

Arrest Made In Stabbing Of Fla. International Football Player

BY TIM REYNOLDS
AP Sports Writer

Kendall Berry was going to be one of the featured running backs in a FIU football scrimmage on Saturday. The 22-year-old was so excited he spent some of his final hours begging people to come to Miami and watch.

There's no scrimmage now. For Berry, there will never be another. Leaving a football team in mourning and a university in stunned disbelief, Berry was remembered Friday as a "tireless worker" and "great person," one day after he was fatally stabbed in an argument outside the front doors of the school's student recreation center.

A frantic 24-hour search for a suspect ended Friday night, when police said 22-year-old Quentin Rashad Wyche turned himself in. Later, police said Wyche would be charged with second-degree murder and held without bond.

Wyche was in training camp with FIU's football team last summer, though his name does not appear on the team's 2009 roster.

"Kendall had an infectious personality," FIU football coach Mario Cristobal said Friday before the arrest was announced. "He was loved and respected by everyone who had the privilege of knowing him. It was truly an honor to have known and coached Kendall. It's a shame to lose such a young life to an act of senseless violence."

Investigators said Berry and Wyche got into a "verbal dispute" and Wyche pulled out an unknown sharp object and stabbed Berry. It was unclear what the dispute was about.

Wyche was in custody Friday night and it was not immediately known if he had an attorney.

Wyche's arrest ended a day where the FIU community was on high alert. Increased security for students and grief assistance were available, and Berry's football teammates were meeting with counselors. Students living in residence halls were advised to keep doors locked, and any person at the university was offered protective escorting if desired.

"Our hearts are heavy," a somber FIU president Mark B. Rosenberg said in a video statement Friday morning, adding

that the school "will not rest" until Berry's attacker was found.

Berry will be remembered in a "celebration of life" at FIU's basketball arena on Monday afternoon.

"The FIU football team and FIU community suffered a tremendous loss. ... We will come together and help each other overcome this tragedy," Cristobal said.

The campus opened as usual Friday and classes and other events took place as scheduled. The rec center was closed until noon, and reminders of the crime — police tape stuffed into a trash can, an orange "X" spray-painted on the ground — were left behind near the front doors.

Spring football, which was to conclude Wednesday, is postponed indefinitely. Those who knew Berry best said it wasn't like him to be caught in a heated situation.

"Last night, his grief-stricken mother described Kendall as a negotiator, not a fighter," Rosenberg said Friday.

Bill Buldini remembered Berry the same way.

Buldini was Berry's high school coach and remained in close contact with him during his college years. Buldini got a call

from Berry on Wednesday night, inviting him to come see Saturday's practice at FIU.

"To talk about him as a football player would underscore him," Buldini told The Associated Press. "As great as a player as he was for us, he was a great person. He was a good kid. Never had any problems with Kendall. Never got in any trouble. I used to tell kids, if you were looking for a role model, look at Kendall Berry."

FIU student Freddy Chica, 23, said he was inside the rec center Thursday night when he noticed a commotion. Shortly afterward, he said he saw Berry drop to the ground in a chaotic scene. Chica said he saw a man check Berry for a pulse and start CPR, then saw another person begin resuscitation attempts. He said he also saw paramedics arrive on the scene.

"When they ripped his shirt off, I noticed that the shirt was full of blood," Chica said.

When paramedics put Berry on the stretcher, his hands fell to the side and his head moved sideways, Chica said. "I can't get that picture out of my head," he added.

Berry had 164 all-purpose yards in limited use as a freshman in 2007, appearing in

all 12 FIU games that season. He sat out the 2008 season with a knee injury and then had some breakout moments in 2009, rushing for three touchdowns in a span of 13 minutes against Middle Tennessee on Nov. 7 and following that up with two more scores the following week in a win over North Texas.

Berry finished last season with seven touchdowns, six of them rushing.

"Terrible tragedy," Buldini said. "The Kendall Berry I know wouldn't go out and look for any trouble. He was excited. He wanted us to come down and see him play. He had graded out with the best grade of the running backs. He thought he was headed in the right direction."

Berry had seven brothers and sisters, FIU said.

"In our sorrow, we must come together," Rosenberg said in his message to the university community. "Our campus is safe. Now more than ever, you must tell this story. ... Even while we mourn Kendall and express our sympathy to his family and friends, we must not let this heinous crime overshadow the incredible track record for safety that we have."

Kelley Steps To Forefront NCAA For Top-Seeded Huskers

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LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Dominique Kelley isn't Nebraska's first or even second option on offense, but no one has played a bigger role in the Cornhuskers' two NCAA tournament wins.

