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## March madness tournament

The Big Ten entered the NCAA tournament full of confidence after a highly competitive and entertaining regular season secured them nine bids, including four of the top 14 seeds.“I don’t feel afraid of ... anybody because we truly have played the best teams in the country on a night-in, night-out basis,” Michigan State coach Tom Izzo said.Some media (ahem) even wrote stories about how good the league was and how this might be the perfect opportunity to end its 21-year national championship drought.Well, then came a 22-hour stretch that featured:Michigan State losing to UCLA,Ohio State losing to Oral Roberts,Purdue losing to North Texas,Oh, and Boston Celtics coach Brad Stevens reiterated once again — perhaps clearly enough this time — that he won’t be the next head coach at Indiana.“I’m a 44-year-old Masshole. I swerve, I eat Dunkin’ Donuts, and I root for the Patriots,” said Stevens, who grew up in Indiana, played college ball in Indiana and previously coached in Indiana.Duane Washington Jr. Ohio State reacts at the end of regulation against Oral Roberts on March 19. (Gregory Shamus/Getty Images)He might as well have said the Indy 500 is a waste of fossil fuel, pork tenderloin sandwiches are inedible and Deflategate didn’t happen.Indiana is desperate to return to prominence and Stevens was the dream candidate — even if that dream was delusional. They are still capable of getting a great coach, but when even Brad Stevens is bailing on the Midwest and declaring his support for the Patriots ...It wasn’t all bad, of course.Illinois rolled and Wisconsin pounded North Carolina. Rutgers won its first NCAA tournament game in 38 years. Michigan, Iowa and Maryland haven’t played yet, so they’ve got that going for them. Rick Barnes doesn’t coach in the league.The Big Ten still can win that long-awaited national title — or even send enough teams deep into this tournament that it dominates the storylines.What happened across the first two days though (Michigan State was in Thursday’s play-in round) certainly doesn’t create confidence.The Big Ten’s hope this year was that the teams were battle-tested after a rugged conference schedule. Yet three teams have already collapsed in crunch time.“Obviously Michigan State lost in overtime, we lost in overtime and I think Ohio State lost in overtime too,” Purdue coach Matt Painter said. “So you’re going to get into close games in the NCAA tournament.”Yet in those close games, they each failed to show the toughness, the execution and the passion amid pressure that is required in March.UCLA rallied from an 11-point halftime deficit to win by six in overtime as the Spartans offense became a disjointed mess.“Just disappointed,” Izzo said. “I mean, we had the game won.”North Texas finished with an absurd 11-0 run in overtime to beat Purdue. 78-69.“Just had a series of possessions from offense, defense to start the overtime where we didn’t execute,” Painter said.And Ohio State had a slew of offensive opportunities late in the second half and in overtime before falling 75-72.“I thought that we just had too many missed opportunities, too many turnovers, too many empty possessions on offense,” Buckeye coach Chris Holtmann said.These weren’t just losses. There is never an excuse for Ohio State to lose to a 15 seed or Purdue to a 13 seed. But there really isn’t one when the Big Ten is getting out-toughed and outreached — the basic tenets of the league.Congrats to the underdogs, but this was bad.And this is a rough year for the Big Ten to start stumbling. The entire tournament is being staged in Indiana, including first weekend games on the home courts of IU and Purdue. The later rounds are all in Indianapolis, the Big Ten’s spiritual home.And the question now is whether the Big Ten was as good as everyone believed during the regular season and just got tripped up — as tends to happen in this event.Or was the strength of the league a mirage, the work of teams beating up on each other and thus creating the perception of excellence that isn’t rooted in reality?The next couple weeks will tell the story. Since Michigan is dealing with a critical injury, Illinois was always the league’s most likely national champion. The Illini looked great, albeit against 16-seed Drexel.And, of course, there was Rutgers to the rescue — the Scarlet Knights, by beating Clemson, served as a feel-good story after decades of futility.In the middle of an ugly 24 hours for the league, the Big Ten will take it. Once brimming with confidence, the league now has questions and concerns to answer.More from Yahoo Sports: WEST HARTFORD, Connecticut – At 1:17 a.m. last Wednesday, as Hartford coach John Gallagher watched film at home, he felt an earthquake rumble beneath him. Who knew that a seismic event could double as a cosmic sign of a program’s first-ever NCAA tournament bid?Gallagher spent the past year riddled with regret over the lost opportunity of 2020. Hartford reached the America East title game for the first time in his 10-year tenure, only to have the opportunity taken away 35 minutes before the team bus left for Vermont. So earlier that day, he’d asked God for a sign while praying the rosary at Holy Family Catholic Retreat Center in Farmington.The greater Hartford area isn’t exactly located on the San Andreas Fault, so the rumble of the earthquake hit Gallagher much harder than the 1.9 it registered on the Richter scale. And he became more convinced of the cosmic nature of his plea when he next spoke to Father Terry Kristofak of Holy Family. “He said, ‘You know the epicenter was right there, two miles below the