

Sports

Panthers Champs

'March Madness'

64-Team Field Set

The March Madness shootout is to tip-off. The road to Seattle begins Thursday, with 64 teams vying for a final four berth. That road may be a little rockier for lower seeds like McNeese State, Princeton, Robert Morris and East Tennessee State than for power houses Illinois, Georgetown, Oklahoma and Arizona - but, as previous tourneys have proven, upsets are imminent. Here are the first round pairings and sites enroute to the Kingdom:

- East -

(at Providence, R.I.)

- #1 Georgetown (26-4) vs. #16 Princeton (19-7)
- #4 Iowa (22-9) vs. #13 Rutgers (18-12)
- #5 N. Carolina St. (20-8) vs. #12 South Carolina (19-10)
- #8 Vanderbilt (19-13) vs. #9 Notre Dame (20-8)

(at Greensboro, N.C.)

- #2 Duke (24-7) vs. #15 S. Carolina St. (25-7)
- #3 Stanford (26-6) vs. #14 Siena (24-4)
- #6 Kansas St. (19-10) vs. #11 Minnesota (17-11)
- #7 W. Virginia (25-4) vs. #10 Tennessee (19-10)

- Southeast -

(at Nashville, Tenn.)

- #1 Oklahoma (28-5) vs. #16 E. Tennessee St. (20-10)
- #4 Florida St. (22-7) vs. #13 Middle Tennessee (22-7)
- #5 Virginia (19-10) vs. #12 Providence (18-10)
- #8 La Salle (26-5) vs. #9 Louisiana Tech (22-8)

(at Atlanta, Ga.)

- #2 North Carolina (27-7) vs. #15 Southern (20-10)
- #3 Michigan (24-7) vs. #14 Xavier (21-11)
- #6 Alabama (23-7) vs. #11 S. Alabama (22-8)
- #7 UCLA (20-9) vs. #10 Iowa St. (17-11)

- Midwest -

(at Indianapolis, Ind.)

- #1 Illinois (27-4) vs. #16 McNeese St. (16-13)
- #4 Louisville (22-8) vs. #13 Ark.-Little Rock (23-7)
- #5 Arkansas (24-6) vs. #12 Loyola-Mary. (20-10)
- #8 Pittsburgh (17-12) vs. #9 Ball St. (28-2)

(at Dallas, Texas)

- #2 Syracuse (27-7) vs. #15 Bucknell (23-7)
- #3 Missouri (27-7) vs. #14 Creighton (20-10)
- #6 Georgia Tech (20-11) vs. #11 Texas (24-8)
- #7 Florida (21-12) vs. #17 Colorado St. (22-9)

- West -

(at Boise, Idaho)

- #1 Arizona (27-3) vs. #16 Robert Morris (21-8)
- #4 UNLV (26-7) vs. #13 Idaho (25-5)
- #5 Memphis St. (21-10) vs. #12 DePaul (20-11)
- #8 St. Mary's (25-4) vs. #9 Clemson (18-10)

(at Tucson, Ariz.)

- #2 Indiana (25-7) vs. #15 George Mason (20-10)
- #3 Seton Hall (26-6) vs. #14 S.W. Missouri St. (21-9)
- #6 Oregon St. (22-7) vs. #11 Evansville (24-5)
- #7 UTEP (25-6) vs. #10 LSU (20-11)

by Rob Prindle

From door-mats in November to division champs in March, the once struggling Erie Panthers clinched the East Coast Hockey League regular season title Friday night with an 8-6 victory over the Johnstown Chiefs.

The Panthers, who began their season with a flurry of one and two goal losses, remained cellar-dwellers in the newly formed ECHL for the first several weeks of the long season. At their lowest point, Erie was 21 points out of first place. The club steadily improved and finally put things together to take command of the league winning 13 out of

17 games in a 30-day stretch. The Panthers record now stands at 36-19-3.

If it had not been for the Chiefs the Panthers would have clinched the title earlier. The Chiefs had previously owned the Erie club having beaten them nine out of 14 previous meetings.

The win Friday was almost as exciting as the season. The Panthers tied the score at 1-1 in the middle of the first period and the Chiefs returned the favor knotting things at 2-2 in the second. The third period proved to be wilder.

The Panthers, with a flurry of strong drives and power play advantages pulled to a more than comfortable looking 6-2

lead. This was not the case, however, as the play got rough and the Panthers found themselves at the wrong end of a five minute power play. The Chiefs scored three times during this lengthy advantage and eventually tied the game with two Panthers in the box.

With the game tied at six and the clock ticking down, it looked as if the Panthers would have to wait for another night to clinch the league crown. However, the Panthers pulled not one but two last minute goals to ice the win at 8-6 and the championship.

The Panthers finish up the season at home this weekend before heading into the playoffs.

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WHITE, BUBBLY
AND SORE,
AND SOMETIMES
THE SKIN
PEELS OFF
AND BLEEDS!"**

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BASEBALL BASEBALL BASEBALL BASEBALL BASEBALL BASEBALL

PITTSBURGH PIRATES

VS.

MONTREAL EXPO'S

SATURDAY APRIL 15th

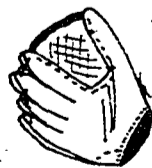
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