

Villanova Set, NCAA Turns To City Fives

By CHUCK NEWMAN
Of The Inquirer Staff

A City Series Palestra showdown with the prize a trip to Columbia, S. C., is likely in the first round of the NCAA basketball tourney, opening March 7.

Villanova, one of 10 independents accepting bids to the NCAA on Tuesday, figures to meet either St. Joseph's or Temple, whichever survives the Middle Atlantic Conference playdowns.

The Hawks and Owls are heavily favored in semifinal games Friday and so are expected to meet for the MAC title and the right to meet the Wildcats. Villanova beat both in regular-season play.

NIAGARA VS. IVY CHAMP

The Villanova-MAC pairing was one of three announced in the East. In other pairings the Southern Conference winner (Davidson the choice) will meet fourth-ranked St. Bonaventure (19-1) at St. John's and Niagara (19-4) will battle the Ivy League winner at Princeton.

Penn can sew up the Ivy title Friday by beating Columbia at the Palestra.

In other NCAA pairings Jacksonville (20-1) will meet Ohio Valley champion Western Kentucky and Notre Dame (19-5) will play the Mid-American Conference winner (probably Ohio U.) in a double-header at Dayton.

MARQUETTE IRKED

At Provo, Utah, a double-header will pit Weber State (Big Sky Conference) against Long Beach State (21-3) and Utah State (18-5) against the Western Athletic Conference kingpin (Utah or Texas El Paso) and at Fort Worth, Tex. Houston (20-3) will oppose Dayton (17-7) and New Mexico State (21-2) will meet the Southwest Conference winner (likely Rice).

Dayton grabbed a berth when Marquette (19-3) dropped out in anger over being placed in the Midwest playdowns, away from its regular Mideast placement. Jacksonville and Notre Dame were picked as Mideast independents.

Villanova and Penn loom as regional finalists. The Wildcats (18-6) have been playing excellent ball of late and will rate the choice over any MCA team.

KRAFT 'OVERJOYED'

Penn, loser only to Purdue this season in racking up 23-1 log and seventh national ranking, will be favored over the Purple Eagles, making their first NCAA start after eight NIT appearances.

The winner of the Southern Conference-St. Bonaventure game will meet the Atlantic Coast Conference champion while the winners of the two other first-round games will also meet at Columbia. The ACC champion, if form holds, may be playing on its home court since South Carolina is the choice to represent the conference.

REVENGE MOTIVE

Wildcat Coach Jack Kraft is probably more amenable to playing in the NCAA now that the pairings have been announced. Kraft leaned heavily toward playing in the NIT but his players came to him Monday and told him they wanted to play in the NCAA.

"I'm overjoyed at playing

Continued on Page 25, Col. 2

Pairings For NCAA

Here are the NCAA Tournament pairings. The first-round games will be played March 7 and the second-round games March 12.

EASTERN REGIONAL

At St. John's: Southern Conference champ vs. St. Bonaventure (19-1). Winner faces AAC champion.

At Princeton: Ivy League champ vs. Niagara (19-4).

At Palestra: Villanova (17-6) vs. MAC champ. Winner faces Ivy League-Niagara winner.

MID-EAST REGIONAL

At Dayton: Mid-America champ vs. Notre Dame (19-5); Ohio Valley champ vs. Jacksonville (21-1). Winners play SEC and Big 10 champs, respectively.

MIDWEST REGIONAL

At TCU: Dayton (17-7) vs. Houston (20-3). Southwest champ vs. New Mexico State (21-2). Winners play Missouri Valley and Big Eight champs, respectively.

WESTERN REGIONAL

At Brigham Young: Long Beach State (21-3) vs. Big Sky champ; WAC champ vs. Utah State (18-5). Winners play UCLA and West Coast Conference champ, respectively.

McGuire Snubs NCAA, Plans To Enter NIT

MILWAUKEE, Wis., Feb. 24 (AP). — Marquette University's eighth-ranked Warriors will go to the National Invitation Tournament, coach Al McGuire said Tuesday, spurning a bid from the NCAA.

McGuire said the decision of the NCAA to place Marquette in the Midwest Regional was the basic factor in the Warriors' rejecting the National Collegiate Athletic Association bid.

STILL A PROBLEM

The NIT withheld official naming of the rest of its field until Wednesday.

"I am very disappointed," McGuire said. "Our heart was set on going to the NCAA."

"I still can't figure it out. We have the finest record of my tenure at Marquette—19-3."

McGuire, visibly upset over the decision, took verbal pokes at the NCAA committee that placed Marquette in the Midwest Regional instead of the Mideast.

JACKSONVILLE THERE

"We belong in Dayton, O.," he said. "That's all there is to it. I can't see their thinking."

Jacksonville, Fla., State, 20-1, and Notre Dame, 20-5, were selected for the Mideast Regional, which also includes the champions of the Big Ten and Southeast Conferences.

McGuire, whose last two teams have ben in NCAA post-

Continued on Page 25, Col. 3