

March Madness Awards, All Tourney Teams, Recap

4.8.26 - Konrad Cafe



We are going to start with All-tourney teams, move on to the top 5 watches of the tourney in terms of the games, and then finish with awards. Keep in mind I am a PROUD member of #eyetestfc I am not going to look at any stats to make these squads or give out awards I am strictly going off that boy nice and my very own two eyeballs from watching 90% of the games in this tourney. God bless America and Let's get into it.

FIRST TEAM ALL TOURNEY:

Guard: Labaron Philon



I remember I had zero Labaron Philon now I give my allowance to my mama!!! Let me list some words that came to my mind watching this young man hoop these past few weeks. “Silky.” “Fluid.” “Sensual.” “Effortless.” “Oh my god Labaron don’t do it I’m about to bust.” Like I said, I’m a proud member of #eyetestfc, and my goodness if this man right here isn’t the pinnacle of eye test hoops I’m not sure who is. Electrifying watch. I could never be an NBA GM because I would be taking him top three over that Hamas member that plays center at Duke.

Guard: Darius Acuff



Not as fluid as my dawg Labaron but just as effective and still an electric watch. There’s something hella captivating about watching a college team literally give one player the ball (especially a guard, ESPECIALLY an undersized guard) every trip down the floor and just being like “go and win us or lose us the game.” You obviously see this in the NBA all the time but whenever there is an offense like this in college (think Bennett Stirtz, Trae Young and Oklahoma, Kemba @ UConn sorta) it

hits so different because of how much harder it is to score on the college level and how much of a dogfight each game is. Was a treat to watch Mr. Acuff hoops this march and I hope he is drafted somewhere he can rock out next year.

Guard: Tramon Mark



Probably the most controversial pick here but if you don't like it that's tough stuff. After that game he played against the highly unethical, black magic Purdue team you would've needed lock and chain to keep me from putting bro on this list. That was one of the most impressive performances I've seen. Pure grit and buckets. Bro was fucking frying he basically won them every game and then almost did it again against the team that must not be named. "Oh I'm down to one ankle because bitch ass Fletcher Lloyer Jalen Rosed me? That's okay! Hesi pull in your mouth bitch." It's rare a players performance can overshadow the fact they had to transfer out of their last school due to being in a gay love affair triangle with two of their teammates but this is one of those rare cases (not a lot of guys are in this position to begin with) that all that stuff goes out the door because the hoops are so pure.

Guard: Bennett "Tissues and Lotion" Stirtz



As a run of the mill athleticism white man you have to understand why this one means a little more to me. Iowa's offense like 75% of the time is let the shot clock get down to 8 seconds throw Bennett a grenade and tell bro to make some shit shake and this dude every time without fail would either start the domino or hit some bullshit. I know he didn't play that great the first couple games but that first half against Illinois was special and you can't blame bro too much. Or at least I don't. Scintillating player and performance and bro gained a fan in me for life he literally was Iowa basketball and the definition of cornbread white boy hoops. Also only cracker on the list you have to respect it.

Center: Tarris Reed



I want to apologize to Tarris Reed because I was not at all familiar with his game. I thought he was just another big man who had 0 feel and IQ and if he wasn't rebounding, shooting layups, or dunking it he was hopeless. But no lie he surprised me every single game with his passing ability, footwork, and feel when playing out of doubles. Elite college big man but borderline unbelievable. This guy spend 4 years at Michigan and Uconn and couldn't get one ring out of it. Embrace debate is Tarris Reed a lockerroom cancer? But in all seriousness amazing run and a pleasure to watch. Bro is 100% on Jaden Ivy watch though after that post game interview he had.

https://x.com/dom_lucre/status/2040852836783624568?s=20

SECOND-TEAM ALL TOURNEY:

Not doing write ups and pictures for these guys sorry. If they wanted the pictures and the write ups they shoulda hooped better. Also is mad difficult getting the pics to crop right with text. But I'll divert the blame away from my laziness. Also before I write this up I want to make it clear I'll goon with icy hot on my meat before you see Elliot Cadeau or Yaxel Lindenberg on this list, or any member of the Purdue Boilermakers for that matter.

- **Guard: Keaton Wagler**
- **Guard: Isaiah Evans**
- **Forward: Coen Carr**
- **Forward: Bryce Hopkins**
- **Center: Aday Mara**

Top 5 Games of the Tournament:

A lot of complaints about chalkiness and a boring first weekend this year, but you can't deny the fireworks and entertainment provided to us from the round of 32 til the finish. This was genuinely really difficult to narrow down to 5 so huge credit goes out to me for doing it anyways. God gives his toughest battles to his toughest soldiers. Let us get into it.

5: Wisconsin vs. High Point (Round of 64)

Between the finish of the game and the fact this was the only 12 seed to make some shit shake felt like it was a must this game be included in my top 5. The game winning bucket being on that white boys first 2 point make of the season was absolute cinema and while a totally different finish gave me shades of that furman win over virginia (minus the terrible turnover that was damn near the blueprint for Caeden Boozar, more on that later lol) and was just another classic nail biting game with david vs goliath feel that ended with the underdaws winning. Those threes that that white kid #99 hit down the stretch (I forget bro's name no disrespect) were genuinely fucked and damn near Mike Breen "bang" worthy or Bill Rafferty "ONIONS!" worthy. Electric game if your a Wisconsin fan you are just absolutely sick that Boyd decided to just hold down right trigger and drive left your last like 3 possessions of the game. Ball up top.