Big 12 player of the year Kelsey Griffin attracts the fanfare for her prolific scoring. Yvonne Turner has a well-earned reputation for her 3-point shooting. Cory Montgomery is the inside-outside threat. Lindsey Moore is the dependable point guard.

Kelley? She just does what needs to be done, when it needs to be done.

"With our balance, 'Neek' is someone who gets overshadowed by some other players," coach Connie Yori said Friday. "She's a very capable scorer, and there are certain times we need her to be aggressive. Our focal point is Kelsey, but that means everybody else's defensive focal point is Kelsey, so we need other kids to step up. She's been more than willing to do that."

Kelley goes into Sunday's regional semifinal game against fourth-seeded Kentucky (27-7) coming off a career-high 22-point game in an 83-70 win over UCLA.

Kelley made 6 of 7 shots and 9 of 12 free throws in arguably her best game of the season. It came at the right time for a top-seeded Nebraska team (32-1) that struggled early against the Bruins. She hit a big 3 to give Nebraska a lead late in the first half, and then scored eight straight points after UCLA had pulled within 10 points with nine minutes left.

"The things I can bring to the team are my energy and emotion," Kelley said. "I just kind of got going the other day. I was real excited, and I want to play hard for people like Kelsey, Cory and 'Vonnie' who put in a lot of time to this program."

Kelley scored 11 points in the

Huskers' 83-44 rout of Northern Iowa in the first round. The Huskers let UNI stay close for 15 minutes before they wore down the Panthers.

Kelley said she's not overly concerned about the slow starts the past two games.

"We're a No. 1 seed and we've had this target on our back all season," she said. "We've been saying all year that everybody is giving us their best shot. For the most part our team has done a good job of staying poised, sticking together and not separating. It's nothing we haven't seen since the beginning of Big 12 play."

But the competition gets tougher and the stakes higher now.

"Henceforth, we're not going to be able to have an eight- or 10-minute period of the game where we're not playing on all cylinders," Yori said.

Yori is counting on Kelley to keep doing what she's doing to keep the Huskers going.

Kelley is a Lincoln native, but Yori never took for granted that she would sign with the hometown Huskers three years ago. Kelley was wooed by many Division I schools, and she was close to committing to Colorado. Yori said she never worked harder to recruit a player.

Yori simply loves Kelley's all-around game. She's third on the team in scoring, rebounding, steals and assists. She's a 78 percent free-throw shooter. She doesn't shoot the 3-pointer often, but she's good at it, hitting 42 percent (21 of 50).

"She does a lot of the little things right," Yori said. "She's aggressive, she gets to the foul line, she reads her teammates, she finds her teammates, she's a very good ball-handler. She fits perfectly into our system on both ends."

"Our community rallied around our team, our students rallied around these guys and that's because of their personalities," Jacobson said.

Michigan State has been the monument of the bracket under Izzo: 13 straight NCAA tournaments, seven trips to the round of 16, five Final Fours, a national title in 2000.

This has been a little tougher trip.

The resilient Spartans survived a whack-a-mole-like season filled with winning streaks, injuries, suspensions and benchings.

The latest downturn came in the second round, when Lucas ruptured his Achilles tendon against Maryland, leaving the Spartans without their scoring, assists and all-around leader.

Having Allen and forward Delvon Roe hampered by lingering injuries wasn't going to make it any easier.

"It's kind of hard when you lose your floor general," Michigan State forward Draymond Green said, referring to Lucas.

Northern Iowa took advantage early.

Grinding the game down with their smothering defense, the Panthers got the tempo they wanted: slow-and-not-so-easy.

Koch, previously quiet in the postseason, scored nine quick points and Northern Iowa held the Spartans to 7-of-22 shooting, going into halftime with a 29-22 lead on Ahelegbe's buzzer-beating jumper.

But the Spartans fought back.

Appearing more comfortable against Northern Iowa's swarming man defense, Michigan State hit six of its first seven shots during an opening 16-5 run, going up 38-34 on Roe's sky-high alley-oop off a sore knee.

Northern Iowa responded in typical fashion, setting up a foul-filled final 7 minutes that Michigan State grinded into another regional final appearance.

