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End of the Line - South Carolina Gamecocks Defeated by Iowa Hawkeyes in Friday's Final Four Matchup

Sports / **Published On April 01, 2023 05:15 AM /**

Staff Consortium **April 01, 2023**

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Aliyah Boston and the South Carolina Gamecocks were defeated by the Iowa Hawkeyes on Friday, March 30, 2023, sending the previously undefeated team home for the season.

There will be a new NCAA Women's Basketball champion this year, as the South Carolina Gamecocks ended their historic unbeaten run with a narrow loss to Iowa in what turned out to be a hard-fought battle between the two teams in front of almost 20,000 fans.

Ending the first quarter with a 9-point deficit, the Gamecocks pulled back to end the half just a point behind, 37 to Iowa's 38. The USVI's Aaliyah Boston, who was subbed out in the first quarter, returned in the third to contribute a layup and two free throws, but that was not enough to

give the Gamecocks the lead – the deficit widened to a four-point gap as the teams ended the third quarter 59-54 in favor of Iowa.

A minute into the fourth quarter, a layup by Boston gave South Carolina a one-point lead, but Iowa quickly overturned that lead and the Gamecocks were not able to close the gap, finishing the game with 73 points to Iowa's 77.

In the post-game conference, Boston ascribed the Iowa victory to the physicality of the Hawkeyes' game, and reflected on what the first few moments after the final buzzer felt like for the previously undefeated team, which had previously gone 42 games without a loss.

"It was kind of just like an end of an era... you know we had a special group," Boston said, before heaping praise on the performance of teammate Xia Cooke, who played for 40 minutes and contributed a whopping 24 points to South Carolina's total. The pair shared a moment following the end of the game, where Boston offered some perspective to her younger teammate.

"I mean she played every single minute of this game, she gave her all and I just told her 'you know...you can't hang your head low because you did really good you know. You kept us in this game'," Boston told reporters.

She also disclosed that she had not yet decided whether or not to take advantage of the Covid-era provision that would allow her to return for a fifth year with the Gamecocks.

"I was gonna have to really write down the pros and the cons of everything and so whether we won or not it would still be something that I would have to consider," Boston said.