

MEN'S NCAA TOURNAMENT: SPOKESMAN.COM/SPORTS



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Will this be the last time Kelly Olynyk leaves the court as a Zag? He has to decide whether to declare early for the NBA draft.

End for three seniors

GONZAGA-WICHITA STATE NOTEBOOK | Jim Meehan and Christian Caple, Staff writers

SALT LAKE CITY – Elias Harris, one of three Gonzaga seniors, would do it all over again, except change the ending.

"It just hurts," said Harris, who had 12 points and seven boards in Gonzaga's 76-70 NCAA tournament loss to Wichita State on Saturday. "It'll take time to get over this. Great coaching staff, great group of guys. If I could do it all over again with the same group of guys, I would."

The forward's stellar career ended with another tough outing. He was held to five points on 2-of-10 shooting in Thursday's win over Southern. He made just 2 of 8 shots against the Shockers.

Harris and the rest of the Zags were struggling to put a wildly successful season – a 32-3 record, a rise to No. 1 in the polls and a No. 1 seed in the tournament – into perspective after a stunning loss that sent GU packing from the tournament for the fourth straight year in the round of 32.

"I don't know how to put it," sophomore guard Kevin Pangos said. "We didn't play our best. They were hitting shots. I guess they did beat us tonight."

"It's tough. We did so many great things all year and this one we fell short. Everyone in this locker room really wanted this one."

GU will lose Harris, Mike Hart and Guy Landry Edi. Junior forward Kelly Olynyk, who poured in 26 points, faces a decision in the near future on whether he will return to Gonzaga next season or make himself eligible for the NBA draft.

Olynyk addressed his teammates in a sullen locker room.

"Guys were upset that we weren't going to be able to play together again," he said. "We just wanted to extend this as far as we



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Gonzaga's Mike Hart battles Wichita State's Ron Baker for a rebound. Hart had six points and 14 rebounds in his final game – and perhaps his best – as a Zag.

could. I told them it doesn't take anything away from what we've done, or anything from you as a person or us as a team. Everyone is going to go forward and do their thing and improve. It's not the end of the road for any of us."

Of his plans, Olynyk said, "I haven't thought about that at all. We just lost 20 minutes ago."

Bell sidelined

Sophomore guard Gary Bell Jr. left the game early in the second half with a lingering injury. He went scoreless in 19 first-half minutes, then exited after a few minutes early in the second half.

"Just a nagging injury," Bell said, pointing to the top of his right foot, near his ankle. "At halftime it got a little stiff and I couldn't go after that. It

(happened) against (Southern on Thursday), but I don't know what really happened."

Turning up the heat

Gregg Marshall was tired of watching Gonzaga's post players get to the rim, grab offensive rebounds and go to the free-throw line.

So the Wichita State coach called for the Shockers to extend their defensive pressure to three-quarter court and, eventually, employed a full-court press.

"I don't think they liked it," Marshall said, noting that Pangos still managed to shake loose for a pair of 3-pointers. "But I do think that may have taken them out of the rhythm, and you're less likely to foul and we were in the bonus again. I did not want Olynyk or Harris and those guys to drive and get to the foul line."

A victory worth dancing about

By Christian Caple

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SALT LAKE CITY – You could hear the celebration in the hallway, the walls of the EnergySolutions Arena concourse reverberating with the sounds of chants and yells that signified the toppling of a giant.

And once you got inside Wichita State's locker room, you could see it, too.

Gregg Marshall, the team's 6th-year coach, danced a jig and sang the same pro-Shockers chant that the whole team had belted out minutes prior.

Chadreck Lufile simply wept, head in his hands, teammates laughing and prodding alongside him.

Lufile, a junior, played exactly one minute. He committed a foul and a turnover.

"Best game of my life," he said before a TV camera, still in tears.

This, apparently, is what it feels like to beat the No. 1 team in the country, which is what the Shockers did here Saturday night, dealing Gonzaga its third loss of the season with a 76-70 beating that sends WSU to next week's Sweet 16 in Los Angeles.

Speculation about Gonzaga's vulnerability led respectable folks to believe the Shockers could win, and so the victory in itself is not the night's biggest surprise.

It's how Wichita State made it happen that will turn heads.

The Shockers (28-8) shoot 33 percent from 3-point range as a team. They average about 19.5 attempts per game, and typically make about 6.5 of those. That average plummeted in their black-and-blue win over Pittsburgh on Thursday, as WSU used a grueling



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Wichita State's Fred VanVleet (23) hip-bumps a teammate after Saturday's win.

defensive effort to hide the fact that it made just two of its 20 attempts from beyond the 3-point arc.

So, color surprised anyone who watched the Shockers make 14-of-28 from 3-point range against Gonzaga, a team that allowed opponents to shoot just 32.3 percent on such attempts this season.

"We know what we're capable of on offense but we haven't really displayed it this year," said freshman guard Fred VanVleet, whose unlikely 3-pointer with the shot clock winding down gave WSU a 70-65 lead with 1:26 to play.

