North Carolina wins national championship

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW ORLEANS — North Carolina capitalized on a last-second blunder by Michigan and gave Dean Smith his second national championship with a 77-71 victory over Michigan on Monday night.

The two titles in Smith's 32 years at North Carolina both came at the Superdome, and this one didn't have to wait for a last-minute jumper by Michael Jordan. That 1982 game also ended on a blunder — by Georgetown.

The Tar Heels won with a powerful inside game of Eric Montross and the 3-point shooting of Donald Williams as Michigan's Fab Five lost in the title game for the second consecutive year.

Smith becomes the fourth active coach to win two national championships. Indiana's Bob Knight has won three, while Louisville's Denny Crum and Mike Krzyzewski of Duke have each won two. Only John Wooden with 10 at UCLA, Adolph Rupp of Kentucky with four and Knight have won more than Smith, who was making his ninth appearance in a Final Four.

The Tar Heels (34-4) didn't wrap up the victory until Chris Webber, who had scored 23 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, made the mistake of calling a timeout the Wolverines didn't have.

North Carolina was leading 73-71 when Pat Sullivan missed the second of two free throws with 20 seconds left. Webber grabbed the rebound, charged up court and stopped in front of his bench with 11 seconds left to call a timeout. The Wolverines had already used their allotted three and a technical foul was called.

Williams, who finished with 25 points, made both free throws on the technical and he added two more when he was fouled on the ensuing possession for the final margin.

When the buzzer sounded the Tar Heels charged the court and mobbed Smith, the second-winningest coach of all time who had always been maligned for his Final Four failures.

The Tar Heels got the lead for good when Derrick Phelps scored on a layup with 3:12 left for a 68-67 lead. Jimmy King of Michigan threw up an air ball from 3-point range and the Tar Heels extended the lead to three when George Lynch scored in the lane with 2:10 left. Montross, who had 16 points, dunked with one minute left and it was the Tar Heels by six.

Smith's NCAA record improved to 55-23, the most tournament victories for a coach; Fisher dropped to a still-amazing 17-3. He led the Wolverines to the national championship as the interim head coach in 1989.

Michigan finished 5 for 15 from 3-point range, far from the 0-for-4 effort against Kentucky in the overtime semifinal.

Michigan's one-game run without any 3-pointers ended early, and three long jumpers on as many possessions started the Wolverines on the way to a 23-13 lead with 11:33 left in the half. Reserve Rob Pelinka hit two 3s to start the 19-4 run and Rose followed with another as Michigan scored 11 straight points.

Burton-Durham

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key points."

The women's team defeated the 24th ranked Demon Deacons of Wake Forest on their current 11 match streak against non-conference opponents. The Lady Aggies also go into their last two weeks of regular season matches carrying an almost perfect 4-1 record in the Southwest Conference.

The recent losing streak has not put a damper on the team's outlook of the rest of the season as Burton-Durham said that the team has retained cohesiveness.

"We hang out together, we party together, we go through good and bad together. Basically, we do everything together," Burton-Durham said of her rapport with her teammates.

She was very confident in her teammates as well as in herself that they can perform well in their last four matches and in the Conference Championships.

Burton-Durham hopes that her tennis career will continue after she leaves A&M.

"I'd like to go professional, possibly...hopefully," she said.

She also knows that before she can think about her aspirations, she has work to do before the season's end.

"(I must) improve my game. My goals are to work on both the mental and physical aspects of my game," she said.

Burton-Durham has no regrets about coming to Texas A&M for both her tennis and academic pursuits, however, she did admit that infrequent trips home and having her parents far away was saddening.

But she added that she wouldn't change a thing.

"(It's) the best choice I've ever made," she said.

Burton-Durham said that she wished women's tennis was more popular on campus.

"It doesn't get that much credit, but the publicity for a women's tennis match is not as large as some of the other events,

"We have to improve our self more and then maybe we'll get credit for our accomplishments," she said.

The women tennis team has upcoming matches against Utah on Thursday and then will try to tame the Cougars of Brigham Young University on Saturday.

Aggies

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standing," Johnson said. "He had control of all three of his pitches and stayed ahead in the count most of the time."

