

## UConn, Irish, Louisville, Miss St. Top Seeds In Women's NAAs



In this March 6 photo, Connecticut head coach Geno Auriemma gestures to his team during the first half of a game against South Florida in the American Athletic Conference tournament finals in Uncasville, Conn.

**BY DOUG FEINBERG**  
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP) — UConn is back in a familiar place — the No. 1 overall seed in the women's basketball NCAA Tournament. Joining the Huskies as top seeds are Notre Dame, Louisville and Mississippi State. The Huskies enter as the lone unbeaten team and will be vying for their 12th national championship. It's the ninth time that UConn has entered the NAAs undefeated, including last year when the Huskies went in as

the overwhelming favorite before their 111-game winning streak ended with a loss to Mississippi State in the Final Four. This year's Final Four is in Columbus, Ohio, and will take place on March 30. The national championship game is on Sunday, April 1. Defending national champion South Carolina and A'ja Wilson await as a possible Elite Eight matchup for UConn in the Albany Regional. The Gamecocks are the two-seed. "What can you do? You have to beat some pret-

ty good teams. Is it an impossible feat? Obviously not," South Carolina coach Dawn Staley said. "We saw that last year. If we're in the position where we have to play them, we're going to play them. We're going to give it our best shot and let the chips fall where they may." The Gamecocks lost by 25 at home against UConn on Feb. 1. Florida State and Georgia are the other top seeds in the Huskies' part of the bracket. "Brackets are brackets. There are good teams in every bracket," UConn

coach Geno Auriemma said. "There are great matchups in every bracket and it doesn't really matter at this stage where you're placed, what region, you're going to have to beat some really good teams. The schedule we play, I knew we'd get somebody two or three that we already played. We know that." UConn, which has been a No. 1 seed every year since 2007, opens up against 16-seed Saint Francis (Pennsylvania) on Saturday morning. All of the top four teams in each region

SEE SEEDS, PAGE 3B

## Pioneers Finish Strong, Place Eighth At Cape Fear Intercollegiate

LELAND, N.C. — The Tusculum men's golf team posted the second lowest round of the day with an eight-over par 296 to finish with a three-round score of 914 to finish eighth at the Cape Fear National Intercollegiate.

The two-day, 54-hole tournament was held at the par-72, 6,850-yard Cape Fear National at Brunswick Forest and hosted by Appalachian State University. Tusculum was the lone NCAA Division II team present in the predominantly D-I field.

Texas Arlington led wire-to-wire finishing with a six-under par 858, including 290 on Monday to win the team championship by 30 shots over runner-up Jacksonville State. USC Beaufort finished third with 891, Appalachian State was fourth with 898 and Robert Morris came in fifth with 904. Loyola-Chicago was fifth with 909, followed by Wright State (911), Tusculum (914), La Salle (959), North Carolina Central (963), North Carolina A&T (982) and Hampton (1004).

Sachin Kumar of Virginia Commonwealth captured medalist honors with a three-under par total of 213, including a final round 69 to win by one shot over Tripp Summerlin of Appalachian State (68-72-74=214).

Anthony Bolden finished tied for 23rd place with his tournament total 226 including a one-under par 71 in Monday's final round. Bolden was two-over on the front nine and carded three-birdies on the back nine for a three-under par 33. He climbed 15 spots up the leaderboard, which was the second biggest jump of the day for the 76 competitors.

Brandon Alexander moved up nine spots on the scoreboard and tied for 25th place with 227. After opening the tournament with an 81, Alexander bounced back with rounds of 72 and Monday's 74. In his final round, he recorded three birdies, five bogeys and 10 pars to post his third top-25 finish of the season.

David Whinery also finished 25th with his three-round total of 227. Liam Sweeney had a seven-position improvement from Sunday as he carded a 74 and finished 54th overall

SEE PIONEERS, PAGE 3B

# PAYING OFF BIG TIME

### The Huskies Took A Chance On A First-Year Coach, And He Has Led Them To Historic Success

**BY TATE RUSSELL**  
SUN SPORTS WRITER

Over the summer North Greene athletic director James Buchanan and the school's search committee took a chance on a 25-year-old with no high school coaching experience to take over the boys basketball program.

