

Penn Defeats Princeton, 50-49, For Ivy Title and N.C.A.A. Spot

By GORDON S. WHITE Jr.

Special to The New York Times

EASTON, Pa., March 4 — James Salters hit an 18-foot jump shot from the right of the lane with 11 seconds to go to give Penn a 50-49 victory over Princeton tonight in their one-game playoff for the Ivy League basketball title. It also gave the Quakers the final berth in the 48-team National Collegiate Athletic Association tournament.

The 5-foot-11-inch senior guard from Hempstead, L.I., never saw the ball go through the hoop because he fell backward after his shot. But he heard the deafening noise from the Penn faithful in the capacity crowd of 3,400 at Kirby Field House on the campus of Lafayette College.

Then, as Salters was getting up off the floor, Princeton's Gary Knapp made a desperate driving shot that missed, assuring Penn of its ninth Ivy crown in the last 11 years. Princeton had no timeouts left, so Knapp had to take the shot.

The Quakers will meet Washington State, the third-place team in the Pacific-10 Conference, in the opening round of the National Collegiate tour-

namment at West Lafayette, Ind., Thursday night.

"We can beat anybody right now — anybody!" Salters said. "That was the greatest shot of my life, and we can beat anybody."

Penn and Princeton finished the regular eight-team Ivy League season last Saturday deadlocked for first place with 11 victories and three defeats each. That forced the Quakers and the Tigers to meet, according to league rules, in a one-game, winner-take-all match on a neutral court. It was the first such Ivy League basketball playoff since 1968, when Columbia beat Princeton for the title and N.C.A.A. berth.

Penn Last Year's Surprise

Princeton or Penn has won the Ivy League title for 17 of the last 18 seasons, with that Columbia playoff victory the lone exception. Salters's winning shot kept Penn more dominant as the Quakers have now won 10 Ivy titles in that span.

A year ago Penn won the Ivy League easily and became the surprise team of the National Collegiate tournament by

recording a string of upsets to reach the Final Four, or N.C.A.A. semifinal round. The Quakers finished fourth in the tournament but achieved much more than expected.

Pete Carril, Princeton's coach for the last 13 seasons, said: "I don't think they're as good as last year's Penn team, but nobody expected that team would do anything. They went to the semis."

Penn's 1978-79 team finished with 25 victories and seven losses. This season's team has an overall record of 16-11. Princeton finished at 15-15, the closest that Carril has come to having a losing season at Princeton.

Bob Weinhauer, in his third season as Penn's coach, was pleased about tonight's outcome. "For a change we saw the damn thing go in for us at the end," he said. "It's gone against us so many times in the last seconds. Salters has been our leader on and off the court, and it was fitting he got the winning shot like that after his man had made his shot."

Knapp, who tried so hard to grab victory from defeat just before the final buzzer, beat Salters with a drive down the middle of the lane for 2 points with 39 seconds to go. That basket, scored on

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United Press International

James Salters of Penn holding onto the rim as he took down the net after victory over Princeton.

The New York Times

Published: March 5, 1980

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a fine pass from Rich Simkus, gave Princeton a 49-48 lead at a time when Penn had not scored a basket in nearly three minutes.

Penn brought the ball up court to face, as always, the pesky Princeton zone. Working the ball around the perimeter from left to right and back again, Salters and Angelo Reynolds were hard pressed by the quick-handed Tigers. But the Penn guards did their job under pressure. As the clock ran down, Reynolds stood behind the key with obvious thoughts of taking a shot.

Reynolds, a sophomore, had scored from long range six times during the game, so a 21-foot shot was not that unlikely. But Salters, running to the weak side, momentarily got open closer to the basket. Reynolds flipped the ball to Salters, who took one step and fired.

Both Penn and Princeton are young teams. Besides Salters, a senior, the Quakers start two freshmen and two sophomores. The Tigers, meanwhile, worked much of the game with three freshmen in the lineup. Knapp was one of them and he got 14 points, tops for Princeton. Salters had 15 points.

Princeton's key freshman, however, is Simkus, the 6-8 center from Dix Hills, L. I. Without him, Princeton cannot do well inside. Tonight Simkus was forced to the bench with his fourth foul in the first minute of the second half. He played only 18 minutes.

Still, Princeton, using a zone all season even though Carril prefers man-to-man defenses, made Penn work hard for its shots. The Quakers hit 46 percent of their field-goal tries as opposed to a season mark of 45 percent. Princeton hit 41 percent.

The Princeton zone and its normal take-your-time style of offense had Penn going through long periods without field goals. The Quakers trailed, 10-2, before getting their first field goal after five and a half minutes of the game. Penn had another stretch of six minutes without a field goal in the first half.

However, Princeton went eight and a half minutes without a basket during one stage of the first half, and Knapp's driving layup with 39 seconds to go ended a three-and-a-half-minute scoreless draught for the Tigers.

The New York Times

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