Mary statue.’”Whether it was karma, coincidence or the divine will depend on the retelling of the story. But Hartford collided with history on Saturday afternoon. The No. 4 Hawks beat No. 6 UMass Lowell, 64-50, in the America East final to reach the NCAA tournament for the first time in 37 years of Division I play.In the telling and retelling of the story – and Gallagher specializes in elongated telling and retelling – there’s certainly room for celestial embellishment. “One day,” joked Penn coach Steve Donahue, “his life is going to be a movie.”One year after the pandemic seized Hartford’s generational opportunity, which Gallagher called a “cruel joke,” everything aligned for the Hawks. They upset Vermont in the semifinals last weekend and got 19 points from graduate student Trae Carter and 17 from senior Austin Williams to pull away on Saturday. The rumble proved prophetic.Hartford coach John Gallagher shouts instructions to his players during a game against Bowling Green on Dec. 31, 2019. (Scott W. Grau/Ucon Sportswire via Getty Images)And with the win, the NCAA tournament became a much more colorful place. Gallagher, 43, resonates as one of the sport’s most over-the-top characters, the outsized caricature of the over-caffeinated and fast-talking coach in a profession defined by them. Gallagher is a spigot of energy with a personality bigger than his Final Four bar tabs. Someone needs to warn the press conference stenographers in Indianapolis to ice their hands in preparation.“Does Indianapolis actually know who is arriving?” Gallagher said after the game. “I just looked at my phone and there’s 472 text messages. And every one of them is coming to the game.”Don’t laugh. Gallagher is one of the game’s most enthusiastic and relentless connectors, one of 53 first cousins from the Delco area outside Philadelphia who had an estimated 750 people at his wedding. (Everyone from the Pump Brothers to Denzel Washington was invited.) “John has 100 best friends,” Donahue said.Gallagher has preached the theme of neighborhood during his 11 seasons at Hartford, and his neighborhood is about go national. Don’t worry, he’ll find a way to still chat with everyone.Amid the postgame celebration, Gallagher sprinted over to the four-person cleaning crew to celebrate with them. He hugged Triscia Wright, the custodian who services the Smith Center, like she’d scored the winning basket. “It meant the world to me,” she said. “I always feel welcome and a part of the team.” A few minutes later, he screamed to the upper deck of the empty Chase Arena to veteran local columnist Jeff Jacobs of the Connecticut Post: “Jeff! We did it. We did it. Yes!” After that, he FaceTimed his parents on the court and yelled to his team: “Hey guys, this is my dad and my mom. Say HEY!”“We’re the firefighter, the cop, the blue-collar fans who wants to bring their kid to the game,” he said of the Hartford community. “This means a lot to a lot of people.”Gallagher holds a rare reverence for coaches. Have a few beers with him, and he’ll attempt to convince you that former Lafayette coach Fran O’Hanlon is John Wooden. Penn coach Steve Donahue — or “Stevie” as he calls him — is Henry Iba and former St. Joseph’s coach Phil Martelli, his college coach, is Phog Allen.Gallagher name-checked enough coaches who helped him along the way in a conversation with Yahoo Sports this week that he practically read the NBC directory – David Pauley (former University of the Sciences), Bob Burton (former Cal State Fullerton), Fran Dunphy (Temple AD), Speedy Morris (La Salle) and Joe Mihalich (Hofstra). “I was like a wild horse,” he said. “They literally, literally made me who I am.”And after coaching 666 games — a devilish coincidence that promoted a sign of the cross — as an assistant and head coach, he’ll be on the sideline in his first NCAA tournament. “He’s exploding,” said Hartford assistant Tim Brooks.That passion has made Gallagher the heartbeat of a group of coaches that go by the Motley Crew, bonded by Final Four trips, sitting together at AAU games and, of course, listening to endless stories from Johnny Gal. During COVID-19, those conversations switched from barstools and bleachers to Zoom, where the group would gather twice a week.“We’d talk basketball for two or three hours and sometimes it would flow into happy hour for another two or three hours,” says Loyola Chicago coach Porter Moser. “It was therapeutic.”Brown coach Mike Martin, who worked at Penn with Gallagher, sent him a video text this morning to wish him luck. Martin knew he’d be tightly wound, so he hummed out the CBS theme song a capella and asked how many times he’d watched the Selection Sunday Show and heard it. “This morning you do it, brother,” Martin said. “Enjoy it. Your team is ready. We all love you. You are ready for the NCAA tournament.”The sweet gesture spoke to Gallagher’s role as the heartbeat of a teeming group of friends. Gallagher is so loyal he walked up to Loyola Chicago athletic director Steve Watson during their Final Four run and embarked on some impromptu contraction negotiations for Moser. “I’m going to make this easy for you,” he told the unsuspecting AD. “Ten years at \$1.5 million. Let’s not mess around here.”There’s a soft side as well. Arkansas assistant David Patrick told the story of Gallagher going with him to clean out his mother’s home in Australia after she passed from breast cancer. “He was part of that for me, helping talk me through it,” Patrick said. “I couldn’t really be there with her at the end. He helped close my house down. That’s a bond you don’t have with other coaches.”The next time Gallagher can gather with his crew, they’ll toast the accomplishment, relive the America East run and, likely, chuckle at a few of Gallagher’s lines while on a bigger stage. “We’re not going to Indy to say hello to people,” said the coach who says hello to everyone. “We’re going to win.”The Hawks (15-8) could end up in one of the First Four games. They won’t be higher than a No. 16 seed. The safest prediction — at least until there’s another earthquake — is that they’ll be undefeated in the news conferences.More from Yahoo Sports: House prices are rising and it’s alarming homelessness advocates.