



## NKU advances to GLVC Tourney championship game

Malone scores 21 points as Norse hold off Rockhurst, 67-62, in GLVC Tournament semifinals

EVANSVILLE, Ind. - Leslie Malone scored 21 points and blocked three shots as Northern Kentucky University advanced to the championship game of the Great Lakes Valley Conference Tournament by posting a 67-62 win against Rockhurst on Saturday night in the PAC Arena.

Dustin Maguire added 17 points for NKU, which improved to 23-6 and advanced to the GLVC Tournament championship game for the second time in three years. The 15th-ranked Norse built a 17-4 lead early in the first half as Rockhurst missed 15 of its first 16 shots from the field.

"We started off very well and did a great job of defending Rockhurst's shooters," NKU head coach Dave Bezold said after collecting his 99th career victory. "They have some outstanding perimeter shooters, but we challenged their shots in the first half and

were able to build a nice lead. We had that cushion, but we know Rockhurst is an outstanding team and expected them to make a run."

DeAaron Williams scored eight of his 13 points in the first half as NKU took a 33-24 lead into the locker room. The Norse still owned a 62-53 advantage with 48 seconds left in the game, but Aaron Hill and Tyler Knust

*NKU's Scott Bibbins looks to pass against Rockhurst on Saturday.*

knocked down consecutive 3-point shots to bring Rockhurst to within 62-59.

Maguire made two free throws with 31 seconds left to extend NKU's advantage to 64-59, but Hill countered by burying another 3-pointer with 24 seconds remaining to slice the Norse lead to 64-62.

Maguire then made one of two free throws for a 65-62 lead, giving Rockhurst a chance to tie the game. Hill's 3-pointer, however, was off target and Maguire added two more free throws to seal the win.

Williams grabbed nine rebounds for NKU, which shot 43.1 percent from the field. Hill, the GLVC Player of the Year, led Rockhurst (19-10) with 24 points, including five 3-pointers.

"Hill made some big shots late in the game, and they were big-time plays," Bezold said. "Maguire stepped up to the line and knocked down key free throws for us. It was a great win, and we're excited about getting back to the championship game."

NKU faces Bellarmine at 3 p.m. Sunday for the



*NKU's Leslie Malone slams down two of his team-leading 21 points during the second half of the Norse's 67-62 win against Rockhurst. Malone also blocked three shots as the Norse advanced to the GLVC Tournament title game.*

GLVC championship. The Knights defeated Southern Indiana, 54-50, in the other semifinal game Saturday night.

Bellarmine knocked off NKU in both regular-season meetings, including a 76-68 decision over the Norse in Regents Hall on Feb. 26.

NKU won the GLVC Tournament title in 2003 and has finished runner-up in both '05 and '07.

Two years ago, Southern Indiana rallied for a 63-61 win against NKU in the GLVC Tournament championship game in Roberts Stadium.