

# SPORTS

## Local Analyst Jimmy Spats Takes A Close Look

# MARCH MADNESS COULD BE MARCH ANGER AS OPENING ROUNDS GET UNDERWAY TODAY

By W.G. Ramirez

St. Patty's Day is gone, the conference tournaments are gone and that can only mean one thing - March Madness!!!

This year though, the 64-team field may be get a tad bit madder than in the past, leaving an appropriate title of March Anger lingering around. Six teams have shared the #1 position this season and there are a number of other teams that have the potential to go to the Final Four and possibly capture the NCAA Championship.

The opening rounds for this year's tournament got underway this morning as sixteen teams will advance to Round 2. Friday the remainder of the opening round will be played, as the second-round matchups will be complete for Saturday and Sunday.

Local analyst Jimmy Spats, whose well-respected sports service is recognized nationwide, shed some light on this year's tournament region-by-region.

"This had to be one of the

toughest years for the Selection Committee to come up with the 64 teams. I was shocked that a couple of teams didn't make the big dance, such as Providence and UNLV."

Because of the number of talented teams that were left out of the tournament, the N.I.T. had its pickings at quite an attractive menu.

"This has to be one of the best N.I.T. tournaments in years as far as that goes," said Spats.

As many of the other top analysts around the country, such as Dick Vitale, Al McGuire and Billy Packer, Spats agreed that the Eastern Region seems like the easiest of them all.

"That would have to be the East," said Spats, "North Carolina, without a doubt, has the easiest path."

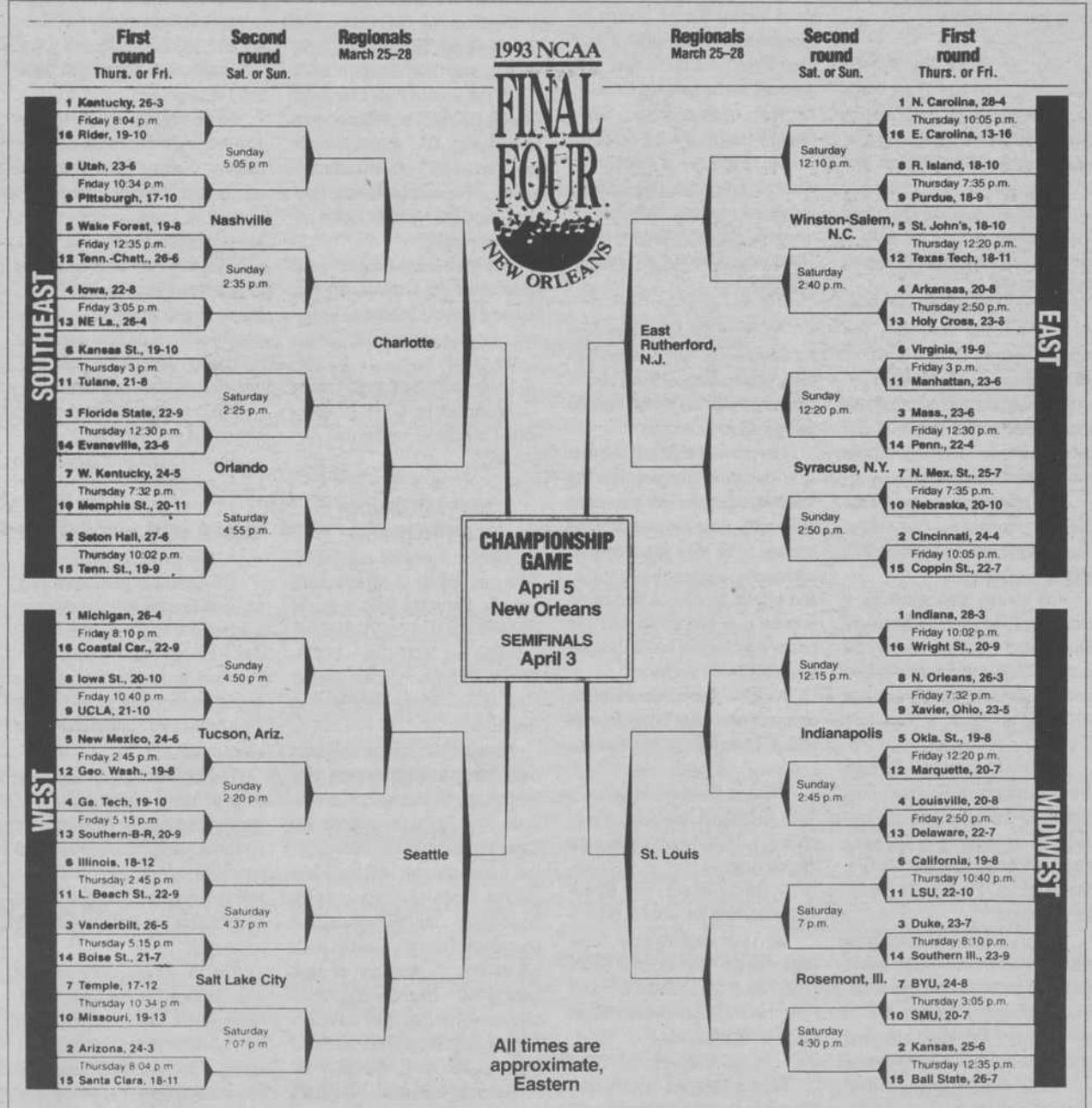
If the Tar Heels will have any problems, it may come against Nolan Richardson's Arkansas Razorbacks in the regional semifinals. A likely regional final matchup will be top-seeded Carolina against #2 seed Cincinnati.

The winner of the East Region will face the Midwest Re-

gion, which could boast the best talent. #1 Indiana, #2 Kansas,

#3 Duke and #4 Louisville. That is how the Midwest stacks up

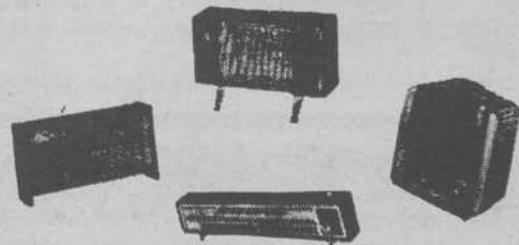
against the rest of the pack. (See Madness, Page 15)



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## J.R. SPEAKS OUT

(Continued from Page 1)

senior campaign continued, his name became apparent in many more conversations. He received Player of the Week honors by the Big West, Sports Illustrated and ESPN on different occasions. USA Today labeled him a Player of the Year honorable mention at mid-season.

Then it began. The Rebels hit a strange bump in the road, losing five of their last ten. Rider's last performance would have to be in the Big Dance. After losing to Long Beach State in the Big West Tourney, last Saturday, the Rebels' chances of making the 64-team field were dampened. Tuesday's announcement sealed the coffin shut for J.R.'s collegiate career. he wouldn't be able to put on one last show for Vegas.

Following our brief interview, strolling through the tunnel, J.R. continued to mumble, "be a good citizen to the community." This will be his last performance.