

Coaches prep teams for regional battles

Thompson hopes to start overdue vacation with trip to Seattle

WASHINGTON (AP) — Georgetown coach John Thompson hopes there's no rest for the weary, at least not anytime soon.

Thompson spent last spring and summer organizing and coaching the U.S. Olympic basketball team. Then, upon his return from Seoul, he barely had time to recover from jet lag before focusing his attention toward guiding the Hoyas toward their 12th straight 20-win season.

Thompson said he has been so busy he hasn't had time to think about being tired. For that matter, he has no desire to take a vacation anytime soon — because he's counting on clutching that familiar towel on the sideline until the conclusion of the NCAA tournament.

It's been a whirlwind year for the veteran coach, what with the disappointing loss to the Soviet Union in the Olympics, his much-ballyhooed protest against Proposition 42, the Hoyas' rise to No. 2 in the national rankings and now, a berth in the tournament's "sweet 16." Undaunted by the hectic pace, Thompson credits his altruistic players for helping keep him fresh.

"I'm tired in one sense, but I'm OK," he said. "I would have been more of a problem if this team had to deal with a lot of on and

off-the-court problems. But this has not been such a team."

Indeed, this year's edition of the Hoyas have turned out to be an ideal blend of youth and experience. First-year players Alonzo Mourning, Dikembe Mutombo and John Turner have meshed with seniors Charles Smith, Jaren Jackson, and Bobby Winston to form a squad that is eager to learn, anxious to win and, most of all, willing to heed their coach's every whim.

"These people have been sensible," Thompson said. "You get tired based upon your reaction to the team. If I was dealing with a bunch of pain in the necks, I'd have had problems.

"You get tired real quick when you have to worry about things other than basketball," Thompson added. "It's not just winning, either. I've had some teams that haven't won and still weren't a problem."

Thompson thought about taking a vacation early in the season, leaving control of the team to assistant coaches Craig Esherrick and Mike Riley, who ended up working in his place when he boy-cotted two games over Proposition 42. Ultimately, however, Thompson figured he owed his upperclassmen a complete effort.

Valvano claims Wolfpack needs hot shooting to conquer East

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — The number 55 is lucky for North Carolina State in the NCAA tournament, but Wolfpack coach Jim Valvano says a higher number will be even luckier in the East Regional.

"I said for us to beat people, we have to shoot 55 percent," Valvano said Tuesday. "We were fortunate against South Carolina and Iowa to do just that. Whether we can do that against a team like Georgetown, I don't know. But we're certainly going to have to do it."

Rodney Monroe's long-range shooting, which resulted in a career-high 40 points, helped the Wolfpack to a 102-96 victory over Iowa in a second-round game last Sunday at Providence, R.I. Monroe hit seven of 13 shots from 3-point range against Iowa, and hit four of six from beyond the 3-point line in an 81-66 victory over South Carolina.

N.C. State hit 63 percent of its shots against the Hawkeyes and 57 percent against the Gamecocks. The last two games have lifted the Wolfpack to 50 percent field goal accuracy for the season.

To match those performances of the first two rounds, Valvano has asked Monroe, Chris Corchiani and Brian Howard to sharpen their shooting eyes because they won't get much chance for layups against the Hoyas. Keeping pace with the Hoyas is the next key, especially since they allow opponents only 39.6 percent field-goal accuracy.

"We have to be very concerned with the score," Valvano said. "We must be in a position to win the game. We can't run up and down with Georgetown."

Lurking in the middle for Georgetown are Alonzo Mourning and reserve Dikembe Mutombo. Mourning has an NCAA-record 160 blocked shots and Dikembe 74, and that will limit people like Corchiani, who like to drive the lane and pass off for the easy basket.

"They're the most formidable team on the boards we've faced," Valvano said. "They can block shots with people from different countries.

"Mourning is precocious. In the Princeton game, he got all the big buckets and hit all the key free throws," Valvano said.

Then there's the constant pressure defense, led by guard Charles Smith, which has led to 521 turnovers, an average of 16 per game.

"They don't let you get into a rhythm. They can turn up the defensive pressure, and if they've got the lead, they can try and force you to take poor percentage shots," Valvano said. "Then they swat it away."

Valvano said if Mutombo and Mourning are blocking a lot of shots, it means the Wolfpack has strayed away from the game plan, which is to stay away from the middle.

Hillman, Edwards keyed strong late season finish for Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — The leadership of Joe Hillman and the unselfish talent of Jay Edwards have been the keys to a successful Indiana basketball season, Coach Bob Knight says.

Knight, named coach of the year Tuesday by the Big Ten Conference, is preparing his Hoosiers to play Seton Hall Thursday in the semifinals of the NCAA tournament's West Regional.

He traces the makings of Indiana's conference championship back to last spring, just before Hillman left Bloomington to join the Medford A's Class A baseball team for the summer.

"I brought Joe in and said, 'Tell me about Edwards,'" Knight recalled. "He said, 'Edwards is the best guy to play basketball with I've ever played with. You miss a shot, Edwards is the first guy to say, 'Joe, keep shooting.'"