The committee believed Sam Tarlton, just barely removed from college, had what it took to lead a program that had been on the rise in recent years, and has he ever proved them right.

"Coach (Brandon) Broyles did a heck of a job in his time at North Greene, and had left things in good shape," Buchanan said. "I said in the interview, 'Let's say we hire you. We will have people ask about hiring somebody so young when this team is one that everybody has high hopes for this year. Why should we hire you?'"

"He gave an outstanding answer," Buchanan continued. "He said 'At some point somebody took a chance on everybody in this room. Obviously you have all been successful, and that is why you are interviewing people for this job. At some point somebody gave you a chance, and if you give me a chance I'll work hard and we'll do things the right way.' Hindsight is usually 20/20, but looking back on this hire, we're thrilled to death with the decision we made."

In his first year ever coaching on the high school level, after being hired from West Pines Elementary, Tarlton has led the Huskies to the Class A State Tournament. The last time North Greene was in this position, in 1992, Tarlton had not been born.

North Greene will begin state tournament play on Wednesday against Oakdale at 4:30 p.m. central time in Murfreesboro at the Murphy Center on the Campus of MTSU.

"It feels great to get to this point," Tarlton said. "At the beginning of the year I really didn't know what type of expectations to have. I've just tried to take it one game at a time. I have been blessed with a

SEE HUSKIES, PAGE 1B



North Greene coach Sam Tarlton cuts down the net after the Huskies beat Coalfield in a Class A State Sectional game on March 5.

SUN PHOTO BY TATE RUSSELL

### HOW TO FOLLOW THE HUSKIES AT STATE

**Class A State Tournament Opening Round**

vs. Oakdale

Game Time 4:30 p.m. CT

**In Person -**

At the Murphy Center On the Campus of MTSU In Murfreesboro

**Online -**

Tssaasports.com/basketball will have live stats running for all state tournament games. There will also be a link for an online video broadcast for a fee.

**On Radio -**

Radio Greenville will be broadcasting the game on both WIKQ 103.1 FM and WGRV 1340 AM.

**On Twitter -**

Follow @Tate\_Russell for score updates, stats and photos of the action.

## Science Of Upsets: Prof Has Formula That Doubles Your Shot

**BY EDDIE PELLIS**  
AP NATIONAL WRITER

Message to hoops fans: This story could make you look brilliant.

A computer science professor at University of Illinois has created a formula that predicts NCAA tournament upsets at double the success rate of someone picking at random — including, but not limited to, those who throw darts at the bracket, or pick based on their favorite color, the most ferocious mascot or the number of vowels in the coach's last name.

This year's upset picks both come out of the South

region. They are No. 13 Buffalo over No. 4 Arizona and No. 14 Wright State over No. 3 Tennessee.

But before betting the mortgage, read on:

The computer scientist who spearheads this project, Sheldon Jacobson, says the computer models only analyze potential upsets by 13, 14 and 15 seeds. A 16 seed has never beaten a 1; anything involving 11s or 12s produce "too much noise," Jacobson says, meaning the relative closeness of the underdogs with their fifth- and sixth-seeded opponents interferes with the statistical model he uses to predict the upsets.

Jacobson and fellow scientists pared down 115 publicly available metrics for every team in college basketball to 15 that have served as the best predictors of upsets in years past.

Some examples include effective possession ratio — essentially the number of points a team scores per possession — along with average scoring margin and opponent's 3-point shooting percentage.

Now for the science: The framework of these formulas is called "balance optimization subset selection" (BOSS), which is an artificial-intelligence algorithm

SEE UPSETS, PAGE 3B



Kentucky players celebrate with their trophy after defeating Tennessee in the Southeastern Conference tournament on Sunday in St. Louis.

AP PHOTO BY JEFF ROBERSON