

★ StarTribune

FINAL FOUR

SUNDAY, APRIL 3, 2022 • STARTRIBUNE.COM/SPORTS • SECTION C

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP • TARGET CENTER
Connecticut (30-5) vs. South Carolina (34-2), 7 p.m. Sunday (ESPN)

Our Sunday best



Associated Press photos

Let's be real: This is perfect. This is the title game Minneapolis Final Four organizers dreamed about. Sizzling South Carolina and national player of the year Aliyah Boston looking to go wire-to-wire as No. 1. And UConn, featuring Hopkins supernova Paige Bueckers, poised to protect its 11-0 record in title games. It's a blockbuster final act, and it's ours. **Story, C6**

EXPANDED COVERAGE

Scoggins: Bueckers finally gets another shot. **C8** • **Souhan:** Ode to "Philly Tough" coaches. **C8** • **For Fun:** Saturday's sights and sounds. **C9**

Minnesota girls continuing to elevate the game

By KENT YOUNGBLOOD
kyoungblood@startribune.com

Maya Nnaji will be there. The women's NCAA Final Four? In her backyard? With her former high school teammate, Paige Bueckers, here playing on a national stage? How could Nnaji miss it? A Hopkins star, coming

off another state title, a top-10 national recruit headed to Arizona, Nnaji can't wait for Sunday night's title game to begin.

"It's inspiration," she said. Olivia Olson will be there, upper deck, with her dad.

Olson led her Benilde-St. Margaret's team into the state tournament as a soph-

omore. Already she's ranked, by ESPN, third in the country in the 2024 recruiting class.

If Nnaji's love for the game was bolstered by her love of watching Maya Moore helping the Lynx win four WNBA titles, Olson can see that happening with someone like Bueckers.

"It's cool for younger girls," she said.

"To look up to the professional players, to see Paige coming back home and playing in the Final Four. It's just, really cool, to have someone to look up to. Little girls can be like, 'I can be like that, too.'"

Given the number of players from Minnesota who continue to make their

See **RECRUITS** on C7 ▶

STANDARD
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

612-712-6541
standardheating.com

*Good for one use.
Restrictions apply. Not valid with other offers.
Tune-up must be performed by 4/30/22.

We're here for you
when you need us!

\$40
OFF

Furnace or A/C
Performance Tune-Up*

Plus, Double Your Savings!

Receive \$80 OFF when you schedule both for the same time.