"I may already have told Joe to quit shooting but Edwards tells him to keep shooting and Joe likes that. Joe said, 'You're open,

he gets you the ball, he rebounds. If we could just get him to go full tilt all the time.' But I've come to believe he goes full tilt a lot more than you'd think because he's an effortless player."

"With Joe's ability to lead and the feeling the kids have for the kind of player Edwards is and the things he can do, we just have a much stronger team psychologically or mentally than a year ago. I don't think it has a single thing to do with what I've done."

In first- and second-round NCAA tournament games in Tucson, the second-seeded Hoosiers shot .555 from the field, limited George Mason and Texas-El Paso to 44.5 shooting, outscored them 47-27 at the foul line, outrebounded them 78-57, and forced 30 turnovers.

Seton Hall, 28-6, is next for Indiana, 27-7. Top-seeded Arizona, 29-3, plays Nevada-Las Vegas, 27-7, in the other semifinal. The winners meet Saturday for a trip to the Final Four in Seattle.

Houston beginning talks with Moon

HOUSTON (AP) — Oilers General Manager Mike Holovak met with Warren Moon's agent in an attempt to sign the Pro Bowl quarterback.

Holovak and Moon's agent, attorney Leigh Steinberg, said an agreement could be reached this week. The two met for nearly two hours Monday during a break in the National Football League owners meetings in Palm Desert, Calif.

"The time to get something done is now," Steinberg told *The Houston Post*. "The deadline for veteran free-agency used to be April 15. Now with Plan B, it's April 1."

A veteran free-agent such as Moon usually can look forward to limited movement because of the NFL's hefty compensation rule.

But, Steinberg said, "if ever there was a player deserving of two first-round picks it would be a Pro Bowl starting quarterback."

Moon's five-year, \$5.5 million contract expired Feb. 1.

"The change in management allowed us to reevaluate the free-agent route," Steinberg said.

Holovak was named general manager

Dome teams get gag under new NFL rule

PALM DESERT, Calif. (AP) — NFL owners voted by the narrowest of margins Tuesday to cut down on what has become known as the "Dome-field advantage" by penalizing teams whose crowds keep the offense from running plays.

Under the new rule, which got the bare minimum 21 votes needed for new rules, referees will be authorized to take time outs from teams whose fans make enough noise to continually disrupt offenses.

That happens primarily in domes, although at least three teams that play in domes, Minneapolis, New Orleans and Detroit, voted for the change and proponents noted that crowds can also disrupt outdoor games.

The rule would not have been approved if Minnesota general manager Mike Lynn had been present. Lynn, an adamant foe of the proposal, had to leave the floor for a committee meeting and told Coach Jerry Burns to "vote his conscience."

Burns voted for the rule.

Proponents said the rule was necessary because crowds were becoming bigger factors than players.

"It had gotten to the point where it had affected competitive balance," said Miami coach Don Shula, chairman of the Competition Committee, which sponsored the rule.

The owners also approved unanimously a resolution that would impose penalties ranging from fines and suspension to loss of a draft choice against any team feigning injury.

Tex Schramm, the chairman of the Competition Committee, called the vote "an upset," because past attempts to curb crowd noise have failed. They have ranged from penalties to experiments with radios in helmets that would permit offensive teams to hear signals more clearly.

Under the new rule, if a referee concurs with a quarterback's determination that players other than wide receivers can't hear signals, he will ask the defensive captain to attempt to quiet the crowd. The referee will then make that announcement to the crowd.

If the noise continues, the referee will then announce to the crowd that any further noise will result in the home team losing a time out. If it is out of time outs, it will incur a 5-yard penalty.

Pro football writers give award to fired Landry

PALM DESERT, Calif. (AP) — Tom Landry, deposed as coach of the Dallas Cowboys last month in what became known as "the Saturday night" massacre, was honored Tuesday by the Professional Football Writers of America for his unstinting cooperation with the media in his 30 years as the Cowboys' coach.

In an unprecedented move, the PFWA unanimously voted to present Landry with the Jack Horrigan Award, given annually to the player or league or club official who demonstrates "a high quality of professionalism in style in helping the pro football writer do his or her job."

The 64-year-old Landry, the only coach the Cowboys had ever had, was summarily dismissed Feb. 25 after Arkansas oilman Jerry Jones purchased the team. Jones immediately installed his longtime friend Jimmy Johnson, the coach of the

University of Miami, as Landry's replacement.

The award is normally given in the summer in a mailed vote after nominees are selected.

But PFWA members meeting at the NFL owners' meetings felt the circumstances of Landry's dismissal and his cooperation over the years merited presenting the award immediately.

Other nominees for the award, included Jim Finks, general manager of the New Orleans Saints; Wellington Mara, owner of the New York Giants and George Young, the Giants' general manager; Dan Rooney, president of the Pittsburgh Steelers; nose tackle Fred Smerles of the Buffalo Bills; Cowboys president Tex Schramm; and Gary Wright, vice president for public relations of the Seattle Seahawks.

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