VanVleet's performance also had anomalistic qualities: the freshman guard entered the game averaging 3.8 points per

game. He scored 13 on Saturday, making a pair of 3-pointers and all five of his free-throw attempts.

"He wins most of the drills in our practice, and we chart those," Marshall said. "We strive to win, and we compete every day and there are sprints for the losers, and Fred is a winner."

Another freshman, Ron Baker, a 30.9-percent 3-point shooter, made 4-of-6 from 3-point range and scored 16 points, connecting on two 3-pointers and two free throws in the final 4:24.

"We shoot well in practice," said Baker, who missed 21 games this season with a stress fracture in his left foot. "So why can't we shoot it good in a game when no one has seen us shoot that well?"

Well, they can. And they did. This was a different kind of victory for the Shockers. They were even outrebounded, 39-30, another surprising statistic considering WSU ranks seventh in the nation in rebounding margin.

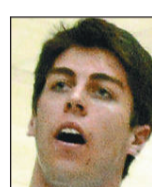
It was the offensive glass that kept Gonzaga (32-3) – which shot just 35.6 percent from the field – around in the first half, when the Shockers built a 13-point lead and established their hot-shooting tone.

And after the Bulldogs came back in the second half, leading by as many as eight points, Wichita State went back to work. The Shockers went more than seven minutes without an empty offensive possession down the stretch, producing points on eight consecutive trips down the floor.

"I've always said, if we shoot the ball well, we're hard to beat," Marshall said. "And tonight, we shot it well. It was one of those nights where it went in."

And in, and in, and in, bumping Gonzaga out in the process.

THEY SAID IT



"I lost it a little bit, just the instant reaction and realizing this was the finish. That's the brutality of the NCAA tournament, how great it can be and how quickly it can all end."

Mike Hart,
Gonzaga senior guard



"Down the stretch it was more about, we just didn't get out on those shooters. I don't know why. We were over helping a little and we got a little casual on (Cleanthony) Early a couple times. The ones by (Ron) Baker hurt us."

Mark Few,
Gonzaga head coach

Wichita St. 76, Gonzaga 70

WSU (28-8)	Min	M-A	FG	FT	Reb	O-T	A	PF	PTS
Armstead	37	2-9	1-2	0-5	3	1	6		
Orukpe	15	1-2	0-1	1-1	0	2	2		
Hall	29	3-6	4-8	1-1	2	3	10		
Baker	33	5-7	2-2	3-6	4	2	16		
Cotton	25	3-5	0-0	1-3	2	2	8		
Lufile	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1	0		
Williams	7	0-1	0-0	0-0	1	2	0		
Early	24	6-11	0-0	2-7	1	4	16		
Van Vlt	20	3-6	5-5	0-1	3	1	13		
White	9	2-3	0-0	1-3	0	4	5		
Totals	200	25-50	12-18	10-30	16	22	76		

Percentages: FG .500, FT .667, **3-Point Goals:** 14-28, .500 (Baker 4-6, Early 4-7, Cotton 2-3, Van Vleet 2-4, White 1-1, Armstead 1-6, Williams 0-1), **Team Rebounds:** 3, **Blocked Shots:** 6 (Hall 3, Early 2, Orukpe), **Turnovers:** 15 (Hall 3, Armstead 5, Orukpe 2, White 2, Early 2, Lufile, Baker, Van Vleet), **Steals:** 8 (Armstead 2, Cotton 2, Early, Baker, Van Vleet, Hall), **Technical Fouls:** None.

GU (32-3)	Min	M-A	FG	FT	Reb	O-T	A	PF	PTS
Pangos	39	6-17	3-5	0-0	5	4	19		
Bell, Jr.	21	0-2	0-0	0-2	0	0	0		
Olynyk	38	8-22	10-14	6-9	2	1	26		
Harris	35	2-8	7-8	4-7	1	2	12		
Hart	27	2-3	0-0	7-14	1	4	6		
Dmrgns	8	0-0	0-0	0-1	1	1	0		
Stekton	17	2-2	0-0	2-2	3	0	4		
Dower	6	0-2	0-0	0-0	3	0	0		
Barham	9	1-3	0-2	1-1	0	2	3		
Totals	200	21-59	20-29	21-39	13	17	70		

Percentages: FG .356, FT .690, **3-Point Goals:** 8-23, .348 (Pangos 4-12, Hart 2-2, Barham 1-2, Harris 1-2, Bell, Jr. 0-1, Dower 0-1, Olynyk 0-3), **Team Rebounds:** 3, **Blocked Shots:** 2 (Dower, Olynyk), **Turnovers:** 13 (Pangos 4, Olynyk 4, Harris 3, Bell, Jr., Dower), **Steals:** 8 (Harris 3, Pangos 3, Barham, Olynyk), **Technical Fouls:** None.

Halftime—Wichita St. 36-31, A—16,060.



COLIN MULVANY S-R
GU's Kelly Olynyk directs a play in the second half.