

AP photo

Michigan interim coach Steve Fisher yells the strategy during the Wolverines' NCAA tournament win over Virginia.

Ann Arbor asks: Bill? Bill who?

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (AP) — Interim Michigan coach Steve there's no question about that," Fisher, in demand since leading the Wolverines to four NCAA, we are as good as Illinois. We victories in 12 days, apologized Monday for ignoring the many messages on his answering machine.

"The phone last night rang nonstop," Fisher said, adding that he just couldn't return the 23 messages left on the machine. "We had to let the thing record."

Members of the media have wanted to talk to Fisher since Michigan's surprising 92-87 victory over North Carolina Thursday. Then Saturday's 102-65 win over Virginia Saturday put Michigan (28-7) into the NCAA Final 4. That's an accomplishment Fisher's predecessor, Bill Frieder, didn't achieve in nine seasons at Michigan. Fisher was named interim coach March 15 when Frieder took the coaching job at Arizona State.

Fisher wishes he could keep talking about the victories over North Carolina, which had twice beaten Michigan in the tournament in the past, Virginia, South Alabama and Xavier.

But he said he realized the team has to concentrate on beating Big Ten champion Illinois Saturday.

"We will have our hands full, Fisher said. "However, we do feel haven't proved it the two times we played them."

Michigan lost both regular season games against Illinois, including the season finale at home.

"But we have good players who . . believe they can beat anybody in the country," he said. "And by the way they have been playing the last two games I think they have reason to believe that."

Fisher said two aspects of his strategy he would emphasize would be getting the ball to 6-foot-10 forward Terry Mills for an inside shot if he's not doubledteamed, and close guarding on Illinois' Kendall Gill.

Despite Fisher's achievement and speculation that Athletic Director Bo Schembechler will take the "interim" out of his title, a big topic of conversation in Ann Arbor Monday was Frieder.

Mike Krakovsky, a Michigan student, said Frieder wasn't popular on campus.

"Everyone is saying, 'Who's Bill?' after he cut the team and everything," Krakovsky said.

Final 4 teams have plenty to prove

Associated Press

Duke, Seton Hall, Illinois, Mich-

An unlikely NCAA Final 4 from the three best basketball conferences in America. A Final 4 with more than four things to prove.

Or, as Illinois Coach Lou Henson said when asked if he had beaten the "rap" that he could recruit but not coach: "That's for people down in the pool halls. That's for them to talk about."

Consider the four teams and their coaches that made it to Seattle. None are conference champions, either regular-season or tournament:

• Michigan, under Steve Fisher, an interim coach who took over just before the tournament after Bill Frieder accepted the job at Arizona State. Under Fisher, what had been a talented group of underachievers, suddenly reached its potential.

• The Wolverines play Illinois, another group with the rap of talented underachievers, a rap for which Henson has received the blame. Illinois beat Michigan twice during the Big Ten season, which will lead to the inevitable debate about how hard it is for to under 40 percent shooting in one team to beat another three times in a given year.

• Seton Hall, sixth Big East team to make the Final 4 in the league's 10 years of existence and perhaps the least likely — only a late-season spurt that got the Pirates into the tournament a year ago saved Coach P.J. Carlesimo's job. It's a faceless team with players better known internationally than in the United States, and until last season, it worried most about getting past the "8-9" game and into the regular draw in the conference tournament.

 Duke, making its third trip to the Final 4 in four years and seventh of all time. That's the good news - the other news is

that the Blue Devils never have won a national championship.

The games begin at the Kingdome Saturday, with Seton Hall (30-6) meeting Duke (28-7) in a Big East-Atlantic Coast Conference matchup that is a precursor to a proposed regular-season tournament matching the East Coast's two top conferences.

Then, it will be the Big Ten vs. the Big Ten, with Michigan (28-7) vs. Illinois (31-4).

Duke, the nation's top-ranked team for the first third of the season, is a 4½-point favorite in the first game, after reaching the Final 4 with an 85-77 victory over Georgetown, the East's top seed. The Blue Devils enter the game with Danny Ferry, in his third Final 4, wearing the mantle that Danny Manning had last year when he carried Kansas to its upset national title.

"When you're ranked No. 1 for two months, that's a lot of pressure," Coach Mike Krzyzewski said.

But it's also pressure when a team has not won a national title and is playing a team like Seton Hall, which is limiting opponents the tournament.

The Pirates go 10 deep and start two Olympians — Andrew Gaze, Australia's best player, and Ramon Ramos, starting center on Puerto Rico's Olympic team. Despite getting only six points from leading scorer John Morton and none from Ramos, the second leading scorer, Seton Hall beat Nevada-Las Vegas 84-61 in the West Regional final.

The three other starters guards Gerald Greene and John Morton and forward Daryll Walker — are the result of Seton Hall's past failures. They were grabbed out of New York by Carlesimo and away from St. John's and Villanova after a 1-16 Big East season



Mike Krzyzewski

three years ago with the promise they would play immediately rather than sit on the bench.