Johnson was also pleased with the play of freshman leftfielder Chad Alexander. Alexander had two home runs including a gram slam with 6 RBI's.

"I thought Chad had some really big hits," Johnson said. "It's really encourging because we think Chad has finally found his groove."

The Aggies will face Texas Tech this weekend at Olsen Field in a three game series.

Plumer

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That whole Democrat-Republican connection is mind boggling.

One pitcher who Texas has decided to hang on to is Nolan Ryan. A certified Texas legend, Ryan decided to hang up his spikes after his 27th season in the majors and await his induction into the Smithsonian Institution.

His place in history is unmatched. There are four areas that hall of fame voters look at when deciding whether a pitcher should make it into Cooperstown.

Victories, innings pitched, strikeouts and shutouts.

Nolan is 10th in victories with 319, sixth in innings pitched with 5,320, first in strikeouts with 5,668 and eighth in shutouts with 61. One last minor statistic is his seven no-hitters, easily another major league record.

From the fantastic to the ridiculous. Los Angeles is a team on the downward spiral. After spending millions of dollars on outfielders and boyhood chums Eric Davis and Darryl Strawberry, the Dodgers have become chumps.

But the most embarrassing thing is the shortstop position. Jose "With an E" Offerman continues to baffle fans and opponents alike with his fielding ineptitude. Last year alone he had 42 errors. The Dodgers attempted to trade him over the off season but found no takers.

Surprise, surprise.

Even the Rangers did not take him. That ought to be a tip-off right there.

While the Dodgers will be the dregs in the West, the penthouse probably will be occupied again by America's Team.

Not the Cowboys, but the Atlanta Braves. The ingredients are there: four potential 20-game winners, a productive offense led by outfielder David Justice and clubhouse leadership provided by third baseman Terry Pendelton.

The pitching staff is so good, it's almost sickening. The Braves already had John Smoltz, Steve Avery and Tom Glavine. For good measure, there was Pete Smith. Atlanta was not satisfied, though.

They brought in last year's Cy Young Award winner, former Chicago Cub Greg Maddux. But the starters can't pitch a complete game every time out and that is where trouble could develop.

The short relief situation is a mess. Two candidates have emerged: Mike Stanton and Mark Wohlers. The key is consistency with those two, which neither has. Too bad Francisco Cabrerra can't pitch.

Now, the moment everyone has been anxiously awaiting. Those world famous Plumer Predictions will be unveiled for the 1993 baseball season. Division winners will be announced and then a few individual awards.

N.L. West- Atlanta Braves. But the Houston Astros could be a surprise.

N.L. East- Montreal Expos. Some magazine actually picked the Philadelphia Phillies to win. Somebody has been seeing the Phillie Fanatic too much.

A.L. West- Texas Rangers. Oops, that was an April Fools' Day joke five days late. The Chicago White Sox are the team to beat.

A.L. East- Toronto Blue Jays. After them, who cares?

Cy Young Award- Smoltz wins it in the National League while Ryan wins it in the American League. It could happen.

Most Valuable Player- First baseman Frank Thomas snags it in the American League while fellow first sacker and San Diego Padre Fred McGriff is a surprise winner in the National League.

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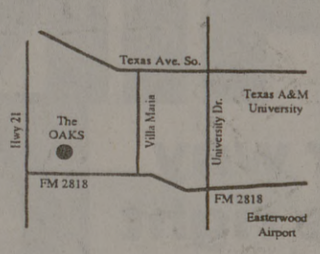

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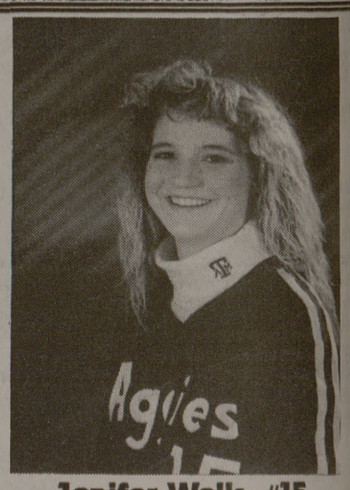

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