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PRINCETON 74, IUPUI 68, 2 OT

Exhausted Jaguars miss key chances

IUPUI squanders opportunities late in regulation, 1st overtime



By Curt Cavin
Posted: March 23, 2010

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IUPUI's basketball team must wait at least another year for the second postseason victory in the school's Division I history.

With several chances to beat Princeton in Monday night's College Basketball Invitational quarterfinal game, the host Jaguars lost 74-68 in double overtime.



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IUPUI led by 12 points in the first half, by 10 in the second half and twice appeared poised to advance to the event's semifinals.

But each time came a falter.

John Ashworth, a 76.7 percent free throw shooter, missed a pair of such shots with 29.6 seconds left in regulation while trying to build on a 63-61 lead.

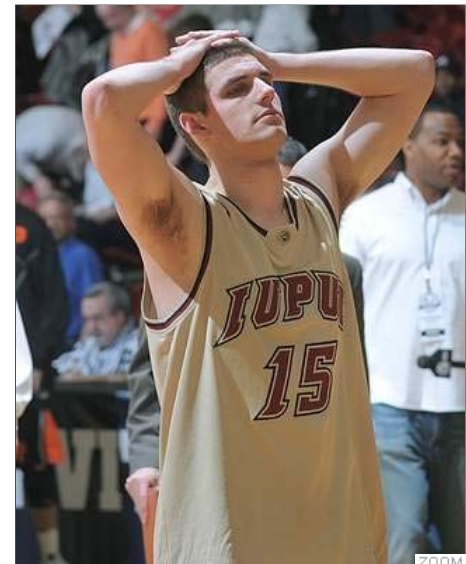
Robert Glenn, fourth in the nation at 59 percent from the field, missed an easier-than-expected leaner at the end of the first overtime.

Tired legs, coach Ron Hunter said.

"Mental fatigue," he said. "We just couldn't finish the game.

"I was tired; they were tired."

IUPUI ran out of steam in the second extra session, missing a pair of 3-pointers and committing three turnovers in its first five possessions. That let Princeton escape. The Jags went those five minutes without scoring, their season over.



This hurts: Sean Esposito walks off the court in dejection Monday night after IUPUI's loss in the College Basketball Invitational. - Matt Detrich / The Star

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IUPUI, which lost its first game in the Jungle this season, finished at 25-11, its second-best record in Division I play.

Glenn's final game included 18 points and 16 rebounds in 46 minutes. Three other teammates played at least that many minutes, with Ashworth totaling 48 of the 50.

The Jaguars also were thin in the frontcourt, playing without Billy Pettiford, a senior starter. The 6-7 forward underwent an appendectomy Sunday night, causing him to miss a game for the first time this season.

Pettiford is the forward playmaker, and his absence showed in the fact IUPUI had just four assists. Pettiford averages 3.8.

Princeton (22-8) might have been playing for the first time in a postseason since 2004, but it was no slouch. The Tigers have won 20 of their past 24 games with the four losses totaling just 11 points. Two of those three-point setbacks came at the hands of Cornell, a darling of the NCAA Tournament's Sweet Sixteen.

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