

**2005 NCAA Tournament: Second Round Preview/First Round Review
BY MATTHEW HATFIELD --- Saturday, March 19th, 2005**

Albuquerque Region:

Saturday --- #6Texas Tech - #3Gonzaga @ 1:10PM (EST)

Bob Knight's Texas Tech Red Raiders were definitely more impressive in their 78-66 first round win over 11th seeded UCLA than Gonzaga was in a 74-64 triumph past 14th seeded Winthrop, champions of the Big South conference. When Texas Tech's offense is at its best - passing well and moving without the basketball - they are tough to stop. After an early 8-0 lead on the Bruins, UCLA got back in the game, but not before TT went on an 8-2 run to end the half and go into the locker room up 37-31. For Texas Tech to win it's no secret guards Jay Jackson and Ronald Ross must perform at their best. Still, the Red Raiders will be in good shape if they are playing solidly on the defensive end of the floor, something they have struggled to do vs. the Big 12 teams at times.

Their backcourt is going to give Gonzaga's youthful backcourt of Derek Raivio, a sophomore, and Errol Knight trouble. Where I think Gonzaga has an edge, in fact a distinct one, is up front. Yes, Devonne Giles scored 16, on 7-8 shooting, and grabbed nine rebounds in his last game. What Mark Few has is a 25-30 point scorer on any given night in Adam Morrison and a double-double threat with Ronny Turiaf (16PPG 9.1RPG). Add in good play from J.P. Batista and Sean Mallon and the Zags can win. **Pick: Gonzaga fairly close. They won't run away and hide simply because they are not a three-point shooting team; more of a dribble drive/maneuver in the lane team. Zaga can be effective in a physical ball game if they're hitting their shots at the foul line, which they did not do against Winthrop all that well in the first half.**

Saturday --- #8 Pacific - #1 Washington @ 3:20PM (EST)

Winner of this game will get the winner of what ought to be a fantastic second round ball game between Georgia Tech and Louisville. Many like Pacific to pull the upset in this game simply because they have better size than a Washington team predicated on good, quick guard play. Washington was able to hold off the Montana Grizzlies due to the play of their bench, which outscored Larry Krystkowiak's team 35-19. Believe me, Lorenzo Romar knows and expects better overall play from his team to reach the Sweet 16.

Pacific, meanwhile, was real fortunate that Pittsburgh did not come in with good legs. Why? Well, the Panthers were only stuck in Sioux Falls for about 13 hours or so not long prior to game-day. It showed as the Tigers were able to capture a 6-0 lead, a 45-30 half-time lead and never relinquish it in a 79-71 victory. Pacific played sort of a 2-3 zone defense to get up on the Panthers. They were also fortunate Chris Taft, Carl Krasuer and the gang did not get going until the second half, and Chevon Troutman did not get going at all. They'll need another 49 collectively via Christian Maraker, David Doubley and Mike Webb. **Pick: Hey, don't take any of these picks to the banks, please. I'm going to go with the Tigers to pull the 'upset' simply because I do not believe Washington can rebound the ball well enough. Remember, Pacific has depth, too.**

Saturday --- ##7 West Virginia - #2 Wake Forest @ 8PM (EST)

Of all the #1 or #2 seeds, Wake Forest looked the shakiest in my opinion. And of all the #1 or #2 seeds, Wake was the only one to trail at intermission, down 27-24 to Chattanooga. They were down because of their ineffectiveness under the basket and shooting the basketball. The Demon Deacons were a ridiculous 2-15 from three-point land at the break and saw the Mocs hold advantages in the points in the paint as well as the rebounding (26-19) categories.

I'll tell you this much: if Skip Prosser's team does not shoot well and gets beat up inside from the opening tip, they will lose. Fact of the matter is the Mountaineers are not going to turn the ball over four times in their first four possessions to start the second half. WVA, who saw Creighton jump out to an early 10-0 lead and later let a 12-point lead get away from them, can cause havoc for Chris Paul, one of the Natl. POY candidates. Their 1-3-1 zone defense will force the ball out of Paul's hands and into the palms of Justin Gray and Taron Downey, two more than capable shooters. **Pick: Unless the pick-and-pop with Kevin Pittsnogle really has Wake scratching its head and searching for answers, we like the Demon Deacons. All Wake has to do is get the couple necessary stops on defense, get to the line where they are automatic, and take better outside shots and they'll be fine.**

We don't have much time left..... the clock is running down..... better get these last shots up quickly.....

Austin Region:

Saturday --- #6 Utah - #3 Oklahoma @ 3:40PM (EST)

For 20 minutes of play I was not impressed with Oklahoma as they barely led upstart Niagara. In the second half the Purple Eagles just ran out of gas and you could see their collapse coming. The beneficiaries were Drew Lavender (16Pts. 3Ast. 3Stl.) and double-double man, sophomore Tahj Gray (13Pts. 13Reb.).

