

LSU Wins 59-57 In Southeast Regional

Cats' Magic Falls Short In Atlanta

For the Kentucky Wildcats, it was a disappointing end to a great season Saturday when the LSU Tigers withstood a furious last minute effort by the Wildcats at The Omni and sent Kentucky home, one game shy of *Destination Dallas* and the Final Four.

When all the dust cleared, LSU had claimed a 59-57 victory, the Tigers' first victory of the season over UK following three consecutive earlier losses.

But the victory didn't come easy for the Tigers.

A couple time-outs (one to ice Tiger John Williams at the free throw line) and a last-ditch hail Mary from James Blackmon also gave the Wildcats another life in overtime.

That opportunity was set up by senior Roger Harden who scored on a driving lay-up with just five seconds left to cut the LSU lead to 59-57 and UK immediately called a timeout.

On the inbounds play, Williams was immediately fouled and UK coach Eddie Sutton called his final timeout to set up the strategy for one last shot, should Williams miss. He did and junior Winston Bennett rebounded, wheeled and fired a half-court pass to James Blackmon who fired at the buzzer. The ball struck the lip of the rim, but fell off harmlessly.

And while Kentucky went home to recount its memories of a great 32-4 season, LSU advanced to the NCAA Final Four against Louisville in Dallas.

Another UK Comeback Wasn't In The Books

Unlike previous Kentucky comebacks this season, it was LSU which came from four down in the final eight minutes to post the victory. Still, UK appeared to be on the verge of pulling another one out of the hat when Bennett rebounded the missed LSU free throw.

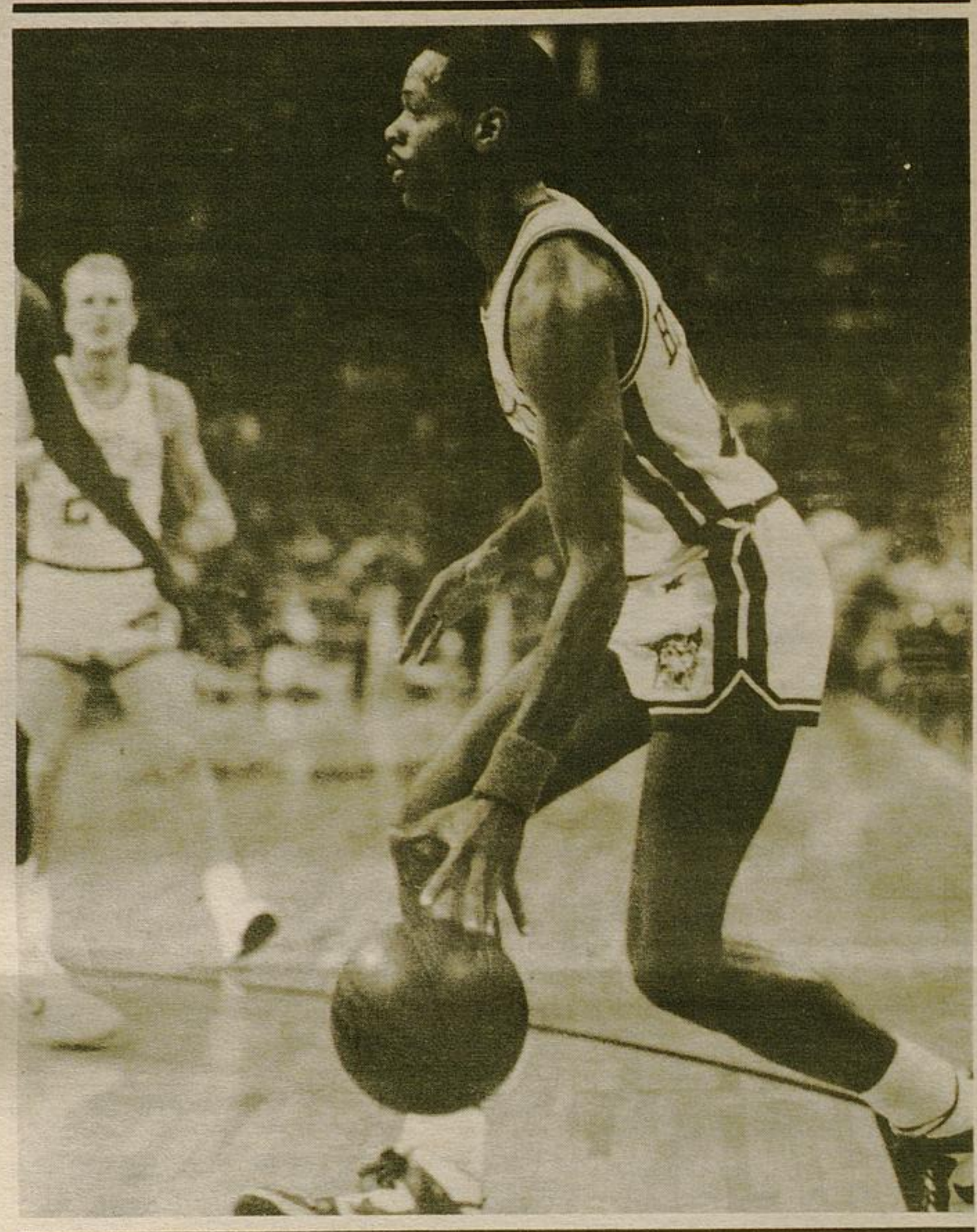
LSU wasn't bothered by the Kentucky magic, not this time.

