," Brown speaks of the following playoff victories en route to the state crown: Bryan 55, Longview 53; Bryan 66, Klein Forest 43; Bryan 63, Richardson 59; Bryan 73, Dallas Kimball 67; Bryan 64, San Antonio Sam Houston 63, and Bryan 71, Fort Worth Paschal 54.

"A lot of people didn't think we could win, but our players believed we could and so did I," Brown said. "I thought going into the season we might have had a little more talent this year

than we did last year. But I just had to try to get them to play together as a team."

"We came around and found the right combination. We got hot at the right time. We tried to peak at the right time, too. There are usually two peaks in a season: we play well at one time, we have a valley and then we play well again. Fortunately, we found our second peak at the

second team. No Vikings made the third team."

But Brown says he's not thinking about honors. He's looking toward next season. District coaches, again voting before the start of the state playoffs, chose Bryan to finish second behind Killeen in next year's 14-5A race. The Vikings will have to search for new faces, however, since Brown loses



Bryan High basketball coach Larry Brown

right time."

Now that the championship trophy has been brought to Bryan High, Brown is having trouble understanding the all-district and all-state teams recently announced. And he may have a point.

The first-team all-district selections, made by way of a vote of District 14-5A coaches before the start of the playoffs, included only one Bryan player — Mitchell Chambers, Bernstine and Bradsher made second team, but it took a second vote of the coaches — brought about upon the insistence of Brown — to get Bradsher and Bernstine on that squad.

To add more insult to injury, the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches' all-state first team didn't have a Bryan player listed. Mitchell, a junior, made

Bernstine, Chambers and Dickson to graduation.

Brown, who teaches four classes in addition to coaching the Vikings, says he'd like to stay in the high school ranks.

"I like the high school level," he said. "I think we're going to get good athletes here every year, our kids are going to work hard and we're going to be successful. We may not win state every year, but we're going to be successful. I had a couple of opportunities to go into college coaching this past year, but I just don't know."

Forward chooses Arkansas

United Press International
LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Jay Crane, a 6-8, 190-pound forward from Haltom City High School, has made a verbal commitment to play basketball at the University of Arkansas, Razorback coach Eddie Sutton says.

Crane made the commitment to Bill Brown, Arkansas' assistant coach after Brown spoke at the school's athletic awards banquet and visited with Crane's family.

John Dickerson, Haltom City's head coach, said Crane had narrowed his choice to either Arkansas or the University of Texas but also had considered Vanderbilt, Utah and Kentucky.

Arkansas already has signed Hunter McDonald, a 6-3 guard from Leawood, Kan. McDonald signed during the NCAA's early signing period in November but Crane cannot sign until April 14, the official spring signing date.

The Razorbacks have at least two other scholarships available for next season and may receive an additional scholarship.

NBA strike may occur Saturday

United Press International
NEW YORK — Larry Fleisher says it's very simple — talking might prevent walking.

Talks aimed at averting a scheduled Saturday night walkout by National Basketball Association players resume today at an undisclosed New York location.

While Fleisher, executive director of the NBA Players Association, refuses comment on the status of the negotiations, he says, "It's positive if we talk." On Monday, the NBA announced that a three-hour session with the union was held Sunday. According to the league, Commissioner Larry O'Brien was part of the negotiating team.

If no agreement is reached by week's end, Fleisher said the walkout would take place after the conclusion of Saturday's eight-game slate — Golden State's 11:05 p.m. EST start against Kansas City in Oakland, Calif., would be the last game played. The regular season is scheduled to conclude April 17 with the playoffs beginning two days later.

The union has reportedly agreed to let management impose payroll caps on each team after next season if the owners are willing to establish a payroll minimum. Apparently the sticky point is the minimum amount to be paid out by each team for salaries.

Sunday's talks were the first since negotiations broke off last Thursday after only 20 minutes. Fleisher, angered by management's stance, maintained the league's bargaining stance was an attempt to eliminate free agency.

As the deadline nears, those around the league have begun preparing for a strike. "I don't care what side you're on, if anyone just thinks of the consequences they'd realize in a second a strike would be the height of stupidity," Boston Cel-

tic coach Bill Fitch said. "Nobody could possibly gain a blessed thing, even in the long run."

Fitch's boss, Celtic owner Harry Mangurian, is perplexed.

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