Tech home Wednesday in NIT first round

The World-News Sports

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However, the NIT can lay claim to Oregon, a two-time conqueror of UCLA, the nation's No. 4 team. Oregon, however, would have preferred to be elsewhere.

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From staff and wire dispatches

Coach Charlie Moir reorganized his recruiting trips, planned two practice sessions this week and had hopes that starting forward Phil Thieneman can be located in Florida.

All of this came about when Virginia Tech received a bid Sunday to the National Invitational Basketball Tournament.

It is Tech's third bid to the NIT and the fact the Gobblers won the title with four victories by a total of five points in 1973 probably influenced the selection.

Tech will entertain Georgetown Wednesday night at 8 in Cassel Coliseum in the opening round of the 16-team event. The eight opening winners will meet in quarterfinal games in Madison Square Garden in New York March 14-15. The semifinals will be March 17 with the title game Sunday March 20.

"I'm excited for the kids," said Moir. "They have worked long and hard this season. NIT is a funderamental test. If you know, we are on our quarter break and the kids are scattered. I went in touch with everyone except Thieneman. His dad said he was in Florida visiting a friend but he was going to get in touch with him.

Moir has practice sessions planned today at 3 and 8 p.m. There will be two again Tuesday and maybe a shooting session Wednesday. Tech is still having a problem with its defense. It is a great weapon in practice. It has been a problem in games.

The return game, scheduled for March 21 at Virginia, started 4-18-77

ODU, which was later beaten by Syracuse, also received an NIT bid and will play at home Wednesday night against Villanova. The Gobblers have not played or practiced since Feb. 26 when they closed their regular season with a loss to Marquette.

Neither ODU nor Tech has been informed who they will play should they win Wednesday. The only thing they regretted about the invitation, said Moir, was the fact he had to cancel his personal recruiting plans.

He was scheduled to hit the road to night. But he will stay in Blacksburg. However, he plans to keep his assistants on the road and bring them back for the game Wednesday.

Tickets are the Georgetown game are on sale at Cassel Coliseum. They are $3 for adults and $3 for students. Interested person also may call 651-7511.

The field NIT includes 12th-ranked Alabama, Oral Roberts with star Anthony Roberts, Indiana State and Larry Bird and Houston with Dallin Birlong. In last week's national statistics, Roberts was averaging 32.2 points a game, Bird 31.7 and Birdsong 28.9.

The NIT also has Seton Hall's Glenn Mosley, the nation's No. 2 rebounder. Bird ranks ninth in that department.

Houston is second nationally in scoring and Old Dominion is sixth.

The first-round pairing: Tuesday March 8—Illinois State at Creighton.

Wednesday March 9—Indiana State at Houston, Georgetown, D.C., at Virginia

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