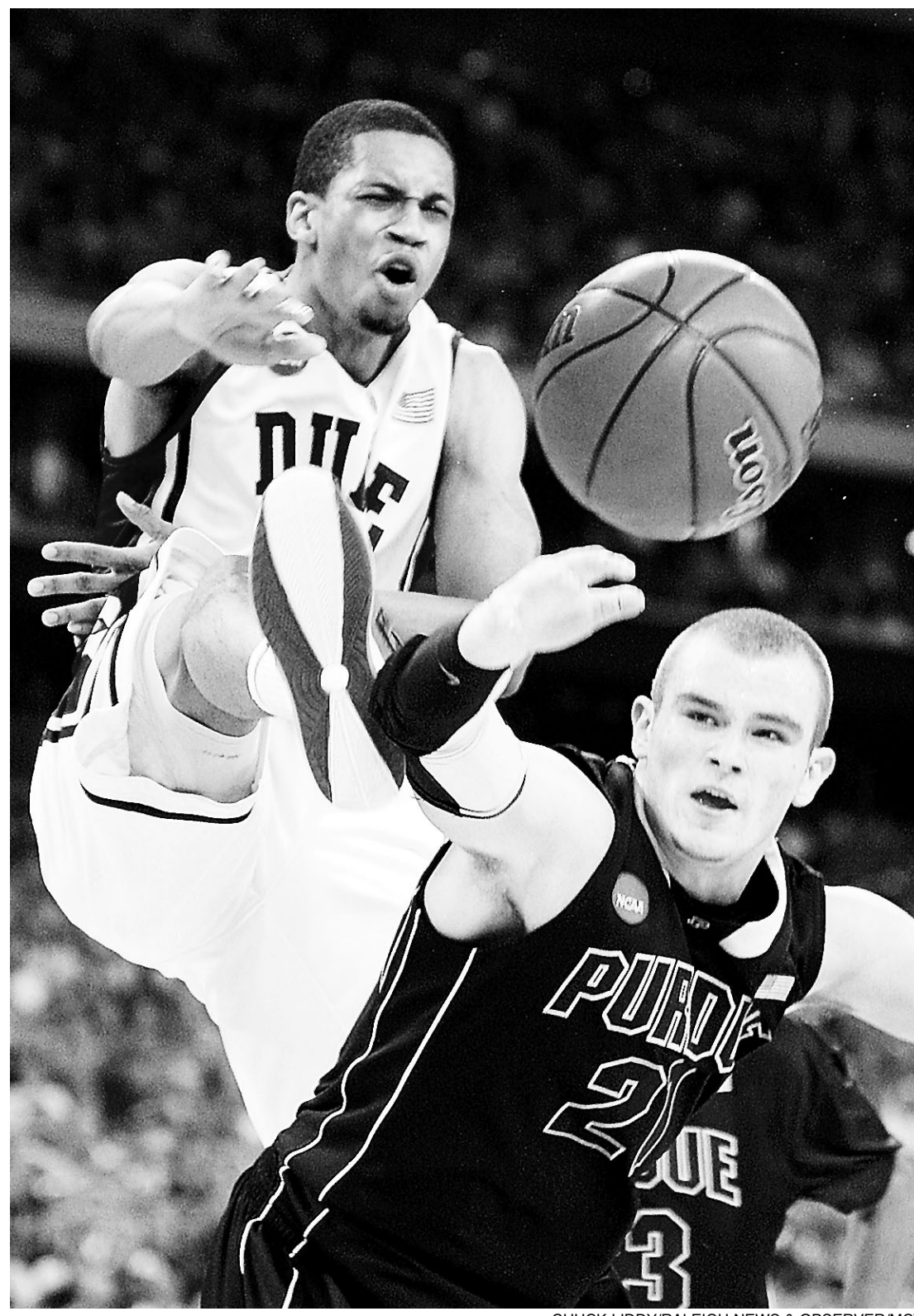
"I love March," Izzo said with a smile.

NO. 3 BAYLOR 72, NO. 10 SAINT MARY'S 49: HOUSTON (AP) — LaceDarius Dunn, Tawny Carter and Baylor had all the fun, ending what had been an entertaining NCAA tournament ride for Omar Samman and surprising Saint Mary's.

Dunn and Carter both made 3-pointers on their first shots and later combined for a highlight alley-oop dunk as Baylor rushed to a huge lead and romped in the South Regional semifinals.

The third-seeded Bears (28-7) led 46-17 at halftime and could begin looking ahead to Sunday, when they will play No. 1 seed Duke with a chance to reach their first Final Four since 1950, when there were only eight teams in the field.

More impressive for Baylor, it is another inspiring step in redemption nearly seven years after coach Scott Drew took over a pro-



CHUCK LIDDY/RALEIGH NEWS & OBSERVER/MCT

Lance Thomas of Duke (42), left, battles for a loose ball with D.J. Byrd of Purdue (21) in the first half at the NCAA South Regional on Friday, at Reliant Stadium in Houston, Texas.

gram reeling and recovering from a murder and scandal that shook the world's largest Baptist university like nothing in its history.

Dunn scored 23 points with four 3-pointers and Carter added 14 points for Baylor.

