



**2008 NCAA
SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL**



No. 1 USC AIKEN Pacers

VS.

No. 8 CLAYTON STATE Lakers

CLAYTON STATE 60

USC AIKEN 58

Quarterfinals -- Game Three -- 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 15, 2008

Augusta, Ga.

Christenberry Fieldhouse



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QUOTES

Clayton State Head Coach Gordon Gibbons

"Our team is built around defense. Our team felt like, without a doubt, they could come in here and come out with a victory. But the one thing you know about Vince Alexander's teams and about playing USC Aiken, they are not going to quit and they have extremely talented players. You saw that in the last five or six minutes. They were going to come at us as hard as they could. We probably got a little tentative, but you can do that sometimes with the lead. Then we missed four free throws down the stretch that, if we made them, might have made things a little easier."

"This is the readiest we've been for Aiken's stuff. In the tournament, you have 15 hours to ready. This week, we had a week to get ready. When you can hold a guy who I consider among the best in the country in Chris Commons to 11 tonight, that's a credit to our defense and these guys."

"They had hurt us a couple of times down the stretch by really running it back at us. But I had players cramping up and could not sub, so we had to stand pat and it kind of hurt us."

Clayton State's Michael Sloan

"We were ready to play. We got excited to show everybody that the first time wasn't a mistake. You hear the buzz that (last week) was a fluke; you had to go to three overtimes... you barely won. So, we went out and proved everybody wrong tonight."

Clayton State's Brian Kelley

"On offense we just wanted to come out and execute and take good shots. Lately, we've been coming out and taking our time on offense, running through it, making their defense work and then getting open shots."

(On Blocking Job Casimir's Last Shot): "I saw him coming down the court. I thought they were going to call a timeout, but he was coming and I hurried to get back. I was just trying to get there and contest it. He took a tough shot and he missed it."

USC Aiken Head Coach Vince Alexander

"They slow it down a lot and drag the game out. It gets us out of our rhythm and they do a good job of that. We want to be in the 80's and 90's and they want to be in the 50's and 60's, so they make you play their style of game and the only way we can get into it is to get up and pressure them a little bit."

"We got off to a slow start. We wanted to go to a zone and try to stop them from coming off those screens and put up some quick shots. They came out and hit a couple of those and it kind of backfired on us; when you come out with a game plan, you look to that to help you. When they hit a couple of shots, your players start to question that and I think that might have hurt us defensively."

"You've got to make shots. I thought they were being real physical. I thought our guys, on the other end, felt like they could be physical as well. We felt like they could play physical while we couldn't."



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March 15, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joey Warren, Athletic Media Relations Director

NCAA TOURNAMENT

South Atlantic Regional -- Quarterfinal No. 3

Lenoir-Rhyne 76, Virginia Union 68

NO. 8 LAKERS UPEND TOP-SEEDED USC AIKEN, 60-58

AUGUSTA, Ga. -- Clayton State withstood a furious, late-game rally from USC Aiken and upset the top-seeded and sixth-ranked Pacers 60-58 Saturday in the third quarterfinal game of the opening day of the 2008 NCAA South Atlantic Regional in Christenberry Fieldhouse.

With the victory, the Lakers improved to 18-14 and will face the winner of Saturday's last quarterfinal matchup between No. 4 Virginia Union and No. 5 Lenoir-Rhyne. The win also marks Clayton State's second victory over USC Aiken in six days -- the Lakers topped the Pacers 89-87 in triple overtime on Sunday, March 9 at the USCA Convocation Center to capture the Peach Belt Conference Tournament championship.

Michael Sloan and Tracey Williams each tallied 14 points for the Lakers, while Bernard Fields added 10 points.

Cordaryl Ballard notched a game-high 20 for the Pacers, who had four players reach double figures. Jeremy Fears netted 16 points, Chris Commons managed 11 and Job Casimir chipped in 10, all in the second half. The loss ended the season for USC Aiken, the Peach Belt Conference regular-season champions, at 27-4.

The Lakers shot 52.5 percent from the floor and limited USC Aiken to just 36.7 percent shooting from the field. The Pacers went just 5-for-27 from long distance.

Clayton State led 56-46 with 3:48 remaining when the Pacers began a furious rally. USCA rattled off a 9-0 spurt that included five points from Casimir, pulling to within one at 56-55 on a layup by Commons.

Williams answered with two free throws with 47 seconds left and added another free throw with 14 seconds remaining to put the Lakers ahead 59-55. Aiken's Jeremy Fears' three-point play with eight seconds to go to pull USCA within 59-58. Ricky Garrett hit one of two free throws with :07 to go for the final margin.