

Cal Shuts Down Syracuse In 2K Sports Classic Semi-Finals

by [Jaquam Bodden](#) 21 November 2014, 1:29 AM

Photo Credit: thegarden.com

Recap

The California Bears, under new coach Cuonzo Martin, were picked to finish 7th in the Pac-12 preseason poll. Tonight, Cal let the country know that they are the real deal, handily beating Syracuse in the 2K Sports semifinals, 73-59. No. 23 Syracuse (#20 in the SQ Writers Poll) was the favorite to win the 2K Sports Classic, but the Bears had other plans as they began to dominate late in the first half.

Cal was led by their three-guard attack of Jabari Bird, Jordan Matthews, and Tyrone Wallace, who combined for 48 points on the night. As for Syracuse, Rakeem Christmas, the team's top scorer, struggled mightily, only scoring eight points before fouling out late in the 2nd half. Kaleb Joseph and Michael Gbinjie scored 13 points apiece, and Chris McCollough had 12 points, 6 rebounds, and 4 blocks.

Cal led by as many as 19 points in the game. Syracuse had the chance to cut into the lead, but in the end the Cal Bears were too strong for them.

Our Take

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The loss by Syracuse may have showed us how Syracuse is going to be this season. This team is definitely different than last years and it showed. Even though they lost tonight it doesn't mean it's time to panic. It's still early in the season so there's still room to improve for them.

As for Cal, the bears have captured their first signature win of the season and they have proved that they belong so far. The win is great for the team that looks to make another trip to the NCAA tournament. Cal has another test for them as they face Texas in the 2K Sports championship on Friday.