



**2009 NCAA
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL**



No. 1 AUGUSTA STATE Jaguars

vs.

No. 2 USC AIKEN Pacers

AUGUSTA STATE 85

USC AIKEN 57

Championship Game -- 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Augusta, Ga.

Christenberry Fieldhouse



2009 NCAA SOUTHEAST REGIONAL



QUOTES

USC Aiken Head Coach Vince Alexander

"When I put things in perspective, I think about where my program has come from. We're not done, we're going to continue to work, continue to get better. They (ASU) stepped it up big-time tonight and did a tremendous job. All credit is due to them."

"They've been here, and you can tell. We haven't. We were turning the ball over, we weren't executing our offense. We weren't doing a good job. They (ASU) knew how to play in this type of game and they did a great job."

"I just don't think we matched their intensity and we just didn't play like I thought we were capable of playing. Our players know that."

On Chris Commons (PBC Player of the Year): *"He just didn't play real well. He struggled."*

USCA's Kingsley Oguchi

"You have to give credit where credit is due. They played better than us."

USCA's Josh Dollard

"My team doesn't give up. At all. But we could never cut that lead down. They played some great defense. We put them on the line too much and turned the ball over too much. And when you do that to a good team, they are going to capitalize on that, especially on their home court."

Augusta State Head Coach Dip Metress

"Six months ago I went to the dentist with my daughter. They asked me to schedule my next appointment six months down the road and asked me if I wanted this date in March. My daughter said 'no, that's when the Elite Eight is.' So, six months ago, she saw something. Now, I can tell you this. I knew when we scrimmaged Johnson C. Smith, and we got kicked by 20 in the first half, and we never complained and we never broke off and stayed together. I knew then we would be OK. That's the beginning of a championship team. Tonight was a great win for us."

On returning to the Elite Eight: *"We have a basketball program, not just a team of guys. We really have great character. I'm not easy to play for, but they bonded with each other and stuck together all year. It's very, very difficult to go back there. We beat a team tonight that's incredibly talented obviously the huge difference was having this on our home floor."*

"For the first time since I've been here, the last two days, everybody was talking about us. It's a good feeling to have the whole community behind us."

"It does help to have experience, no doubt about it."

Augusta State's Center Garret Siler

"To get a win in your final game on your home floor is great. There's a lot of blood, sweat and tears on this court."

"We all had butterflies before the game. But I told Greg (Hire) and Ty (Beal): 'If you're not nervous, you don't want it enough.' That desire takes over your body."

Augusta State's Guard Steve Smith

"There's no weak link on this team. If somebody is down, somebody else will pick them up."

Augusta State's Forward Ben Madgen

On Having Tournament Experience: *"It prepares you very well. We had a good game plan and started to double down on Dollard and Commons and not let them get into the game which I thought helped us a lot on the floor. They were turning the ball over and that took the pressure off us a bit. All of us were able to get into the flow of the game. Experience definitely helped."*



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joey Warren, Athletic Media Relations Director

NCAA TOURNAMENT

Southeast Regional -- Championship

Augusta State 85, USC Aiken 57

ASU Captures Southeast Regional, 85-57

Led by Most Outstanding Player Garret Siler, No. 4 Jaguars set for return trip to Elite Eight

AUGUSTA, Ga. – The Augusta State Jaguars earned a return trip to Springfield, Mass., and the NCAA Division II Elite Eight as they used a suffocating defense to smother the USC Aiken Pacers 85-57 Tuesday night in Christenberry Fieldhouse.

The fourth-ranked Jaguars, the top seed in the Southeast Regional, improved to 29-4 on the year with their 15th straight win while USC Aiken saw its season come to a close at 25-8.

The Jaguars held the Pacers to a season-low 57 points, forcing 17 USCA turnovers and limiting Aiken to 5-of-21 three-point shooting. The Jaguars shot 61 percent (28-of-46) from the field, had 11 steals and five blocks.

Augusta State sprinted out of the gate, jumping to a 15-4 lead as the Jags hit seven of their first 11 shots of the game, including six points from Garret Siler. The Pacers answered back with a 7-2 run to cut the lead to four with 9:45 to go in the first, five of those points from Kingsley Oguchi.

Leading by six with 5:44 to go, the Jags pushed the lead back into double figures following a Steve Smith 3-pointer and Greg Hire layup and led 36-27 at the break.

USC Aiken made its move to cut into the ASU lead to start the second half. After ASU extended the lead to 13 on a 3-pointer from Fred Brathwaite and layup by Ben Madgen, the Pacers answered with a 7-2 spurt that included a 3-pointer from Chris Commons.

But USCA would get no closer as Augusta State went on a 15-5 run over the next four minutes to increased the lead to 21 with 12:39 to play. USCA cut the lead to 17 following a Josh Dollard jumper, but Ben Madgen's dunk with 9:21 to play put the lead back above 20 points where it would remain for the rest of the game.

Garret Siler was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player after tying for the team lead with 25 points on 9-of-11 shooting. The senior center also had a team-high six rebounds and five blocks. Madgen also scored 25 for ASU, hitting six-of-seven from the field and all 11 of his free throw attempts. ASU shot 68 percent in the second half alone and hit 24-of-28 free throws in the contest.

Dollard led the Pacers with 16 points off the bench while Oguchi added 12. Seth Leonard added eight points and a team-best five rebounds while Chris Commons had eight points.

The win was the 80th in the last three years for Augusta State against only 18 losses, the most successful stretch in school history. The Jaguars return to the Elite Eight after winning their first region title last year and advancing to the national championship game. ASU will meet Christian Brothers, winners of the South Region, in the first game of the Elite Eight on Wednesday, March 25, at 12:00 p.m., from the Mass Mutual Center in Springfield.

At the conclusion of the contest, the Southeast Regional All-Tournament team was announced: ASU's Siler and Madgen, USC Aiken's Chris Commons and Josh Dollard, along with Catawba's Rob Fields, were named to the squad.