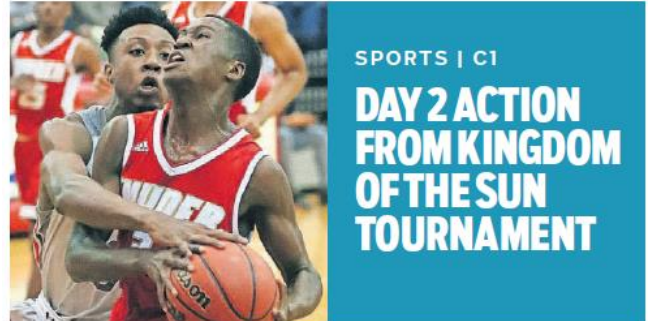


DAY 2 - December 28th 2017

All Stats and Stories by **Richard Burton**



WINTER HAVEN 76, WILDWOOD 68: Keyshawn Bryant scored a game-high 26 points and Timothy Lowery scored 20, as the Blue Devils held off a late charge by the Wildcats. Marcus Niblack led Wildwood with 25 points, while Darion Wilson scored 20. Winter Haven led by nine at halftime and was up seven after three, but saw the Wildcats close to within two points on two occasions, with the last coming at the 2:27 mark of the fourth quarter. From there, Bryson Birdsong scored six points during an 8-0 run to put the game away for Winter Haven. Wildwood, who was down by as many as 11 in the fourth quarter, didn't score another basket until there were four seconds left.



APOPKA 56, VICTORY CHRISTIAN 55: Jai Clark (21 points) hit the go-ahead three-pointer with 55.4 seconds left, as the Blue Darters knocked off the Storm. After Clark's shot, the Storm missed a chance at a go-ahead three-pointer with 37 seconds remaining. From there, Clark hit two free throws with 28 seconds left to make it a four-point edge for Apopka. Victory failed to convert again, but the Blue Darters missed a front end of a one-and-one. The Storm got a three-pointer from Bulldog Harrison (19 points, 10 of those in the fourth quarter) to make it a one-point game with 1.7 seconds on the clock. After a timeout, the Blue Darters inbounded the ball and ran the clock out. Victory Christian trailed by six points entering the final quarter, but took the lead at 52-51 following a 6-0 run with 1:43 left on a basket by Wilfredo Rodriguez (18 points). Clark, who scored 11 points in the opening quarter, would come up big late for Apopka and made the plays to help it avoid a second straight fourth quarter collapse. On Wednesday, the Blue Darters blew a 10-point lead in a 50-48 loss to Mount Carmel (Md.). Nathan Louis added 11 of his 15 points for Apopka in the second half of the win on Thursday. Clark made 4-of-7 from three-point range in the win for the Blue Darters. Rodriguez finished with nine rebounds for Victory Christian, which was 1-of-12 from three-point range over the opening three quarters, but got back into the game with three makes from long range over the final eight minutes.

THE VANGUARD SCHOOL 58, NORTH MARION 35: The Colts couldn't get hardly anything to fall in a loss to the Panthers. North Marion missed 42 of 53 shots in the game and was 2-of-24 from three-point range in the blowout loss. The Colts were down 27-13 at halftime and made just 4-of-30 in the opening half, which included an 0-of-15 mark from beyond the arc. North Marion, though, battled back and got consecutive three-pointers from James Coleman and Marquez Reaves to get to within 28-22 at the 4:36 mark of the third quarter. The Panthers were able to extend their edge to nine points at the end of the quarter and saw North Marion fall apart over the final eight minutes. TVS opened the fourth quarter with a 12-0 run and cruised. Coleman led North Marion with 11 points in the loss.

WESTMINSTER ACADEMY 84, STRANAHAN 67: Zach Scott scored 35 points, as the Lions routed the Dragons. After falling down 5-0, the Lions went on a 15-0 run and went on to extend their lead to 49-30 at halftime. By halftime, Scott had 19 points, 12 in the second quarter. For two tournament games, Scott has scored 58 points. Duduey Blackwell (17 points), Chase Johnston (16 points) and Sam Griffin (15 points) also contributed for Westminster. David Herard (19 points), Cyrus Nance (18 points) and Imady Legiste (14 points) led the way for Stranahan in the loss.

