

Sweet 16 Bound? Hardly Shocking

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Wichita State should know how to avoid distractions by now.

When the NCAA Tournament field was first set, all anybody wanted to talk about was the Shockers finally getting a shot at Kansas. Nobody wanted to mention that they first had to take care of Indiana just to give the game a chance of happening.

It came to pass, of course. And behind a stellar effort on both ends of the floor, the No. 7 seed Shockers beat the Jayhawks 78-65 on Sunday night, advancing to the Sweet 16.

Now, all anybody will talk about is a potential rematch with overall No. 1 seed Kentucky, the same team that ruined the Shockers' perfect season in the NCAA Tournament a year ago.

Except Wichita State first has to beat No. 3 seed Notre Dame.

"We're going to approach it the same way we did this time," Shockers star Fred VanVleet told The Associated Press. "We'll let y'all do all the looking ahead, anticipating."

Don't worry. There will be no shortage of it.

The Shockers (30-4) have played enough win-or-go-home games that they should be immune to looking ahead, though. VanVleet and fellow backcourt mates Ron Baker and Tekele Cotton were part of the team that advanced to the Final Four two years ago, beating No. 1 seed Gonzaga and second-seed Ohio State before falling to eventual national champion Louisville.

So even in the moments after an emotional victory over Kansas, a school that has refused to play the Shockers for years, VanVleet was al-



DAVID EULITT/KANSAS CITY STAR/TNS
Wichita State Shockers guard Ron Baker (31) salutes the Wichita State fans at the final buzzer of their 78-65 victory over the Kansas Jayhawks during the third round of the NCAA Tournament on Sunday in Omaha, Nebraska.

ready able to focus on the Fighting Irish.

"Listen, Notre Dame is a heck of a team," he said of the ACC Tournament champs. "We don't have time to overlook anybody. That's what teams do with us. We know how it feels."

The Shockers beat the Jayhawks

with the same formula that has carried them to so many wins under coach Gregg Marshall: They fought for every rebound, they pestered the Kansas guards in the half-court, and they executed flawlessly whenever they had the ball.

VanVleet had 17 points and six assists. Cotton poured in 19 points.

Baker had 12 points without a turnover in 37 minutes. Even unheralded guard Evan Wessel drained four 3-pointers and had 12 points to go with nine rebounds against the bigger, longer Jayhawks.

"We knew we could heat 'em up after free throws and a couple of dead balls, like we do most teams,"

Baker said. "We just got our pressure into the game, kind of slowed them up."

Kansas led by eight in the first half, but a 13-2 charge into the locker room had given the Shockers the lead. They never relinquished it in the final 20 minutes, giving their fans bragging rights over a school that had not played them since 1993.

"It's definitely one of the biggest wins I've been a part of. Definitely hits home, being a Wichita kid, growing up a Wichita State fan," Wessel said. "My family went to Wichita State. It's big for the community, and I'm just glad we got the win and we can move on."

The Shockers headed home after their game Sunday, but they won't have a whole lot of time to rest. Their matchup against Notre Dame in the Midwest Regional is Thursday night.

"Our coaches are already scouting them," freshman forward Shaq Morris said. "We didn't see them all year. Now that this game is over, that's what we're focused on."

Likewise, the Fighting Irish will surely be focusing on Wichita State. Even with the blue bloods from the Bluegrass State potentially looming, Notre Dame first must beat a program that has won at least 30 games three straight years, that started 35-0 last season and is headed to another Sweet 16 with many of the same players.

"It kind of sinks it," Marshall said. "You're one of the top 16 teams in the country at this point, with only an upside. That's the basement."

The next couple of weeks will determine the ceiling.

Lennon

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Also for Yankton, Emma Stewart was sixth in the triple jump (33-6), Adrienne Kusek was sixth in the shot put (35-11.5) and Tessier was sixth in the 60 hurdles (9.83).

