

Lack of Big Man Costly To B.C. Tourney Hopes

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Boston Globe (1960-1979); Mar 20, 1967;

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By **JOE CONCANNON**

Staff Reporter

The disappointment was imprinted on every face as Boston College's finest basketball team packed its bags and returned home Sunday morning.

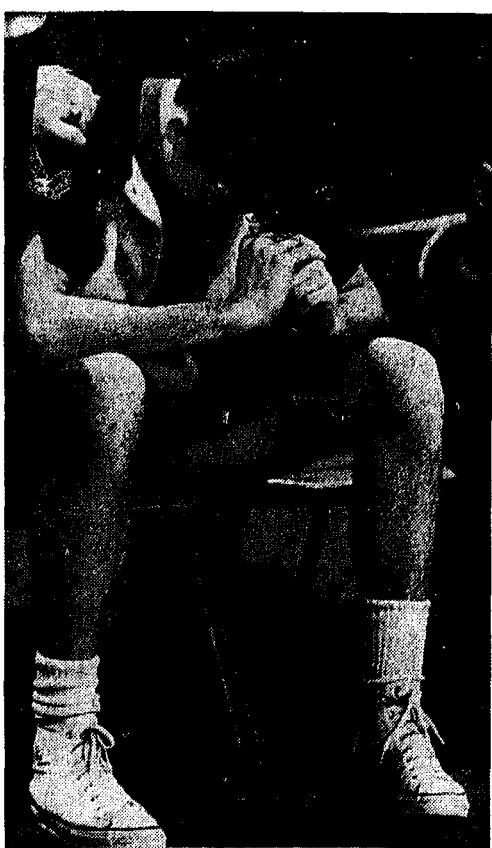
It was all over, sudden, shocking and ever so emphatic, a season that started with a rousing runaway against

the Quantico Marines and ended on a humbling note in the N.C.A.A. Eastern Regional finals.

North Carolina, a team with a rich tournament tradition, lived up to its storied past and offered a preview of its promising future, with a convincing 96-80 victory over the

B.C.

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DEJECTED—B.C. Capt Willie Wolters looks weary near end of NCAA Tourney game won by North Carolina. (Special to the Globe—Dick Raphael Photo)

B.C. Five Rates Place Among Eagles' Greats

★ B.C.

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Eagles Saturday night down there in Dixie.

A B.C. season that produced 23 victories in 26 games, including some grand ones over teams like Providence, Syracuse, Tennessee and St. John's, came to its improper close on an evening that those who lived through it will never forget.

"It feels funny," said B.C.'s Billy Evans. "You play a whole season and then, in one night, you die. That game was all that mattered. Oh, boy. I just can't stop thinking about it."

What is important, though, in the larger sense, was not so much that the Eagles lost. This happens. What is more important is the fact that they were there, period. That is the real story.

This was only the third time in 20 years—since Holy Cross won it all in 1947—that a New England team had made it to the N.C.A.A. Eastern finals. Boston University did it in 1958, Providence in 1965 and now, Boston College.

This one, as B.C. captain Willie Wolters said on the way down, "is the prestige tournament. It's the one we wanted, the one we worked for all season long."

And the Eagles were able

representatives. It was simply that North Carolina had that one big man (6-11 Rusty Clark), those two great shooters (Larry Miller and Bob Lewis) and, perhaps, that added touch of experience that comes with age, with competition and with exposure.

"You have to have that big man," said B.C. coach Bob Cousy. "There's no getting away from it. You could see it all through this tournament."

"I had him (Clark) boxed out several times," said B.C.'s Steve Adelman. "That was my job. But he'd go up over me for a rebound and pick it right out of my hands."

The trip to the national finals never happened—this year. But the Eagle's lose only two men, Wolters and Doug Hice, and a good crop of freshmen, up from a team that lost only once, will move in to battle for position.

And there is the irrefutable fact that the Eagles, having been through it all once, will be a much better team for the experience.

"This is a great group of kids," said Cousy. "What a pleasure it is to work with them. My initial thought was to get into a low pressure situation and enjoy coaching that way. But you have to want to win. And these kids carried me with them."