Samman, who had become a breakout star in the tournament with his dominating play in the first two rounds and the one-liners when talking or tweeting, finished with 15 points and nine rebounds for the 10th-seeded Gaels (28-6). He made only one of eight shots and had only three points at halftime.

NO. 6 TENNESSEE 76, NO. 2 OHIO STATE 78: ST. LOUIS (AP) — One Evan Turner is pretty good. Five Tennessee Volunteers are even better.

Brian Williams scored the go-ahead basket on a tip-in with 32 seconds left. Bobby Maze converted a pair of late free throws and J.P. Prince blocked a desperation 3-pointer at the buzzer Friday night, leading Tennessee past Ohio State 76-73 and into the NCAA tournament's round of eight for the first time.

Wayne Chism had 22 points — all but

four in the second half — and 11 rebounds for the sixth-seeded Volunteers (28-8), who pulled out a back-and-forth tussle in the Midwest Regional semifinals.

They'll play No. 5 seed Michigan State on Sunday for a spot in the Final Four.

Few expected this from the Vols considering where they were on Jan. 1. Tyler Smith, their leading scorer last season, was dismissed from the team and Williams, Cameron Tatum and Melvin Goins were suspended after a gun and marijuana were found during a traffic stop.

But nine days later, Tennessee stunned then-No. 1 Kansas, and the Vols emerged as an even stronger team. Now, they're one win from the Final Four.

Turner, a leading contender for national player of the year honors, scored 31 points — 21 in the second half. But the rest of the Buckeyes were just 3 of 16 from the field in the second half. Jon Diebler, so big for No. 2 seed Ohio State (29-8) in the first two rounds, shot 1 of 7 from 3-point range.

NO. 1 DUKE 70, NO. 4 PURDUE 57: HOUSTON (AP) — This is more like it for Coach K and Duke.

The top-seeded Blue Devils returned to the round of eight for the first time since 2004, with Kyle Singler and Jon Scheeyer helping them pull away in the second half against No. 4 Purdue.

Singler scored 24 points and Scheeyer added 18, snapping out of a shooting slump just in time to help Duke (32-5) clear a nagging hurdle that had some wondering if the mighty program was losing its edge.

The Blue Devils had lost in the round of 16 in three of the past five seasons, but now stand one victory from their 11th Final Four appearance under coach Mike Krzyzewski.

Brian Zoubek grabbed 14 rebounds and Duke dominated the undersized Boilermakers inside, as expected. The absence of injured forward Robbie Hummel finally caught up with Purdue (29-8), which lost in the regional semifinals for the second straight season.

AZTECS

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third-seeded West Virginia 64-55 to reach the round of 16 for the first time since 1985.

They are the first double-digit seed to go this far since Marist in 2007 as the No. 13 seed and just the 12th in 16 years.

Not bad for a program Burns came back five seasons ago to rebuild only to stumble out 0-16 in conference play her first season.

"We don't have anybody to emulate. We don't look to our juniors and seniors or the banners. The coaches try to give direction on how to be and how we try to be is tough and confident. We have aspired to do that and earn respect," Burns said.

San Diego State also has gotten better when it matters most.

The Aztecs averaged 27.5 free throws in each of their NCAA wins, and a team that came in ranked 241st nationally from outside the arc has hit 52 percent from 3-point range (13 of 25) through the first two games. Senior Quenese Davis, the MWC tournament MVP, scored 19 against West Virginia, and senior Jene Morris had 27 in that game.

"Two outstanding, outstanding guards, and they've been attacking and shooting the very best of their careers at this time," Duke coach Joanne P. McCallie said. "That's pretty nice timing from that standpoint. They're an exciting team. It's important we play good defense."

McCallie said she doesn't believe seeds matter at this point in the tournament, not with what is on the line for both teams.

"It doesn't take a lot to motivate. Our players know how good the teams are and are excited to play," she said.

Duke (29-5) will counter the Aztecs' backcourt with junior guard Jasmine Thomas, who has scored in

double figures 30 times this season. The Blue Devils are experienced with their Atlantic Coast Conference regular season and tournament titles, balanced with five players scoring at least seven points a game and tenacious on defense.

They rank second nationally with 13.3 steals per game and eighth in rebounding margin.

McCallie believes her Blue Devils learned well from their 60-52 win over LSU in the second round.

And these Blue Devils are pretty excited to be here too. They lost to Texas A&M 77-63 in their last regional semifinal in 2008 and to Rutgers 53-52 in 2007.

"It's a lot of fun to come back," Duke senior center Joy Cheek said. "We were here two years ago, and that's what I remember a lot, getting beaten by Texas A&M. We haven't been past this round, so it's going to be a lot of fun to hopefully get past San Diego State."

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