

Academics

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Give Education Secretary Arne Duncan an assist, too. The former Harvard basketball player has made it his annual mission to remind folks that coaches, as well as universities, need to be held accountable for performance in the classroom.

"Where folks take this seriously, and build it as part of their institutional culture, really good things happen to student-athletes," Duncan said Wednesday. "If folks want to play around the margins and not take it seriously, we can address that."

A lot of folks have played around the margins — and still do. Eight schools in this year's tournament fall below the minimum graduation rate standards set by the NCAA and face sanctions if they don't improve. One of them is UConn, which didn't get serious about improving its graduation rates until being hit with a postseason ban for next year that the university is currently appealing.

Still, the graduation numbers for both black and white players are 15 points higher than when Lapchick first started charting graduation rates a decade ago. There has been progress, even if the NCAA graduation standards can still be circumvented in various ways. Kentucky, for instance, remains in good standing on the academic performance watch even if just two of the eight freshmen and sophomores on John Calipari's team three years ago are still on the roster.

By next year, teams must graduate 50 percent of their players to be eligible for postseason play.

Coaches may argue otherwise, but that's not an unreasonable standard, especially when you consider the tutors and other academic help given to athletes.

The great thing about the NCAA tournament is that everyone has a chance to succeed.

We should ask for no less when it comes to players getting their degrees.

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Summit League Sets Record For Men's Basketball All-District Selections

ELMHURST, Ill. — The Summit League set a record with four National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) first team all-district selections and five honorees total. District 12 first teamers include Oakland's Reggie Hamilton, Oral Roberts' Dominique Morrison, South Dakota State's Nate Wolters and IUPUI's Alex Young while IPFW's Frank Gaines earned a second team nod.

The 240 student-athletes from 24 districts are eligible for the NABC Coaches' Division I All-America teams, to be announced on Tuesday, March 20.

The Summit League's previous high totals for first team selections was three in 2009-10 and the highest number of total honorees was four last season.

Hamilton leads the nation in scoring with 25.7 points per game and owns The Summit League record for points scored

in a season with 821. The senior guard leads The Summit League in three categories (scoring, free throw percentage and steals) and ranks among the NCAA leaders in three-point field goals per game (5th), free throw percentage (23rd), three-point field goal percentage (24th) and steals per game (36th).

Morrison, the league's Player of the Year, averages 20 points per game, fifth-best in The Summit League and 16th nationally. A second team NABC all-district selection last season, the senior forward recorded 16 20-point scoring performances and led Oral Roberts to the league's regular season title with a 17-1 record.

Wolters is the only player in the NCAA to average 20 points, six assists and five rebounds per game this season. He leads The Summit League with 6.0 assists per game, ranking 16th nation-

ally, and is second in the league in scoring (21.3 ppg) while playing eighth in the NCAA rankings. The junior guard was a second team NABC all-district pick a year ago and earlier this month earned MVP honors at The Summit League Basketball Championship after leading South Dakota State to its first league title and NCAA Tournament appearance.

Young, the NCAA's active career scoring leader with 2,286 points, ranks 12th nationally this season by averaging 20.4 points per game. A first team NABC all-district selection last year, Young is tied for the NCAA's third-highest scoring game of 2011-12 with a 43-point outburst in December.

Gaines, a junior forward, ranks ninth nationally with 21.2 points per game and is the first IPFW player to earn NABC all-district honors.



South Dakota State fans celebrate during the Summit League Tournament last week in Sioux Falls. The Jackrabbits earned the program's first-ever NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament berth, and will face Baylor tonight (Thursday) at 6:27 p.m.

Jacks

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The Bears pride themselves on Canadian Brady Heslip's long-range prowess, even using the moniker "Brady range" for his 3-pointers that he fires up from all over the court and usually well beyond the arc. He's made 84 of 193 attempts for a 43.5 percent clip, third-best in the nation.

The Jackrabbits might just be able to keep up with the Bears from long range because they have a roster full of sharpshooters like Heslip.

"Yeah, they've all got Brady range," Heslip said. "No, they can definitely really shoot the ball. They've got four guys over 40 percent, and their point guard's capable of making 3s, too. So we're just going to have to guard the three point-line better than we've guarded it all year."

