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Friday's Viewer's Guide: 2K Classic championship highlights night

By Sam **Vecenie** | CBSSports.com November 21, 2014 3:10 am ET

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Can Texas take the 2K Classic? (USATSI)

The 2K Classic championship is the best game on tap for Friday night. Let's see what else is on the agenda.

Best game: Texas vs. California (7 ET, ESPN2) -- This should be a good matchup with both teams coming off wins over borderline-ranked teams. The question going into the game will be whether or not Longhorns point guard Isaiah Taylor can go after injuring his hand Thursday night. If he can't go, Javan Felix will likely slide into lead guard duties, and that's a major advantage for California. Jordan Matthews, Jabari Bird, and Tyrone Wallace form one of the best backcourts on the West Coast, and that would be every bit as equal as the advantage Texas holds in the frontcourt with Myles Turner, Cameron Ridley and Jonathan Holmes. Holmes, in particular, was fantastic Thursday, and the Golden Bears have no one to guard him adequately. If Taylor plays, I think the Longhorns win this pretty easily unless Cal can knock down 10+ 3-pointers. If he doesn't, I think I might choose Cal to pull the upset and get a big notch in their at-large belt.

Second-best game: George Washington at Virginia (7 ET) -- While this likely won't be the most exciting game of the night, it should be a really good matchup. Even with the losses of Maurice Creek and Isaiah Armwood, the Colonials profile as a tournament team in 2015. Kethan Savage and Patricio Garino should pick up the scoring slack, and Mike Lonergan is

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an excellent coach. Unfortunately, he'll be facing off against one of the best coaches in the country in Tony Bennett, who has a really well-oiled Cavaliers team going i in Charlottesville right now. Led by Malcolm Brogdon's two-way prowess, Virginia is a really tough team to beat. Their goal is to slow the game down and simply out-execute you at whatever it is you do best. It'll probably be a slower game, but Virginia should come out on top and pick up a solid win for their seeding resume.

Another one to watch: Duke vs. Temple (9:30 ET, TruTV) -- This is one of the Coaches vs. Cancer Classic games this year, which pits Duke's high-powered attack against Temple. It's a game worth watching in the way that every Duke game this year is worth watching. Jahlil Okafor is an absolute monster, Justise Winslow will probably do something cool, and Tyus Jones will show poise well beyond his years in getting everyone involved. Temple is actually coming off of a huge win against Louisiana Tech earlier this week, given that the Bulldogs will likely be a tournament team. Quentin DeCosey played extremely well as they found a way to slow down the high-pressure Bulldog system. Duke probably wins this game by 15-20 points, but it'll at least be more fun to watch than the next game I'm going to list...

Bonus game: Dayton vs. Connecticut (2:30 ET, ESPN2) -- I'm not sure I can -- in good conscience -- tell you to watch this game. Dayton's game with Texas A&M Thursday featured nearly 40 turnovers and 35 percent shooting from the field. The gameplay of the Connecticut game was at least better, but the Huskies had to scratch and claw their way to a win against what is projected to be a mid-CAA team in College of Charleston. Also, it's an afternoon game that will be played on a court with stickers on it that causes players to occassionally fly all over the place like they're playing on a slip and slide. It's going to be an ugly game that will likely come down to the final minute. Either team could win and it wouldn't surprise me.

Matchup of the night: Olivier Hanlan vs. Juwan Staten -- It's another Puerto Rico game, but it's hard to pass up a game featuring two scoring guards like this. Whereas Hanlan is averaging nearly 18 points per game in his first three matchups of the season, Staten hasn't really had a shot to go off yet. I think this game against another great scorer like Hanlan might be just what he needs. West Virginia likely wins this game anyway even if he doesn't go off because they're simply the better team, but I think we're going to see Staten's first real breakout of the season.

