

St. John's and Penn Win in East Regional

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RALEIGH, N.C., March 9 — In a complete reversal of fortunes for the two leading New York Metropolitan area college basketball teams, St. John's won its opening-round game in the National Collegiate Athletic Association tournament by beating Temple, 75-70, tonight and Iona lost its first-round game to Pennsylvania, 73-69.

St. John's was lucky to get a bid to the 41st annual N.C.A.A. championship after being soundly beaten by Iona six days ago in the final of the Eastern College Athletic Conference Met playoff. But the N.C.A.A. committee gave both Iona and St. John's places in the 40-team field, the largest in tournament history.

Lou Carnesecca, the St. John's coach, said after his team's big victory: "I must congratulate the men of the committee. They are very astute. Right now I'd like to kiss them."

St. John's Ends Jinx

St. John's, which "broke a jinx", according to Carnesecca, will meet Duke in the second round of the East regional and Penn will play North Carolina. The Tar Heels and the Blue Devils finished first and second in the recent Atlantic Coast Conference playoffs and received opening round byes.

Penn, which held a 12-point lead at halftime, never relinquished the lead, although the Gaels did get within a point with 6 minutes 43 seconds remain-

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ing in the game. Tony Price, named the Ivy League's outstanding player this season, had 27 points to lead the Quakers.

The St. John's triumph did much more than make up for a 1-point loss the Redmen suffered at the hands of Temple last Jan. 6 in the regular season. It also marked the first time St. John's has won a first-round game in the Redmen's last five appearances in the N.C.A.A. St. John's teams lost opening round games in 1973, 1976, 1977 and 1978.

"I want to relish this," Carnesecca said, refusing to look to Sunday's game. "We broke a jinx. Let me enjoy it just a while."

The East regional's second-round games will be played in Reynolds Coliseum at North Carolina State University, where St. John's and Penn won tonight before 12,000 fans.

McKoy Scores 22

Wayne McKoy, the 6-foot-8-inch sophomore, was the hero for St. John's as he scored 22 points and controlled the inside action during most of the second half. It was a big achievement for McKoy, who was soundly beaten by Iona's big man, Jeff Ruland, in the E.C.A.C. final last Saturday. Ruland scored 19 points and had 15 rebounds against Penn tonight.

Reggie Carter also had a spectacular game for the Redmen, scoring 20 points and guiding the team up court.

In a total team performance, St. John's put an end to Temple's 10-game winning streak. The Owls from Philadelphia, who had a 25-3 won-lost record and were ranked No. 13 in a wire-service poll going into the tournament, were slight favorites.

But after St. John's got a 4-point lead at halftime, the Redmen did let it go. Their season had been marked by losing leads in the second half. Not this time.

Temple, as usual, put up its zone defense against the Redmen right from the start. St. John's not only penetrated the zone but also got the ball to McKoy for inside baskets. Also, Carter drove for layups a couple of times that seemingly broke Temple's confidence in its defense.

On offense, Temple enjoys the high-speed game — if it can control the

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tempo. With Rick Reed, who holds Temple assist records, passing off for scores and hitting enough to be the team's high scorer this season, the Owls enjoyed racing.

But St. John's took the tempo away from them.

"If you let them control, they'll drive you right up the turnpike," Carnesecca said. "But it's a little different when you have the candy."

Walt Montford, Temple's husky senior center, posed a serious threat in the early going as he seemed to have the answer to beating McKoy inside. Montford got 14 points in the first half.

'Just Made Up My Mind'

McKoy said after the game: "I knew if he kept going like that he was going to make it tough on us. I just made up my mind to slow him down."

McKoy got control inside in the second half. Montford had only 8 points in the last 20 minutes for a total of 22, while McKoy had 12 of his 22 in the second half.

As time began running out, Temple went to trap defenses, sending two or three men after the player with the ball. St. John's handled the challenge well and, in fact, settled the issue off a Temple trap.

Leading by 2 points with 5½ minutes to go, Carter was pressured by a trap. That left McKoy open inside, and Carter fed him for an easy basket. Then Bernard Rencher drove for a layup that caused him to reinjure his left ankle.

Rencher had to be taken out, but Tom Calabrese came in and handled the ball well. Rencher suffered a sprained left ankle two weeks ago and hobbled through the E.C.A.C. playoffs. He will be hampered again Sunday.

St. John's next opponent, Duke, is also suffering from injuries as Bob Bender, a starting guard, underwent an emergency appendectomy last Saturday and Kenny Dennard, a starting forward, sprained an ankle Wednesday in practice.

Iona Makes It Close

Iona came close at the end, trailing Penn by only 2 points after Mike Palma hit on a 25-foot shot with 41 seconds to go. The Gaels from New Rochelle, N.Y., were playing a full-court press and putting pressure on the Ivy champions. Iona then forced a loose ball, and Ruland and Penn's Jim Salters dove for it and got tied up.

The result was a jump ball between the 6-10 Ruland and the 5-11 Quaker guard. It was no contest, and Ruland flipped the jump ball to Lester George.

The Gaels came up court with George passing off to Palma, who pumped twice from about 25 feet as if to take a shot over the Penn defense. But an official called Palma for traveling, and Penn got the ball with seven seconds to go. Iona then had to commit a foul, and Ken Hall sank two free throws for Penn and the final 4-point margin.

Iona lost, but at least it kept its enthusiastic and talkative young coach, Jim Valvano, who announced yesterday that he was remaining at Iona instead of accepting the Providence College head-coaching job. Valvano took over a losing Iona team four years ago and got the Gaels into their first N.C.A.A. tournament this year as Iona ended its season with a 23-6 record. Penn moved on with a 22-5 record, while St. John's was left at 19-10.

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