"You could tell they were wondering if they could beat us four times in a row," said LSU's Derrick Taylor. "Usually Kentucky comes down and says, 'Here we are. We're going to do it to you again.' But today they came down and were hesitant."

True enough, but Taylor was anything but a confident soul himself. He scored only four points but shot an astounding zero percent from the field, nothing for nine.

In fact, it was that type of game. Neither team played particularly well. The shooting percentages were below fifty percent and Kentucky may have lost the contest at the free throw line where the Cats hit a miserable 56.3 percent.

Kentucky raced out of the gate early in the contest, claiming an 11-4 advantage during the first four minutes, thanks to nine points from All-American Kenny Walker, the last coming on a slam dunk after a missed layup. With 16:25 left, it had all the makings of a rout. Far from it.



James Blackmon Drives

LSU Fought Back From 11-4 Deficit

LSU got back in the contest on a pair of baskets from Anthony Wilson and John Williams and the two clubs battled the rest of the way.

LSU actually led the final eight minutes of the first half as Williams pitched in ten points and tourney MVP Don Redden added 9, but Kentucky staged a comeback of its own down the stretch and took command of a 34-33 halftime score when the Cats finally rediscovered Walker.

Walker went over 12 minutes without scoring, but tallied seven in the final 4:37.

UK got even when Harden canned an 18-footer at 30-30 and Walker tied the score at 32 after Redden had put LSU up by two. Redden hit one of two free throws for a 33-32 score and then Walker gave UK the lead at intermission by tickling the nets at 0:01 with an eight-footer from the baseline on a long pass from Harden.

Kentucky, hitting only six of 11 from the charity line in the first half, appeared to be in good shape because the Cats owned a 22-16 advantage in rebounds. But most of that came in the first six minutes when UK burst on the scene with intensity at its highest level.

In the second half, LSU led most of the first ten minutes, but Kentucky reclaimed the lead at 9:39 and held command until 3:30 when the red-hot Redden hit a turnaround shot for a 53-51 lead. Blackmon tied the game with a long range baseliner (his third straight bomb), but Ricky Blanton bagged a pair of free throw to put LSU back in front.

After a Kentucky miss, Redden scored on a follow-up when Taylor shot an air ball and LSU suddenly enjoyed a four-point lead (57-53).

Walker Free Throws Narrowed Lead To Two

Walker hit a pair of free throws to cut the score to 57-53 with 1:19 left but Blanton scored on a backdoor play at 0:15 as Kentucky was desperately trying to prevent LSU from running out the clock. That set up Harden's scoring drive and then the final five seconds.

Harden, who had played hero in two of three earlier games with LSU, was hoping to get the ball again for the final shot, but it was obvious that LSU was paying extra special attention to the blond bomber.

OFFICIAL NCAA BASKETBALL BOX SCORE													Date: March 22, 1986		Site: THE OMNI									
VISITORS (Last Name, First)																								
No.	LOUISIANA STATE	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	REB	PF	TP	MIN	A	TO	BLK	S											
24	John Williams	1	7	15	2	4	4	2	16	39	1	0	2	1										
44	Don Redden	1	6	13	3	4	8	3	15	34	3	5	0	1										
10	Derrick Taylor	0	0	9	4	4	1	3	4	34	3	1	0	1										
11	Anthony Wilson	0	6	9	0	0	2	2	12	35	0	1	0	1										
33	Ricky Blanton	0	5	5	2	2	8	4	12	28	3	0	0	1										
43	Jose Vargas	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0										
31	Oliver Brown	0	2	0	0	3	2	0	0	18	1	0	0	3										
30	Bernard Woodside	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0										
20	Beboisha Bukumirovich	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	2	0	0										
TEAM REBOUNDS (Included in Totals)													6											
TOTALS		24	53	11	14	32	17	59	200	12	9	2	8											
FG %: 1st Half		12 of 29-42.4%		12 of 24-50.0%		Game		24 of 53-45.3%		Deadball		Rebounds												
FT %: 1st Half		9 of 11-81.8%		2 of 3-66.7%		Game		11 of 14-78.6%																
HOME																								
No.	KENTUCKY	FG	FGA	FT	FTA	REB	PF	TP	MIN	A	TO	BLK	S											
25	Winston Bennett	1	3	13	2	4	12	4	8	36	1	1	0	2										
34	Kenny Walker	1	8	11	4	6	7	2	20	38	3	3	0	1										
10	James Blackmon	0	5	12	0	1	1	2	10	31	0	2	1	1										
15	Ed Davender	0	1	6	3	4	4	4	5	35	2	3	0	0										
23	Roger Harden	0	6	8	0	0	5	1	12	38	5	2	0	1										
55	Cedric Jenkins	1	2	0	1	3	3	2	2	19	1	1	0	1										
44	Robert Lock	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0										
TEAM REBOUNDS (Included in Totals)													1											
TOTALS		24	52	9	16	33	17	57	200	12	12	1	16											
FG %: 1st Half		14 of 30-46.7%		10 of 22-45.4%		Game		24 of 52-46.2%		Deadball		Rebounds												
FT %: 1st Half		6 of 11-54.5%		3 of 5-60.0%		Game		9 of 16-56.3%																
OFFICIALS: Hank Nichols, John Clougherty, and Tom Fraim													SCORE BY PERIODS		1st H.		2nd H.		OT		OT		FINAL	
Technical Fouls: None													LSU		33		26		XX		XX		59	
Attendance: 16,453													KENTUCKY		34		23		XX		XX		57	