Potential upset: After seeing the way that **Toledo** ran with VCU, I think that it can wear down what is a pretty thin Oregon team by running against them. This Toledo team is probably the best the MAC has to offer this season. Even if it likely can't get in via an atlarge berth (unless they beat Duke and basically run the table in the MAC), this could be a game that could help them move up a seed line if they can win the MAC tournament. The key to the upset will be the Rockets finding a way to slow down Joseph Young, who might be the most efficient scoring guard in the country.

Pick against the spread: LSU -1 vs. Old Dominion (6:30 ET, CBSSN) -- If LSU is going to compete for second place in the SEC this season, it's gotta prove that it can take care of the teams that it should beat. Old Dominion, in reality, doesn't seem likely to make the NCAA Tournament. LSU is much more talented than they are. Period. Jordan Mickey should be able to shut down the paint, and Jarell Martin is going to eventually have to become a consistent scoring threat that LSU can count on. They just struggled with Texas Tech and Tubby Smith's mustache on Tuesday, but I just can't fathom a tournament team -- like I think LSU is -- losing this game on a neutral floor.

Other notes:

- Iowa-Syracuse (5:00 ET, ESPN2) is a game that will happen. Syracuse looked undeniably terrible for the whole game on Thursday against Cal, and so did lowa in the second half against Texas. My only prediction is inefficiency as neither team has a lead guard at this stage that can reliably initiate offense.
- Akron-Miami (FL) (2:30 ET, ESPNU) should be a fun one for a while, but Miami will likely pull away eventually.
- Seton Hall-Nevada happens tomorrow in the Paradise Jam, and I think everyone should watch Isaiah Whitehead at least once.

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NCAA Football | 9:49 am Reports: LSU to hire Ed Orgeron as defensive line coach

Golf | 9:47 am Phoenix Open bans golfers from tossing gear into crowd at No. 16

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NCAA Basketball | 9:28 am Notre Dame Ioses Zach Auguste

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- Oh yeah, Kentucky plays too. And they're only 28.5 point favorites against Boston University. They should probably cover that, but who knows how engaged UK's defense will be after the way they played in the first half against Buffalo on Sunday.
- UNLV-Stanford (7:00 ET, TruTV) is the opening game of the Coaches vs. Cancer Classic. Stanford should win this one, but I'm excited to see Rashad Vaughn and Cody Shop Fan Gear Doolin take on Chasson Randle and Anthony Brown.
- · Stephen F. Austin has to travel to Cincinnati to take on Xavier. That's another matchup of potential Tournament teams.
- · Georgia State Colorado State is another intriguing mid-major game. I don't think GSU is as bad as they showed earlier this week against lowa State.
- · Also in action: Louisville, Florida, Utah, Michigan State.

Topics: Anthony Brown, Cameron Ridley, Chasson Randle, Cody Doolin, Isaiah Taylor, Isaiah Whitehead, Jabari Bird, Jahlil Okafor, Jarell Martin, Javan Felix, Jonathan Holmes, Jordan Mickey, Joseph Young, Justise Winslow, Juwan Staten, Kethan Savage, Malcolm Brogdon, Myles Turner, Olivier Hanlan, Patricio Garino, Rashad Vaughn, Tyrone Wallace, Tyus Jones, Akron Zips, Boston University Terriers, Brown Bears, Buffalo Bulls, California Golden Bears, Cincinnati Bearcats, College of Charleston Cougars, Colorado State Rams, Connecticut Huskies, Dayton Flyers, Duke Blue Devils, Florida Gators, George Washington Colonials, Georgia State Panthers, Iowa Hawkeyes, Iowa State Cyclones, Kentucky Wildcats, LSU Tigers, Louisiana Tech Bulldogs, Louisville Cardinals, Michigan State Spartans, Nevada Wolf Pack, Old Dominion Monarchs, Oregon Ducks, Seton Hall Pirates, Stanford Cardinal, Stephen F. Austin Lumberjacks, Syracuse Orange, Temple Owls, Texas Longhorns, Texas Tech Red Raiders, Toledo Rockets, UNLV Rebels, Utah Utes, Virginia Cavaliers, Washington Huskies, West Virginia Mountaineers, Xavier Musketeers, NCAAB



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