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Boston's Record-Setting 28 Point, 22 Rebound Performance Leads South Carolina to 69-61 Victory Over North Carolina

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Virgin Islands basketball superstar Aliyah Boston had her best performance in the 2022 NCAA Tournament thus far scoring 28 points and hauling in 22 rebounds to help South Carolina beat North Carolina 69-61 Friday night.

Boston is just the fourth player to score at least 25 points and at least 20 rebounds in the NCAA Tournament. Her 22 rebounds were the most by a South Carolina player in an NCAA Tournament game ever.

It was also Boston's 27th straight double-double, which is the fifth longest streak in Division 1 history, according to ESPN.

In the fourth quarter, Boston scored all of the Gamecocks 13 points, with 8 of those points being second-chance opportunities.

Boston started out the game strong and scored the Gamecocks' first five points. Destanni Henderson scored the next six points for South Carolina and they led 11-2 just two and a half minutes into the game. North Carolina responded by outscoring South Carolina 21-11 the rest of the first quarter and had a 23-22 advantage heading into the second quarter.

South Carolina's defense responded and held North Carolina to just eight points in the second quarter which allowed the team to build a 39-31 lead at halftime.

North Carolina cut the deficit to four, 47-43, with four and half minutes remaining in the third quarter. However, a 9-2 South Carolina run to close the third quarter gave the team an 11 point, 56-45 lead heading into the final quarter.

North Carolina trimmed the deficit to four, 65-61, with two minutes left but did not score for the rest of the game and a Boston lay-up and a pair of free throws in the final minute secured the victory for South Carolina.

Boston told ESPN after the game that her performance was "just about being dominant...I was just trying to do everything I can for our team to get the win." She credited God and her team's discipline and hard work over the past few weeks as key factors that allowed South Carolina to win.

South Carolina head coach Dawn Staley said Boston has been dominant in all of the team's biggest games this season. "She has goals and wanted to win a National Player of the Year. And some people can have those goals and not deliver and have people guessing as to what it is. She goes out there and performs. There's nobody that has performed at the highest level against the best competition in our country consistently all season long, and I think she wants it," he said.

After the game, North Carolina coach Courtney Banghart, referring to Boston, said, "She's powerful and strong. She has kind of dancer footwork. She's relentless." Banghart joked that she didn't want her team to play against Boston again. "I wish she was old enough to go to the pros. I would be sitting in the front row celebrating her to be drafted because I think I've seen enough. I had one chance, and I've seen enough of Aliyah Boston."

South Carolina will take on Creighton at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday on ESPN for a chance to play in the national semifinals.