Callahan led the Jackrabbits with 75 3-pointers, followed by Jordan Dykstra (51), Brayden Carlson (46), Chad White (45) and Wolters (32).

"They definitely have range," Baylor coach Scott Drew said. "Doesn't matter if it's the college line or NBA line, they can shoot from anywhere."

Dykstra sank 48.6 percent of his long-range jumpers, Carlson 46.9 percent, White 46.4 percent and Callahan 40.5 percent.

"Well, it's had to be" a big part of the Jackrabbits' offense, Nagy said. "We're not a huge team, but we do shoot the ball well. When we do shoot the ball well, then it really opens up the floor for Nate, our point guard, because it puts a lot of pressure on teams to have to take away the three. When they have to take away the three then Nate is able to get it."

"I've coached Nate for three years, and I haven't really seen anybody that can stay in front of him. But our guys around him are

going to have to play great, and Nate's going to have to trust those guys because he's become more and more the focus of teams."

The Bears are brimming with talent. The seniors on the team were part of the group that lost to eventual champion Duke in an NCAA regional final their sophomore season.

And they're part of a renaissance from scandal at the school, which has turned into a hotbed for recruiting across several sports with the successes of Robert Griffith III in football and Brittney Griner in women's hoops.

"They know who we are now. We can go to the local grocery store and they recognize you from pictures and stuff like that," Acy said. "So it's what our mindset was coming in, to try to put this program on the map. Everybody in every sport has done it, so it feels good to say you're a part of Baylor."

Even if Seth Davis dares to pick against them.

Minnesota, UNI Earn NIT Wins

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Rodney Williams tied his career high with 21 points, Austin Hollins had 16 and Minnesota beat La Salle 70-61 Wednesday night in the opening round of the NIT.

Andre Hollins added 13 points for the Golden Gophers (20-14), who play the winner between Miami and Valparaiso in the second round.

The Gophers closed with a 15-6 run to give coach Toby Smith his 100th win at the school. Only seven coaches in the program's history have won at least 100 games.

Earl Pettis scored 19 points for La Salle (21-13), while Ramon Galoway added 13 and Jerrell Wright 12. It was the first postseason game for the Explorers since they qualified for the NCAA tournament in 1992.

This was the 14th appearance for Minnesota in the NIT, including championships in 1993 and '98 — but the '98 title has since been vacated.

NORTHERN IOWA 67, SAINT JOSEPH'S 65: PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Seth Tuttle sank two free throws with 1.3 seconds left and finished with 23 points and 11 rebounds to lead Northern Iowa to a 67-65 win over Saint Joseph's on Wednesday night in the opening round of the NIT.

Marc Sonnen scored 15 points for the Panthers (20-13), who play at Drexel in the second round. The Dragons advanced with an 81-56 win over Central Florida.

Ronald Roberts Jr. tied the game for the Hawks (20-14) on a thunderous dunk with 7 seconds left to bring them back after they trailed most of the second half.

But Roberts fouled Tuttle with the game tied at 65. Hawks coach Phil Martelli pounded the scorer's table in frustration. Tuttle made the first and appeared to try and miss the second on purpose, but the ball rattled around and in for a 67-65 lead.

The Hawks turned the ball over on their last possession.

Carl Jones scored 24 points and C.J. Aiken had 16 for the Hawks. Halli Kanacevic grabbed 12 rebounds.

MIAMI 66, VALPARAISO 50: CORAL GABLES, Fla. (AP) — Rion Brown scored 18 points to lead Miami to a 66-50 win over Valparaiso on Wednesday night in the opening round of the NIT.

The Hurricanes stretched a four-point lead and finished the game with a 16-0 run over the final 3:41. Malcolm Grant and Shane Larkin keyed the run with consecutive 3-pointers.

Larkin scored 12 points and Trey McKinney

Jones finished with 10 for Miami (20-12). Ryan Broekhoff had 18 points and Richie Edwards added 16 for the Crusaders (22-12).

Miami advances to a second-round matchup Sunday against Minnesota, which beat La Salle 70-61.

The Hurricanes played without leading scorer Durand Scott, who began serving a six-game suspension after he was declared ineligible last week for receiving impermissible benefits. Scott also missed Friday's loss to Florida State in the Atlantic Coast Conference tournament.