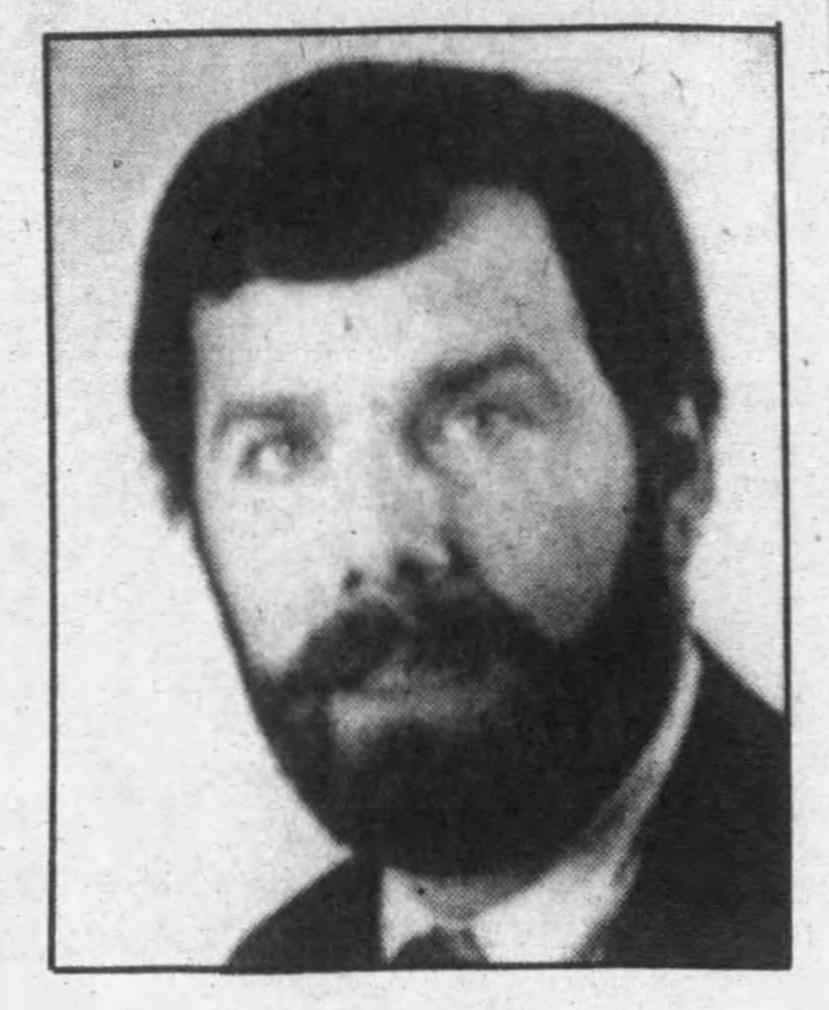
"Us? In the Final 4? Can you believe that?" Greene said. "To think about where the program was when Daryll, John and I came here and to where it is now . . .

Michigan has the names, as in All-American Glen Rice, who shot 13-for-16 and finished with 32 points in the 102-65 rout of Virginia in the Southeast Regional final. Plus Rumeal Robinson, Sean Higgins, Terry Mills, Loy Vaught and a host of other high school standouts.

But Steve Fisher?

"Never in my wildest dreams did I think I'd be sitting before you today as the head coach of Michigan, with a group that's getting ready to go to the Final 4," said the 47-year-old assistant who got his job only two days before the tournament started.

That's when football coach and athletic director Bo Schembechler bid Frieder adieu with the comment: "We want a Michigan man coaching Michigan, not an Arizona State man." Even after Satur-



P.J. Carlesimo

day's victory, Schembechler remained noncommittal about Fisher's future.

But his players say one reason for their success is that they feel looser under Fisher than under Frieder.

Illinois must play under the burden of its two wins over Michigan, 96-84 at home and 89-73 on the road.

Henson recognizes that, despite the euphoria of Illinois' first Final 4 trip since 1952.

"I suppose I could have pulled off my sport coat and thrown it and run around kissing people," he said. "I really felt good. I think it's great that we're going to the Final 4, but we still have business to take care of."

And of course he said the correct things about his opponent.

"Michigan right now is playing the best ball of anybody in the NCAA," he said. "I saw, the game yesterday and they were unbelievable. They could have beaten a pro team. If they play like they've been playing, nobody's going to beat them."

Big Ten banks a bundle from tourney

Gazette staff report

The Big Ten Conference has hit the jackpot in the NCAA men's basketball tournament in more ways than one.

With Illinois and Michigan meeting in the semifinals of the Final 4 on Saturday, the league is assured of having a team in the championship game next Monday night in

In addition, the conference will rake in more than \$4.5 million for its impressive showing in the tournament. The exact figure is \$4,503,-

Indiana and Minnesota both reached the Illinois and Michigan will get to keep \$788,130

Sweet 16 portion of the tournament by winning two games, and Iowa advanced to the second round before falling to North Carolina State in double overtime.

