

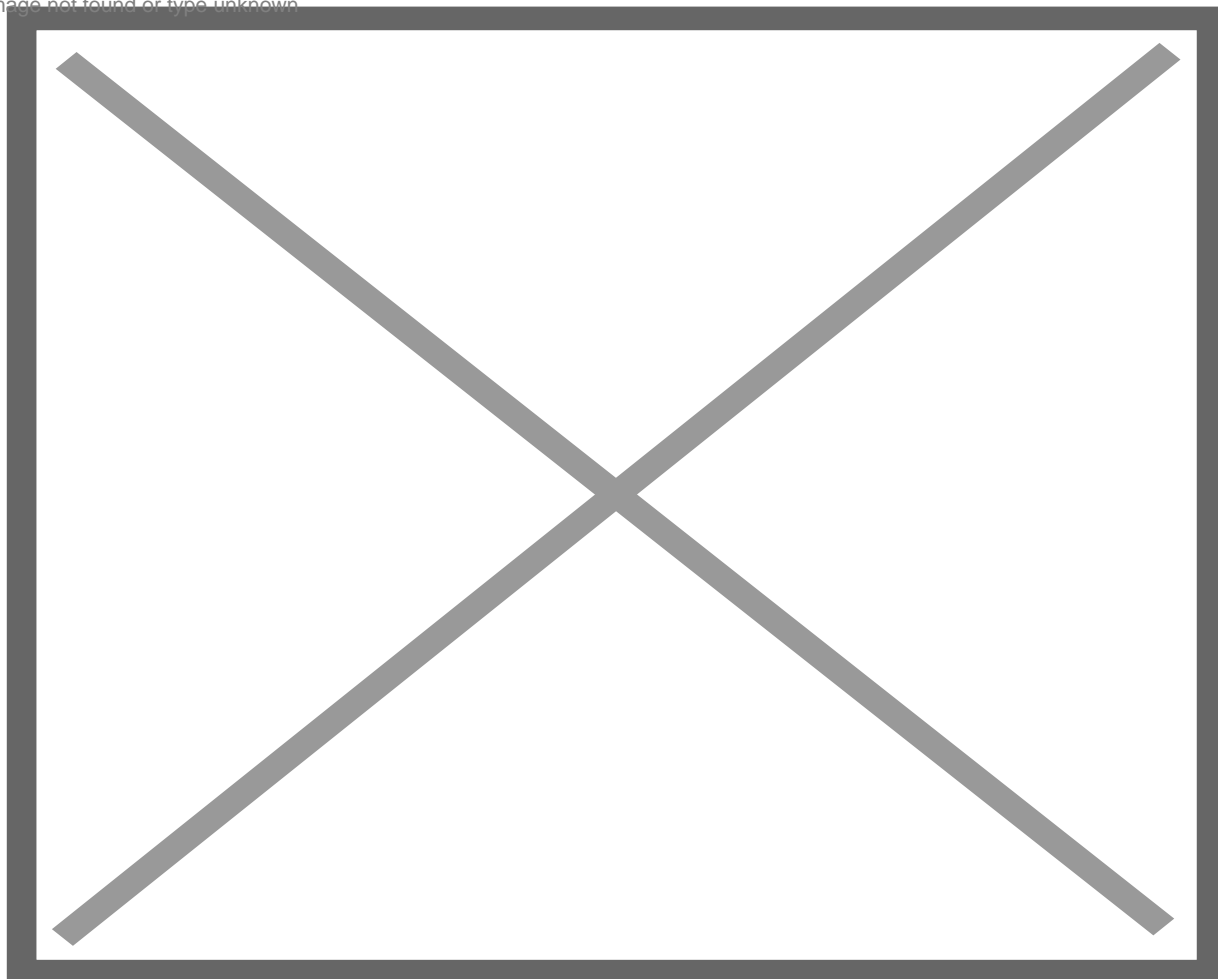
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# Virgin Islander Aliyah Boston and South Carolina Defeat UConn 64-49 To Win National Title

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## Virgin Islander Aliyah Boston and South Carolina Defeat UConn 64-49 To Win National Title Thanks to Stingy Defense and Aggressive Rebounding

South Carolina won its second NCAA national title in program history by beating UConn 64-49 in the Women's Basketball National Title Game on Sunday night. Virgin Islander Aliyah Boston recorded her 30th double-double of the season with 11 points and 16 rebounds in the victory.

In an emotional post game interview, Boston told ESPN, "We are national champions, I'm in tears."

South Carolina dominated the rebounding battle against UConn 49-24 in the game.

When asked about South Carolina's dominance on the glass, Boston stated, "We knew that we have been dominant on the glass all season and we knew that we couldn't change up, especially for this game we knew it would come down to rebounding."

South Carolina's Destanni Henderson led the game in scoring with a career-high 26 points.

South Carolina had six offensive rebounds in the first five minutes of the game and jumped out to an early 13-2 lead. Boston had three of those early offensive rebounds and scored a lay-up during the Gamecocks run.

In the first quarter, South Carolina out-rebounded UConn 12-3 and led 22-8 heading into the second quarter. Zia Cooke was the team's leading scorer with eight opening period points and Boston had five first-quarter points for South Carolina.

It was the fewest points that UConn has scored in a quarter in any game this season.

Henderson knocked down her second of two second-quarter three pointers and gave South Carolina an 18 point, 30-12, lead with just over seven and half minutes left in the first half.

UConn responded with a 9-2 run that included five points from Paige Bueckers, the 2021 Player of the Year, to trim the deficit to 11 with about four minutes left in the second quarter.

They continued to inch closer to South Carolina for the remainder of the second quarter but still trailed 35-27 at halftime.

In the first half, South Carolina had 16 offensive rebounds and 17 second-chance points.

South Carolina scored the first eight points of the third quarter to build a 43-27 lead with just over five minutes left in the third quarter.

UConn answered the South Carolina run with a 10-0 run that made the score 43-37 with a 1:30 left in the third quarter.

South Carolina led 46-37 at the end of the third quarter.

Early in the fourth quarter, Boston had a big block that led to a Henderson lay-up that put the Gamecocks up by double digits with about eight minutes to go in the game.

South Carolina built their lead up to 16 points in the fourth quarter before UConn hit back-to-back three pointers to trim the deficit to 10 points with about three and a half minutes left in the game.

UConn did not get closer than 10 points after that point in the game.

Boston recorded her 30th double-double of the season when she made a free throw and scored her 10th point with 1:15 left in the game.

Boston was the Consensus National Player of the Year and the Naismith Defensive Player of the Year this season.

Boston had an historic season and now holds the Southeastern Conference record for consecutive double-doubles after putting up at least 10 points and 10 rebounds in 27 games in a row this season. Her double-double streak is the fifth longest in the history of Division 1, according to ESPN.

Heading into the national semifinals, she averaged 16.8 points per game and 12.2 rebounds this season, which ranks her fifth in that rebounding category nationally.

In a Sports Illustrated article in February, Boston was heralded as the “Face of Women’s College Basketball” and a “double-double machine.”

Boston’s 29th double-double ties the SEC Record for the second most double-doubles in a season.

South Carolina was the number one ranked team in both the Associated Press and Coaches Polls for the entirety of the season and entered the game as the nation’s third best scoring defense, giving up 50.5 points per game this season.

Boston was a major part of that defense’s success as she led the team with 2.49 blocked shots per game, which was the 14th highest in that category this season in the country. Boston also averaged 1.3 steals per game and was tied with Destanni Henderson, a fellow team mate, for the most steals per game on the team.