

President's Message to Campus

Office of the President
March 26, 2018

Two words describe it well...National Champions!!

Saturday the men's basketball team, led by head coach Andy Bronkema, defeated Northern State University 71-69 to capture the first NCAA Division II national championship in Ferris' history. This championship victory, the first by a Division II men's basketball team in Michigan, was the team's 38th victory, tying an NCAA record for the most wins in a season.

The game was played before a packed house of over 3,500 people, an attendance record for the Sanford Pentagon in Sioux Falls, S.D. Many Ferris fans attended and cheered for our team, but with Northern only 200 miles away in Aberdeen, S.D., the atmosphere was loud and intense. Ferris fans across the nation joined a television audience of over three million people watching the game on CBS.

The Bulldogs trailed by as many as seven points but rallied to lead by two at the half. After the break, they pushed this lead to six points, but trailed by three points with a little over two minutes to play. From there they held Northern scoreless, winning with two free throws, a layup and a final free throw. Junior center Zach Hankins led the Bulldogs with 19 points and was named the tournament's most valuable player.

The victory was the team's 26th in a row, which included nine in the post-season, vs. Saginaw Valley, Ashland and Lake Superior in the GLIAC tournament, vs. Ohio Dominican, Lake Superior and Findlay in the NCAA Midwest Regional, and finally against Barry, West Texas A&M and Northern at the national finals. A great crowd of fans welcomed the team and the national championship trophy to campus Sunday afternoon.

Please join me in congratulating our team - Drew Cushingberry, Peter Firlik, TyQuone Greer, Zach Hankins, D'angelo Hughes, De'qavion Johnson, Noah King, Greg Krusniak, Markese Mayfield, Jaylin McFadden, Andrew Meacham, Michael Peterson, Peyton Staples, DeShaun Thrower, Armani Tinsley, Cole Walker, Greg Williams and honorary team member Mitchell Peterson.

We salute head coach Andy Bronkema and his assistants – Jim Lake, Bill Killian, Dave Schlump and Al Hamilton. Over 300 colleges and universities compete in Division II. Two weeks ago, 64 teams began the NCAA post-season tournament. And only one earned the National Championship, our own Ferris State University Bulldogs.

Congratulations coaches, student-athletes and fans. This truly was an extraordinary, memorable year. It is indeed a great day to be a Bulldog!!

David L. Eisler, president