Illinois and Michigan earned \$1,251,000 apiece for the league. Indiana and Minnesota brought in \$750,600 each. And Iowa contributed \$500,400.

In the Big Ten, each school gets to keep half of the money it earns in the NCAA tournament. The other half goes into a "pool" for all 10 league teams to share.

When the cash registers stop ringing,

apiece. Indiana and Minnesota will pocket \$562,950 each. And Iowa will receive \$450,-

Part of that money is earmarked to pay for tournament expenses, such as travel, lodging and food.

Ohio State, Michigan State, Purdue, Wisconsin and Northwestern will all benefit to the tune of \$270,216 apiece.

The Big Ten and the Atlantic Coast Conference both netted \$4,503,600. The Big East Conference finished third at \$3,753,000.

St. John's moves past UAB to NIT finale

NEW YORK (AP) - Jayson Williams and freshman Malik Sealy scored 17 points apiece as St. John's advanced to the final of the National Invitation Tournament with a 76-65 victory over Alabama-Birmingham Monday

St. John's (19-13), seeking its fifth NIT title despite finishing eighth in the nine-team Big East

Judge won't change

St. Louis in Wednesday night's lineup, had a three-point play and Square Garden.

UAB, which trailed by 17 in the next seven points.

first half, got within 12 at halftime and then closed the gap to 42-36 with 11:14 left in the game.

Jason Buchanan, one of three Conference this season, will meet freshmen in the St. John's starting championship game. The Billikens a fastbreak layup to help the defeated Michigan State, 74-64, in Redmen extend the margin to 49the other semifinal at Madison 38, but the Blazers once again got within six by scoring six of the

With sophomore reserve Billy Singleton scoring all seven of his points in the next 3:05, St. John's upped its lead to 59-47 with 3:55

The Blazers rallied again as Barry Bearden hit two threepointers, keying a 12-5 run that made it 64-59 with 1:43 left, but UAB could get no closer.

Agents' charges intact; lowa's Becker testifies

CHICAGO (AP) — A federal judge refused Monday to dismiss fraud charges against Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom while attorneys for the two sports agents argued over witnesses.

U.S. District Judge George Marovich indicated he would not allow the first defense witnesses to testify, then called attorneys into his chambers to resolve the dispute. Walters, 58, and Bloom, 29, are accused of defrauding

seven universities out of scholarship money by paying college athletes thousands of dollars to sign contract agreements before the athletes' college eligiblity had expired.

Both Walters and Bloom have pleaded innocent.

The federal government concluded its case early Monday, with testimony by Iowa professor Samuel Becker, who served on a faculty committee that determined whether scholarships should be awarded to student athletes.

Becker testified that he would not have offered scholarships to Ronnie Harmon, a former Iowa running back now with the Buffalo Bills, or to Devon Mitchell, a former owa player now with the Detroit Lions, if he had known the two had accepted cash from Walters and Bloom and signed contracts in violations of NCAA eligibility rules.

Under cross-exmination, however, Becker conceded he was not certain whether the university attempted to recover scholarship money after it learned the two players had violated the rules.

NFL's free agency NEW YORK (AP) - Judge depart from its previous rulings in David Doty has told the NFL order to grant plaintiff's motion,"

Players Association that he won't Doty wrote. "The court declines to stop the new system of free do so." agency under which 130 players have changed teams in the past six weeks.

But the federal judge presiding over the antitrust suit filed by the union at the end of the 24-day strike in 1987 did not specifically validate the new system as a way for the league to satisfy antitrust requirements. He didn't mention that subject at all. In a decision made public

Monday, the Minneapolis-based federal judge denied an injunction filed by the union of the owners' so-called "Plan B." He based it on his ruling in July

1988, in which he held that outright free agency, which the union is seeking, could hurt the compensation and right of competitive balance and "would first refusal that has bound them work a wholesale subversion of to their teams. The union is the collective bargaining process." seeking free agency for all players

Under the new system, each team was allowed to protect 37 players, with the others on the roster to become unconditional free agents, regardless of whether they were under contract.

As of Monday, 130 of the 619 unprotected players had changed teams, at an average of 78 percent increase in salary, according to Management Council figures. Doty's ruling came on a less liberal plan — one that would allow teams to protect 40, 42 or 44 players, depending on their

But Doty noted that more than 1,000 players still were subject to "The court would have to at some point in their careers.



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NEWS NOTES/

AREA SPORTS

Babe Ruth tryout There will be a tryout Saturday for all boys age 14-15 in the Roosevelt school district who wish to play Babe Ruth Baseball this summer. The tryout will be from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. at Roosevelt. For more information, call Carl Unkel at 365-6736.

Rolls 300 game

Dennis Williams, bowling in the Half and Half League at the Cedar Rapids Bowling Center Monday night, rolled his first 300

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