

Louisville's Ellison likes to get his hands 'dirty'

DALLAS (AP) — Pervis Ellison's favorite players are the rebounders — Buck Williams and Moses Malone — "the guys who do the dirty work." Ellison, the freshman hero in Louisville's 72-69 victory over top-ranked Duke for the NCAA basketball title Monday night, may not have to do as much of the dirty work next season.

With 6-foot-11 Barry Sumpter eligible again and Felton Spencer, a 7-1 highly regarded recruit, arriving, the slender 6-9 Ellison probably will be moved to forward to replace the graduating Billy Thompson. Louisville also loses starting guards Milt Wagner and Jeff Hall from the championship team.

Louisville's Denny Crum, who has coached the only team to win two championships in the 1980s, didn't figure on using Ellison at center this season.

"We didn't promise him he'd be starting but we told him he'd play a lot of minutes," Crum said. "We actually recruited him as a forward, but when Barry Sumpter became ineligible, we had to make the move."

Ellison, who had been averaging 12.8 points and 8.1 rebounds, scored 25 points on 10-of-14 shooting and grabbed 11 rebounds against Duke.

The 19-year-old native of New York, who grew up in Savannah, Ga., was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player. He became only the second freshman to win it, following Utah's Arnie Ferrin in 1944.

The last time a freshman had to step in at center for Crum, the Cardinals also won it all. That was in 1979-80 when 6-7 Rodney McCray replaced his injured brother, Scooter, early in the season.

Like McCray, Ellison, who is nicknamed "Never Nervous Pervis," played with the poise of a senior.

Ellison scored eight of Louisville's last 15 points and grabbed two key rebounds in the Cardinals'

comeback victory, which spoiled a season in which Duke ran up an NCAA record 37 wins. It also ended Duke's 21-game winning streak.

It took some tough defensive work on Duke's All-American guard Johnny Dawkins, who finished with 24 points but was contained late in the contest.

The Blue Devils, who had lost only to Atlantic Coast Conference rivals North Carolina and Georgia Tech this season, had managed to beat bigger front lines all season with



their team defense helping out 6-8 seniors Mark Alarie and Jay Bilas.

"When we talked about matchups before the game, I said we do have a height advantage at one spot," said Crum, who has guided teams to the Final Four in four of the last seven years.

"(Duke) had quickness advantages at the guards and they took advantage of those, and we took advantage of our height advantage with Pervis. I say we got the ball to Pervis in some crucial spots."

With Wagner and Hall unable to produce offensively, Ellison's contributions were vital as Louisville ran its record to 32-7 with its 17th straight win and 21st triumph over in the last 22 games.

Louisville, which trailed 37-34 at halftime and twice fell behind by six points, went ahead 66-65 on Thompson's goal with 2:47 left.

Then, with 41 seconds left, Ellison put in a rebound of Hall's missed shot for a 68-65 lead.

"Pervis got the rebound and stuck it back in — something that he has

done real well for us this year," Crum said.

After Ellison picked off the rebound of the missed shot by Duke's David Henderson, Alarie fouled Ellison With 27 seconds left. The freshman made both free throws for a 70-65 lead, enabling the Cardinals to withstand two late baskets by Bilas and Danny Ferry.

Duke went without a field goal for seven minutes as the Cardinals did a tight defensive job on Dawkins, who hurt them with 15 first-half points and early second-half shooting.

"We switched players on him," Crum explained, "Milt picked up his fourth foul not guarding Dawkins but helping on somebody else. We switched Jeff on him. Jeff was a little fresher. He hadn't had to dodge or guard him all game."

Louisville also put a box-and-one defense on Dawkins.

Crum said, "Both those things helped us because he's the one they go to down the stretch. If we were going to have somebody beat us, we decided it wouldn't be Dawkins."

It marked the third time that Duke reached the title game without winning.

Blue Devils Coach Mike Krzyzewski's team doesn't figure to be back for a while, since he loses four starting seniors — Dawkins, Alarie, Henderson and Bilas.

"(Louisville) tried to keep one fresh guy on me," Dawkins said. "I think they used three different players plus a box-and-one. But that opens avenues to other players. We had good shots, they just didn't fall."

Duke made only 40 percent from the field, while Louisville hit on 58 percent.

Joining Ellison and Dawkins on the All-Final Four team were Duke's Tommy Amaker and Alarie and Thompson.

Duke fans celebrate despite loss

DURHAM, N.C. (AP) — Even in defeat, Duke fans found something to celebrate.

The Blue Devils came home Tuesday without the national championship, but Duke fans masked their disappointment by thanking the team for achieving the most victories ever recorded in a season by a college basketball team.

Duke completed a 37-3 campaign Monday night with a 72-69 loss to Louisville in the NCAA championship game. The loss ended a 21-game winning streak. Coach Mike Krzyzewski said he found some consolation from the turnout of hundreds of fans, some hanging out of building windows, at the university quadrangle.

"I'm going to be coaching here for a while," Krzyzewski told the crowd, many waving blue and white balloons. "I can't promise you 37 wins in a season. My only wish is to always be able to have a group (of players) as special as this is."

"Our team is not a group of robots. They are real people. For 40 games, they've been the most consistent — and I think the best — team in the country."

Krzyzewski and his players thanked the fans for sticking with them through an 11-17 season three years ago and providing continuous and often creative

support. During the tournament, the vocal Blue Devil fans encouraged Navy to "abandon ship" and developed a bobbing gesture to hail Duke forward Johnny Dawkins.

"Whenever we came out in Cameron Indoor Stadium, you made me feel so good," Krzyzewski said. "You make me feel so good now."

Dawkins proved the fans' court-side antics hadn't been lost on the team when he and his teammates stood, extended their arms and began bobbing up and down toward the crowd as fans had often done when Dawkins was introduced or made a dunk.

"We had a great year, but you're No. 1 and we're somewhere up there," said Dawkins, who became Duke's all-time leading scorer this season.

Senior forward David Henderson, the most visibly discouraged member of the team, said it would take some time getting over the loss.

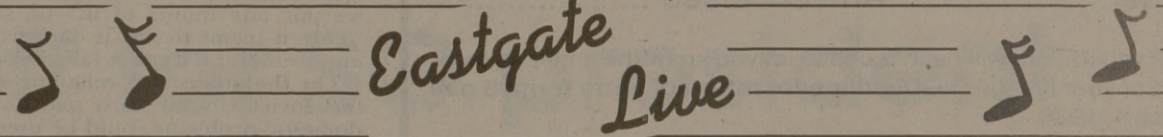
"I'm a true competitor — and last evening, it hurt like hell," Henderson said. "I wish I was one of those guys who could just continue his education forever. We made each other strong, and we've learned and we've grown. It makes coming home without really accomplishing what we wanted — it makes it a lot easier."

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