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## Cal Downs No. 23 Syracuse, 73-59, To Reach Finals of 2K Classic

[box score](#)

**NEW YORK --** California guards Jordan Mathews and Jabari Bird combined for 38 points to lead the Golden Bears to a 73-59 victory over No. 23 Syracuse at Madison Square Garden on Thursday night to advance to the Championship Game of the 2K Classic.

California (3-0) seized control by hitting four straight 3-pointers late in the first half and cruised to its first big victory of the Cuonzo Martin era. Mathews scored 20 of his 22 points in the second half and Bird added 16 points, including a 4-5 performance from the three-point line.

The Golden Bears will face No. 10 Texas, who beat Iowa 71-57 in the first semifinal, on Friday night.

The Bears finally broke through in the third meeting between the teams in the last three seasons. Syracuse ousted Cal in the 2013 NCAA tournament en route to the Final Four and beat the Bears again a year ago in the Maui Invitational.

This time, Cal's four straight 3s, two by Bird, extended a two-point edge to 34-20 in the final minute of the first half. He made another for the Bears' first basket of the season half before Mathews, who had just a pair of free throws before halftime, took charge of the offense.

His three free throws after being fouled made it a 17-point game and he followed with a layup that pushed it to 47-28 with about 15 minutes left.

Kaleb Joseph and Michael Gbinije each scored 13 points for Syracuse (2-1), which couldn't get much going in front of its orange-clad fans at Madison Square Garden. Leading scorer Rakeem Christmas was limited to eight points before fouling out with 6:23 left and Syracuse trailing by 14 points. He came in averaging 18 points and 12.5 rebounds.

David Kravish nearly notched his first double-double of the season, posting 12 points and nine rebounds to add to five assists. Tyrone Wallace also hit the double-digit mark, logging 10 points for the Bears while dishing out six assists.

The Bears meet the Longhorns Friday at 4:30 p.m. ET in the championship game of the 2K Classic.