



**2008 NCAA
SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL**



No. 2 AUGUSTA STATE Jaguars

VS.

No. 8 CLAYTON STATE Lakers

AUGUSTA STATE 89

CLAYTON STATE 72

Championship Game -- 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 18, 2008

Augusta, Ga.

Christenberry Fieldhouse



2008 NCAA SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL



QUOTES

Augusta State Head Coach Dip Metress:

"This is a great feeling, we are going to the Elite Eight, and two weeks ago you probably could have written us off a little bit."

"Our senior leadership helped keep us together."

"Defensively we were solid, but we are going to the Elite Eight, and that's something I've never done."

"We are heading to a state I've never been too, but I am going to find out a lot about it soon!"

"We wanted to make it to this game, being able to just cut down the nets in your home arena is a great feeling."

Augusta State's Daniel Dixon:

"It has been a rocky season for me but my teammates were there to help me, telling me to keep trying. I talked to Coach and he told me he needed me to be a leader on the floor and I got the confidence in me and played my game and fed off of my teammates -- they really picked me up."

Augusta State's Garret Siler:

"Coach kept telling me to play strong and smart, so I did."

(On fouling out) "In order for us to win the game you have to give it your all and that's what I did."

Augusta State's Tyrekus Bowman:

(What does this mean to you) "This means the world to me, I told you we would win, and now we are going to get another one to match it!!"

(On his heart condition) "I think I might need a new (heart) one after tonight. At the beginning of the season, things were tough but I just kept my head up."

(On being named Most Outstanding Player) "In my opinion, I think that Dee Howard deserves the award."

"I don't care about any dunk contest. I am going to the Elite Eight to win a national championship."

Augusta State's Ben Madgen:

"It's an amazing feeling, the emotion the crowd everything!"

"We have worked so hard for this the past two years, we all had the coming goal of making it to the Elite Eight."

Augusta State's Demetrius Howard:

"Coach told us to step it up, so we did."



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QUOTES

Clayton State Head Coach Gordon Gibbons:

"They are real hard to guard. When they are making shots, in the second half then it's difficult. We played well enough on offense to win the game if we score 70 points we are winning, but we just couldn't stop them."

"I wanted to go in at halftime with a good lead, but they just had some good shots."

"We went into the second half down by 5 and just couldn't seem to get it together."

"Everytime we scored they scored, Dixon, Magen and Bowman all made BIG shots."

"The thing that hurt us tonight was the fact that they made timely baskets, we would work hard on defense and then they would make an easy basket on the post -- that's not supposed to happen to us -- that's supposed to happen to other teams but not ours."

"When you're in an NCAA tournament and the other team shoots 65% in the second half, that's shooting pretty darn well."

"It wasn't fatigue that got us tonight it was the fact that they were sharper than us."

"This is my 33rd season as a head coach, this run is maybe as satisfying or more than any because of the struggle to get this team to play championship basketball, it was deciding that in the middle of January we were going to sacrifice and do what it takes to win."

I am disappointed tonight, but there weren't tears because they knew they laid it on on the line for their coaching staff, themselves, their team and their University."

"We went into this tournament with the worst record overall and made it to be one of the last 16 teams standing, that's gotta say something about these guys."

(On Augusta State going to the Elite Eight) "Here's what I've always said about going to the Elite Eight, and I've been there three times. One, you have to have a center -- you aren't winning unless you have a center. The second thing you have to have is three players just as good as any team your going to play against -- they got that. The third thing they have to have is solid role players that do what ever the team needs to win. In my opinion, this team has what it takes to win a National Championship."

Senior guard Michael Sloan:

"It's been a great run -- no one thought we could do what we did."

(On stopping AJ) "It's tough, he can do a lot of things and can go inside or outside. He's in the passing lanes and tough to guard."

Senior forward Jerome Boyd:

(On Garret Siler) "He's a big guy with a big presence and takes up a lot of space."

"They excelled on defense and our offense just wasn't there like it has been throughout this tournament."



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joey Warren, Athletic Media Relations Director

NCAA TOURNAMENT

South Atlantic Regional -- Championship Game

Augusta State 89, Clayton State 72

AUGUSTA STATE ADVANCES TO ELITE EIGHT, 89-72

Bowman Named MOP, Leads Jags to First National Finals With 27 Points

AUGUSTA, Ga. -- The Augusta State Jaguars realized a dream on Tuesday night as they exploded for 47 second-half points on the way to an 89-72 win over upstart Clayton State in the championship game of the 2008 NCAA South Atlantic Regional Tournament. With the historic win, the Jaguars will advance to the Elite Eight for the first time in school history. Tyrekus 'AJ' Bowman was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player after scoring a game-high 27 points.

Bowman, who averaged 27.3 ppg. in the three regional games, hit eight of 15 shots from the floor and 10 of 11 free throws. The senior, playing in his final game at Christenberry Fieldhouse, also had six rebounds, four assists and two steals. Ben Madgen hit three of six 3-pointers for 24 points while Daniel Dixon added 10. The Jaguars (25-6) shot 65 percent (17-26) from the floor in the second half and 54 percent for the game.

Clayton State (19-15) saw its remarkable postseason run, that began with a surprise PBC Tournament Championship, come to an end. The Lakers were led by Bernard Fields who scored 18 points of seven of 10 shooting, including four of six 3-pointers. Tracy Williams added 14 points and six assists while Will Lewis scored 13 and Jerome Boyd 11. The Lakers, making their first appearance ever in the regional final game, and only their second NCAA tournament appearance overall, shot 48% from the field overall after hitting 58% in the first half.

The good shooting by the Lakers was evident in the first half. Augusta State opened the game with a 14-5 lead before Clayton State began to close the gap. The Lakers hit 12 of their next 14 shots from the floor, including 10 in a row as they stormed back to lead by eight with 6:10 left. Fields was especially effective during the run, hitting back-to-back three pointers and a jumper as Clayton State outscored Augusta State 25-8 over the nine-minute span.

But the Jaguars responded with a 14-6 run of their own that left the game tied with 1:30 to go in the first. Steve Smith provided the spark with a trey. Madgen scored 10 of the Jaguars' next 14 points, including seven in a row. His 3-pointer with 1:07 left gave ASU their first lead in over 11 minutes. A Bowman three pushed that up to five and ASU led 42-37 at the break.

The second half was not so dramatic as the Jaguars began to pull away. Bowman dunked on a breakaway, then hit a layup on ASU's next possession to open up an 11-point lead with 15:28 to play. Clayton State did its best to keep up as a Williams' 3-pointer cut the lead to eight at the 13:30 mark and a Boyd layup cut it to nine with 10:58 to play, but that would be as close as the Lakers would get. ASU rattled off the next eight straight points, six coming on a pair of Dixon 3-pointers, to take a commanding 17-point lead.

Clayton State made one last attempt to get back in the game with a 7-0 run capped with a Michael Sloan jumper that again cut the lead to nine with 6:36 to play, but the Jaguars put the game away with a 14-5 run over the last five minutes to build an 18-point lead, their largest of the game, with 1:18 to play.

With the win, ASU improved to 25-6 overall, the second most wins in school history, and finished 14-1 on the season on its home floor. The Jags also extended their home winning streak to eight games.

ASU moves on to the NCAA Division II Elite Eight which begins with the national quarterfinals on Wednesday, March 26 at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, Mass.