4: Nebraska vs. Iowa (Sweet 16)

I did not realize how big of a rivalry this was until I saw some of the most shocking out of pocket tweets from both these fanbases towards each other and realized there was real hatred involved in this showdown. Just an example of two teams that have guys who are glue guys, you can bring home to your parents, and play the right way. The ending where #7 on Iowa got two bodies in the last minute to ice it was cinema and COACH OF THE YEAR(!!!!) Fred Hoiberg putting 4 men out on the floor in the biggest possession of the year for his team was

unbelievable. Everything you want out of a sweet 16 game that just means a little bit more between these two things. Crazy thing about this game is that as an Iowa bettor here it looked like Nebraska had control the whole way and then Iowa in the last 5 minutes just turned up. Amazing watch.

3: Florida vs. Iowa (Round of 32)

A lot of Iowa on this list and no it's not only because I'm gay for Bennett Stirtz but rather because these games were genuine cinema. Within this game you had the subplot of Todd "the stalking gooner" Golden and Ben McCollum going at it and Ben McCollum winning which is just sweet sweet justice. Thinking back on this game the next two thoughts that come to mind are 1) Xavian Lee you have to get a shot up there and 2) think about all the amazing things Florida could have done with 7 million dollars instead of lighting it on fire and giving it to Boogie Fland. Many homeless people could have been fed instead of Boogie Fland dropping 11, 3, and 2 every night. You know you're cooked when you're supposed to be a stud and the announcers are only talking about what a great job your doing Bennet Stirtz. That's like when a first round wide receiver gets the "but he's such a good blocker" treatment. You know at that point they are completely cooked. Anyway amazing game was an absolute treasure.

2: Kentucky vs. Santa Clara (Round of 64)

I'm 100% biased in this game being higher on the list because I had a lot of money (comparatively, we don't unit shame here) on it (on Santa Clara unfortunately) but this game was fucking madness (like march madness, haha get it? I'll shut the fuck up). The rollercoaster of emotions I went through as a Santa Clara ML bettor in the last 5 minutes of this game, especially the last 10 seconds, and during overtime were truly elite and the epitome of what march madness is all about. I can't even be mad at my bet on Santa Clara because if it isn't for a fluke bank shot and #2 on Santa Clara thinking he is Kyrie and hesi-pulling only to get his shit fucking packed up both times down the stretch I am a richer man today. That is March madness though the better team doesn't always win because of a magical moment or two and you can't be mad at it because that is essentially what this tournament is all about. I'm realizing as I get to the end of this breakdown it is essentially me giving myself a large dose of copium for making a shitty bet lmao.

1: Duke vs. UConn (Elite 8)

DUKKEEEEEEEEEEEEEE?? WHAT HAPPENENNNNDUHHHHHHHH?
DUKKEEEEEEEEEE???????? Oh yes. THIS is why we play. Just a hateable university, with a couple hateable players, absolutely CRUMBLING when the lights begin to shine brightest. THIS is one of those rare games where the villain genuinely suffers the most catastrophic downfall and you damn near break your LEGS running to twitter to see how bad they are getting trolled. As a UConn fan as well, this was the cherry on top. From an unbiased standpoint, the game of the tournament. From the extremely biased standpoint of a Duke hater, this was THE game of the fucking tournament. I think I texted this to someone after the game but this might have been my

favorite hate watch of all time. The only other game that stands up to it is Josh Allen shitting all over himself in the AFC divisional playoff game against the Broncos earlier this year. Special stuff.

TOURNAMENT AWARDS:

Ok last but not least

Most Unethical Player Award: *Trey Kaufman-Renn*



In the words of Juice Wrlds debut album, Good bye and good riddance! There is nothing worse on this planet than a big man who is strong enough to fight through contact and for the ball instead decides to take the path (two roads diverge, shoutout NE legend Robert Frost) of flopping anytime he is touched or convulsing the minute anyone lays a finger on him during a box out. Couldn't have been happier to see Arizona pack this guy up. Saw a bunch of people sucking him for being one of the only guys to stay for four years at the same school and complete a tradition basketball career. To me that doesn't make sense. If Osama Bin Laden helped an old lady cross the street would that forgive him for 9/11? I personally don't tend to think so.

Aura Gamble Award: *Dan Hurley and Dusty May*



I have to go with a tie here. In the case of Hurley the gamble to literally head butt a referee after your player hits arguably a top 5 shot in March Madness history to complete an insane comeback and risk a tech for it is an insane aura gamble that paid off immensely. People watch that clip and laugh and say "man that Hurley cat is different." Much different story if he gets a tech called on him and Duke drains two free throws to win. Definition of an Aura Gamble. Now in Dusty May's case, you have him scouting the UConn Illinois game that is taking place IMMEDIATELY before his own team's final four game lmao. That is some insane shit I have never seen before. This guy said I'm not worried about Arizona (one of the greatest CBB teams of all time by some statistics) at all let me start prepping for the championship game. If he does this and they lose bro is coming under serious fire. Definition of an Aura Gamble. I present to you your co-winners.

Cornball Award: *Yaxel Lindenburg*



If you ever want to feel immense second hand embarrassment go and watch a Yaxel post game interview in which bro does this whole nonchalant/disrespectful gimmick when asked about his match up from that game in which he faced off with a freshman 4 years younger than he is. Just a lack of self awareness of so corny bro.

Deshaun Watson Award: *Rob Wright III*



The Deshaun Watson award is dedicated to the player who is able to extract as much money as is contractually possible from their employer while also refusing to play and/or dropping stinkers. I could not believe this guy got 4 million in NIL after watching that first round BYU / Texas matchup. AJ Dybantsa looked like he was playing 1v5 and I thought “you know what fair they have suffered injuries not BYU’s fault” only for me then to find out that this guy Rob Wright is supposed to be the truth and is one of the highest paid guys in the NATION (In the nation!). Absolutely shocking. I have no idea how he played all year I am only basing this off that first round game but man brutal watch.