(Bloomberg) -- Asian stocks rose Wednesday after U.S. shares closed at a record on economic optimism and signs that vaccines can counter a highly infectious coronavirus strain. The dollar held an advance.Australian equities outperformed, shrugging off lockdowns imposed to fight the delta variant of the virus, while China and Hong Kong fluctuated. U.S. contracts were higher after the S&P 500 eked out a gain, remaining on track for a fifth monthly advance -- the longest run since August. Moderna (Bloomberg) -- A consortium led by Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. and the Jiangsu provincial government are nearing a deal to buy a stake in the retail arm of Chinese billionaire Zhang Jindong’s Suning empire, according to people familiar with the matter, the latest domino to fall in Beijing’s effort to clean up its heavily indebted conglomerates.The unit, Suning.com Co., could make an announcement as soon as this week, said the people, who asked not to be identified as the information is private. ZThe Singapore Police Force has refuted allegations of mistreatment of a man taken into its custody, saying that his statements give a misleading impression.Yahoo News Australia VideoNSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian said the government will need to consider what “Covid life” looks between coming out of lockdown and when the majority of the population are vaccinated. Source: ABC NewsCALGARY, Alberta, June 29, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – Frairie Provident Resources Inc. (“Prairie Provident” or the “Company”) announces the results of voting on matters submitted to shareholders at the Company’s annual meeting held today. Election of Directors At the meeting, each of Patrick McDonald, Mimi Lai, Derek Petrie, Ajay Sahbherwal and Rob Wonnacott was nominated for election as a director of the Company for the ensuing year. Each such nominee was elected by ordinary resolution, for a termNeither the threat of dying from Covid nor an array of inducements from lottery tickets to guns and marijuana have been enough to sway America’s staunchest vaccine holdouts.ROCKVILLE, Md., June 30, 2021--Xometry, Inc., a leading AI-enabled marketplace for on-demand manufacturing, today announced the pricing of its initial public offering of 6,875,000 shares of its Class A common stock at a price of \$44.00 per share. In addition, the underwriters have been granted a 30-day option to purchase up to an additional 1,031,250 shares of Class A common stock at the initial public offering price, less underwriting discounts and commissions. The shares are expected to beginThe company said its former Chief Financial Officer Stephen Doyle and two of his family members were also being investigated by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC). “We are genuinely disturbed by the allegations concerning Mr Doyle,” the company Chairman Jeffrey Bleich said in a statement, without providing any details on the allegations. Nuix is not aware of the precise nature of the probe and has not received any formal notification from ASIC, the company said, adding it will cooperate with any investigation.Serena Williams may have missed her last real chance to equal Margaret Court’s record. Read more here.The Roosters and Storm kick off round 16 of the NRL season at McDonald Jones Stadium.Tax season has historically been a prolific time for online scammers. Keep an eye out for these tricks.Australian Associated PressA Melbourne restaurant has reached out to a wheelchair-bound Australian war veteran to apologise after he claimed it would not accept his booking.Joel Sardi served in the army for five years including a stint in Afghanistan before becoming a quadriplegic after suffering spinal injuries in a fall down a staircase in 2014.Round 16 of the AFL season gets underway with Gold Coast taking on Richmond at Marvel Stadium.Australian Associated PressNorth Queensland have become the latest NRL club to be impacted by COVID-19 with training cancelled on Wednesday and three members of the club’s bubble put in isolation.The Cowboys were forced to call off the club’s training after it was discovered that a bubble member had become a case contact of a case over the weekend.AVAV earnings call for the period ending April 30, 2021.HANOI, Vietnam, June 30, 2021--FPT Software, Vietnam’s largest IT firm, has signed an agreement with US-based leading digital experience software provider Sitecore, taking the partnership between two companies to a new level. As a solution partner, FPT Software will promote the adoption of Sitecore’s digital marketing solutions to a wider range of businesses, especially in the Japanese market.The new live-action film stars Darby Camp and Jack Whitehall and features their oversized pup causing good-natured chaos in New York CityTitled The Idol, the series focuses on a female pop singer who ‘starts a romance with an enigmatic LA club owner who is the leader of a secret cult.’In Trafalgar Square, Liam James finds a nervous crowd losing its inhibitions and its doubts

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