BUFORD (Ga.) 73, GAINESVILLE 72: Marcus Watson scored 14 of his game-high 34 points in the fourth quarter and hit the go-ahead basket with 16.1 seconds left, as the Wolves rallied from down 14 points in the second half to knock off the Hurricanes. Watson made 9-of-10 shots to close the game and totaled 23 points after halftime. He had a personal 7-0 run to put the Wolves ahead 71-69 with a dunk at the 45.7 second mark.

Gainesville responded with a three-pointer from Christian Miller-Caldwell with 31.9 seconds on the clock. After a timeout, Buford misfired on a three-pointer, but Watson put in the miss to put his team ahead for good. The Wolves failed to convert a one-and-one with 6.7 seconds remaining and GHS had one last shot. The Hurricanes had to travel the length of the court and Buford came away with a steal and dribbled out the clock for the win. Watson finished 12-of-19 from the floor in the win. He is the first player since Lecanto's Nick Cortes in 2008 to score 30 or more points in consecutive Kingdom games. David Viti (13 points), Donnell Nixon (11 points), and Alex Jones (11 points) led Buford in the win. Josh Dudley (15 points), Miller-Caldwell (14 points), J'len Wilson (12 points) and Diamond Smith (11 points) led Gainesville. The Hurricanes were up seven points with just over four minutes to go, but Watson's surge enabled Buford to score 12 of the game's next 14 minutes and lead to the exciting finish.

LAKWOOD RANCH 74, MOUNT CARMEL (Md.) 63: The Mustangs outscored Mount Carmel 41-19 over the middle quarters after falling down by 11 points after the opening eight minutes. Evan Spiller (19 points, 10 rebounds), Damien Gordon (18 points), Kenny Buckley (15 points, six rebounds) and Christian Shaneyfelt (10 points, seven rebounds) led the way for Lakewood Ranch. William Miller (21 points), Dominic Carrington (15 points) and Jordon Jones (15 points, five rebounds) led Mount Carmel. Lakewood Ranch trailed 24-13 after the opening quarter, but battled back to go up by one at halftime. From there, Gordon scored eight points in the third, as the Mustangs outscored MC 20-10.

VANGUARD 53, BISHOP SNYDER 50: Vanguard held off Jacksonville Bishop Snyder 53-50 in the quarterfinals of the 44th annual Kingdom of the Sun boys basketball tournament on Thursday night. Blake Porter hit the go-ahead free throws with 17 seconds remaining for the Knights, who saw the Cardinals rally to take the lead in the fourth quarter after they trailed by as many as 12. Following Porter's free throws, which broke a 50-all tie, Bishop Snyder turned the ball over with 12.5 seconds on the clock. Porter was fouled again and made the first of two free throws, but had the second rim out and the Cardinals grabbed the rebound and advanced it to just beyond halfcourt at the 5.1 second mark. Bishop Snyder got the ball to Gyasi Powell, who had a good look at a three-pointer, but came up short, as time expired. With the win, Vanguard advances to the tournament semifinals and will face the winner of the late game between Orlando Christian Prep and Rockledge on Friday night at 7:30. To get there, the Knights survived a fourth quarter that featured four ties and two lead changes. Bishop Snyder started the fourth quarter with an 8-0 run and went up 41-40 with five minutes left. Neither team led by more than three points the rest of the way. The exciting final minutes featured a length of the court baseball pass to Derrick Brown, who converted a layup to make it 50-48 in favor of Vanguard with 1:15 left. Bishop Snyder answered on a floater in the line by Chris Bailey (12 points) with 25.8 seconds left in regulation. Vanguard didn't panic and Porter made the clutch foul shots to help move his team into the semifinals. Brown and Dantwan Grimes led the Knights with 14 points each. Keegan Kash grabbed eight rebounds off the bench for Vanguard. Curtis Bailey scored 11 of his 15 points in the fourth quarter to lead the way for Bishop Snyder. The Cardinals trailed by 10 at halftime, but the Knights made just 3-of-15 shots in the third quarter to allow them back into the game.



Vanguard's Dantwan Grimes (3) goes past Bishop Snyder defenders Corey Walker (15) and Luke Martin (5) as he drives to the basket. [BRUCE ACKERMAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER]

ROCKLEDGE 56, ORLANDO CHRISTIAN PREP 53, OT: Elijah Weaver scored 24 points to lead the Raiders past the Lions. Weaver scored 10 points in the fourth quarter and added four more in the extra session. Carlos Jones added 10 points for Rockledge. Nassir Little (19 points), Ronaldo Segu (14 points) and Dejuan Lockett (12 points) led OCP.