While the Gazelles' marks were comparable to last week, Youmans was hoping to see more.

"We saw a lot of what we saw last week," he said. "Now week to week, we need to see improvement. The girls did a lot of good things, but did not make significant improvements."

Yankton is now off until Monday, April 6, when it travels to the South Dakota State Indoor. It will mark the first time the Bucks and Gazelles have competed in that new facility, which features a 300-meter track. (The Dakota-Dome track is 200 meters.)

"I'm excited as a coach, and I'm hoping the excitement I have will carry over to the kids," Youmans said. "The kids will have a lot of fun on a 300-meter track. Hopefully they put up some great times and distances."

Dakota Valley had a pair of



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D
Yankton's Lauren Graves takes the baton for her leg of the girls' medley relay at the Dan Lennon Invitational track and field meet on Monday at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

fourth place finishes on the girls' side, led by Sara Bohan's fourth place time in the 60-meter hurdles. She also placed eighth in the long jump (15-7.75) and teamed with Olivia Ohm, Alyssa Johnson and Marisa Schulz for a fourth place finish in the medley relay (4:29.93).

The Vermillion girls were

led by a seventh place finish from Maddie Lavin in the 3200 (12:22.16). She also anchored the Tanager girls to a seventh place finish in the 1600 relay (4:25.26).

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at twitter.com/JCimburek. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net

Pats Owner: LA Will Have 2 Teams Within A Year

PHOENIX (AP) — New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft says he believes the NFL will have two teams in the Los Angeles area within the next year.

"I don't think it's good that we've let a generation of fans, young kids, grow up without a team. It's not good for the NFL," Kraft said at the NFL owners' meetings in Phoenix. "I really believe within the next year we'll have two teams in this market. ... We have some real good options."

He didn't say which teams might wind up there, although speculation is the

Rams, Chargers and Raiders are prime candidates.

St. Louis owner Stan Kroenke has designed a Los Angeles-area stadium for two clubs — with two home locker rooms, identical sets of office space and two owners' suites.

Kroenke doesn't need to partner with a second team to finance the \$1.86 billion venue in Inglewood, but the league considers Los Angeles a two-team market and wants a stadium that could accommodate both, the Los Angeles Times reported.

His plan competes with one by the Chargers and

Raiders, who have announced plans for a \$1.7 billion stadium in suburban Carson if they don't get new stadiums in their current hometowns.

A team or teams moving to Los Angeles presumably would play at the Coliseum or Rose Bowl until a new stadium was built.

"There might just be one team, but I really think to support the financial commitment of doing the kind of stadium that's necessary in LA, you need the resources of two teams," Kraft said.

Maker Of
Louisville Slugger
Bats Selling
Brand To Wilson

BY BRUCE SCHREINER
Associated Press

Over a century of family ownership of Louisville Slugger bats is going ... going ... nearly gone.

The company that makes the iconic bats gripped by generations of ballplayers — from Babe Ruth to David Wright — announced a deal Monday to sell its Louisville Slugger brand to rival Wilson Sporting Goods Co. for \$70 million.

For 131 years, the family behind Hillerich & Bradshy Co. has supplied bats for games from the sandlots to the big leagues.

H&B CEO John A. Hillerich IV said keeping the bat business in family hands had been a dinner-time topic for years. But as the competition's lineup grew in recent years, the family became willing to listen to offers to acquire the brand.

"It's always been the family's desire to keep the brand independent and family owned," Hillerich told reporters. "It's worked extremely well for 131 years."

"But we've seen things change and we had to make a very tough decision. We'd rather the brand go on and have somebody else own it than potentially put it in jeopardy by keeping it in the family."

Hillerich is the great-grandson of John A. "Bud" Hillerich, who churned out the first Louisville Slugger bat in 1884 for a renowned baseball player in his day, Pete Brown-ing.



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"Farmer" by Larry Starck — one of the new 2015 RiverWalk sculptures.



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