

Govs headed to Boise for CBI

Written by

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Call it a premonition of events to come.

As Austin Peay coach Dave Loos drove home from Saturday's annual APSU Candlelight Ball in Nashville, he came across the WAC tournament final between Utah State and Boise State.

Loos listened to the game intently, not realizing the significance of his discovery on the car radio.

A little more than 24 hours later Loos was informed that his Govs would be playing at Boise State today in the opening round of the College Basketball Invitational. Tip off is scheduled for 8 p.m. and will air on HDNet.

"Anytime you can play in a postseason tournament, it's a good thing," said Loos, who has Austin Peay in a postseason tournament for the seventh time. "We're looking at it in two different ways; not only as a wrapup of this season, but also this tournament, at least for me, is the start of the next season. I'm looking at it from that standpoint and it's a good thing."

For the first time in OVC history four teams

— Austin Peay, Morehead State, Tennessee Tech and Murray State — reached the 20-win plateau, and all four advanced into postseason play, also a first for the conference.

"I think there are four good teams in Murray State, Morehead State, Tennessee Tech and us, and all the teams had real nice seasons and we are happy to continue to be playing," Loos said.

Loos had some long and disheartening days following the Govs' lopsided loss to Morehead State in the OVC tournament semifinals. The quest for the NCAA Tournament was gone, but hope rested with a possible invitation to one of the smaller tier postseason tournaments.

Austin Peay received its invitation late Sunday night, but didn't know of its matchup until after 10 p.m.

Loos was expecting to be on his home floor today, but once the matchup and destination were known late into Sunday

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night, it created a hectic Monday for all involved.

"It was close to 11 when we found out whom and where we were playing and naturally the travel agency wasn't open until this morning (Monday)," said Loos, minutes before his team boarded their flight out of Nashville late that afternoon. "We had a bus at the Dunn Center at nine, and were ready to get to the airport and we didn't leave until 3 p.m. We didn't know about our reservations and we finally got a flight, so here we are."

Loos said Joni Johnson, head athletic trainer, handled most of the travel arrangements, while the coaching staff worked on a game plan. The Govs practiced for two hours before boarding the bus at 3 p.m. for the drive to Nashville International Airport.

"We were thinking we might even have a home game and we had to shift gears," Loos said.

Austin Peay's trip to Idaho will give it games on both coasts this season. Austin Peay traveled to Connecticut to play Fairfield in an ESPN BracketBuster game in late February.

Boise State (20-12) finished 12-6 in the WAC and fell to Utah State in the tournament title game. It's only the third time Austin Peay has played a team from the WAC, the previous two games came against Utah State.

Note: The winner of Austin Peay-Boise State will catch the winner of tonight's Evansville-Hofstra game on March 21. Austin Peay has played in six NCAA tournaments, two NITs, one Collegeinsider.com, and is making its first appearance in the CBI. The last postseason tournament win for the Govs came when it beat Belmont in the 2002-03 NIT. ... Austin Peay last played in the CBIT two years ago. ... The Govs have six straight winning seasons, and have finished .500 or better in 13 of the last 16 seasons.

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