I personally did not think Utah was a great defensive coming in to the game and they did not look like they were playing great defense. However, against college basketball's top free-shooting team statistically (UTEP), they were able to counter speed and quickness with size and rebounding. Okay, they out-rebounded Doc Sadler's Miners by 13, yet Utah did not play its sharpest basketball. The Utes, led by 24 points, 11 rebounds and four blocks from Andrew Bogut, turned the ball over 17 times and made only 25% of their 24 three-point attempts. **Pick: Gray and Kevin Bookout are two players Kelvin Sampson can turn to against Bogut. Two is better than one right? Wrong. Conventional wisdom says take the better seed, but how did that work out with Syracuse and Kansas? Not so good... so I think some of these teams that come out a little on the hesitant side like Utah fix things in the second round. Utes by 5!**



Oklahoma Head Coach Kelvin Sampson calls Terrell Everett (shown pictured) his 'jack-of-all trades' guy for the Sooners. (ScoutHoops.com).

Saturday --- #7 Cincinnati - #2 Kentucky @ 8:10PM (EST)

Seems like weeks since Kentucky last played right? Actually, they should come out pretty well rested and fresh against Cincinnati, an intense, aggressive, man-you-up on defense ball club. They play with a certain meanness and it embodies their Head Coach - Bob Huggins. Jason Maxiell will have to keep the blocks, rebounds and slams coming vs. Chuck Hayes and co. Cincy's defense was able to hold Iowa to 1-11 shooting from the start, but that's just because Iowa is an even weaker shooting team than they already are without Pierre Pierce right?

Kentucky shoots a little bit better, but not much better, and can find it easier to get to the rim with PG Rajon Rondo setting everyone up. If Cincinnati is knocking down their perimeter shots they are a dangerous team. This marks the first game between these two schools in nearly a decade. **Pick: By the way, Cincinnati started 1-5 shooting the first three minutes themselves. KY will keep the turnovers down, defend stingy too and get Hayes face-the-basket looks/touches. We like Kentucky to win by 7-11 points.**

Chicago Region:

Saturday --- #12 Wisconsin-Milwaukee - #4 Boston College @ 5:30PM (EST)

How 'bout the job Bruce Pearl and Wisconsin-Milwaukee did Thursday against an Alabama team that made the Elite Eight one year ago? Okay, so Kansas, also a participant in the 2004 Elite Eight, lost to Bucknell, big deal. Pearl's Panthers were able to take Alabama out of what they like to do by hitting three-point shots with no fear. They came right at Bama with aggression, full court pressing and even got some good play down on the low block vs. the Tide. Again, when you go 10-16 from three-point land in the first half you generally are going to be on top not only at intermission, but also when the game is done.

Ed McCants and Joah Tucker each scored 21 in the win..... doubt they will do it again. BC has a one-two punch just as good if not better in Craig Smith and Jared Dudley. Plus, the Eagles bench, mainly consisting of Jermaine Watson, (13Pts. vs. Penn) is pretty steady. **Pick: Basketball is a game of runs and field goal %. Wisconsin-Milwaukee has no chance if their field goal percentage is low and they cannot get on runs. We like BC and Sean Marshall to have a marginally nice game.**

Saturday --- #9 Nevada - #1 Illinois @ 5:40PM (EST)

Two guys that get overlooked enormously for Nevada are Ramon Sessions and Mo Charlo. Sessions, a freshman, was in double-figures not long into the second half vs. Texas and finished with 11. Charlo added 12 for the Wolf Pack, who overcame constant defensive switches by the Longhorns and 3-16 shooting behind the arc to win 61-57.

Of course, we know Illinois did not shoot their best versus a fairly good Fairleigh Dickinson team that kept it fairly close. Sounds fairly fair right? Anyway, the Illini have to work on these two things: not getting out in transition off a miss to quick and get rebounds off misses by anybody **and** play better than average defense because this team has a larger enrollment than 5,080 and if you don't come to play you won't be playing anymore. **Pick: Ball screens and baseline stagers should get Luther Head open and Roger Powell, the ideal college forward, will play better for 30+ minutes. Man or zone against Nick Fazekas and Nevada? Man was more effective for Texas in the second half so I do not see the Illini changing much defensively. Illini win nicely.**

Saturday --- #11 UAB - #3 Arizona @ 5:50PM (EST)

Looking for another 'wild' and stunning upset? UAB is the team to look at as they just demolished LSU for about 30 minutes. Marvett McDonald scored 21 points and hit five 3's for the victorious Blazers, who made eight steals and used them to score easy buckets in the transition. Zona can score the basketball, too. This definitely has the makings of a 90-100 point game since Washington and UAB both scored in the 100's last year when they met in the first round. Whoever wins will have done it on defense you would think. Channing Frye did not get involved in the first half like he did in the second half against Utah State. They must get Frye and Salim Stoudmire their looks early and often. Utah State, like LSU, saw turnovers take their effect in the second half. Arizona's great athletic ability may allow them to handle UAB's traps on defense.

Pick: Both teams want an up-tempo style of play, can initiate contact (especially UAB's Demario Eddins - one of the best in America at doing that) and can put the ball the peach basket. UAB can and did pull the upset last season. Two in a row in this year's tourney? Not likely I think. Take Zona to get those breakaway dunks, lay-ups and bank shots to win something like 91-82.



Iowa State sophomore guard Curtis Stinson controls one of the smoothest handles in all of college basketball. The future pro, who had 30 vs. Virginia and 29 vs. Kansas earlier in the season, is a big reason why the Cyclones' 2-3 zone trapping/pressuring defenses are successful. (Getty Images)