DREXEL 81, CENTRAL FLORIDA 56: PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Frantz Massenat had 18 points and 14 assists, and Chris Fouch scored 19, as Drexel shook off the disappointment of not making the NCAA tournament by trouncing Central Florida, 81-56, in the first round of the NIT on Wednesday night.

The Dragons (28-6), out of the Colonial Athletic Association, were viewed as one of the big ger snubs from the NCAA field, and coach Brainer Flint made it a point this week to say that team would bounce back and "try to go out and win the NIT."

So far, so good.

Drexel, which set a school record for wins, scored the first nine points, and never looked back. The Dragons led, 37-24, at the half, and will now prepare to host Northern Iowa in the second round next week.

Keith Clanton led the Knights (22-11) with 14 points.

NCAA Men

VERMONT 71, LAMAR 59: DAYTON, Ohio (AP) — Maybe Vermont is on the verge of some memorable NCAA tournament moments to add to the one it most cherishes.

Four McGlynn came off the bench to score 18 points and Vermont grabbed an early lead and hung on to beat Lamar 71-59 on Wednesday night in a first-round game.

Matt Glass added 11 points, Sandro Carissimo 10 and Brian Voelkel had 12 rebounds to help the Catamounts earn a spot against top-seeded North Carolina on Friday in Greensboro, N.C.

The Catamounts (24-11) shot 50 percent from the field, blending an inside presence with McGlynn's touch on the perimeter.

Devon Lamb and Mike James each had 16 points for Lamar (23-12), which had won six in a row since first-year coach Pat Knight ripped his seniors after a loss in late February.

It was only Vermont's second NCAA win, but the first one was something. A 60-57 upset of fourth-seeded Syracuse by the 13th-seeded Catamounts in the first round of the 2005 tournament is considered the biggest victory in school history.

McGlynn, the only player in all of Division I to lead his team in scoring (12.0) without starting a game and yet playing in every game, provided punch to Vermont's offense.

Panthers

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For the Panthers to survive the Cyclones and stay on the evening side of the state bracket, they will need to bring the fire that has propelled them to nine straight victories.

"We are really good when we

have a lot of energy," Kleis said. "Early on, energy will not be a problem, but we have to continue to stay sharp and keep focused."

Tournament play begins today (Thursday) at 1 p.m. with top-seeded St. Thomas More (21-2) against Tri-Valley (16-7), followed by Dell Rapids (19-4) against Winner (19-4). Chamberlain (20-3) plays Aberdeen Roncalli (15-7) in the 7 p.m. contest.

The tournament runs through Saturday at Sioux Falls Arena.

Cougars

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from Gayville-Volin. Yet together, they provide the Cougars with added depth.

"Of our top eight kids, nobody started fewer than six games," Schoenefeld said. "We definitely have some good depth."

Not only that, Viborg-Hurley boasts one of the longest starting lineups in the state.

Kraning stands 6-foot-9, while Hora (6-5), Kludt (6-4), DeNeui (6-1) and Huether (5-11) have helped the Cougars continually give teams fits with their zone defense.

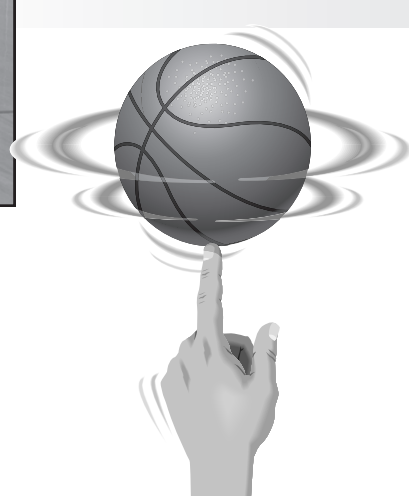
Good Luck at State, Cougars!



2012 Viborg-Hurley Boys Basketball Team

Front: Assistant Coach Tony Hauger, Brayden Meyers, Clay Jorgensen, Collin Sherard, Seth Andersen, Jack Huether, Tyler Novak, Trevor Jacobsen, Assistant Coach Justin Oswald. Back: Austin Bjerkaas, Andrew Jora, Zach Kraning, Ryne Kludt, Tyler Gerdes, Dennis DeNeui, Matt Jensen and Head Coach Galen Schoenefeld.

State "A" March 15-17 in Aberdeen, SD



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