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Virginia Tech's Brandon Flowers will forego his senior season to enter the NFL draft
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College Basketball Hokies put clamp on Bucs

A.D. Vassallo scores a season-high 21 points

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BLACKSBURG — Virginia Tech's men's basketball team feasted on one more non-conference opponent in Monday night's 79-49 win over Charleston Southern at Cassell Coliseum. And so went the last cupcake on the Hokies schedule.



Charleston S. Virginia Tech
49 79

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The young Hokies, who have five freshmen averaging around 15 minutes a game, had a rude introduction to ACC play on Dec. 23 when they squandered an eight-point lead in the last 1:22 in a 77-75 loss at Wake Forest.

That was just a primer for what Tech can expect from here on out. The question is: Is it ready?

"I was born ready," said freshman point guard Hank Thorns.

Not so fast, says junior forward A.D. Vassallo.

"I think the guys still don't have a clue exactly what they're going to get into Saturday," Vassallo said. "That's something that we've got to do the next couple of days in practice, kind of get them ready and get their mind's set on what to expect, because it's going to be the hardest games they've probably every played in their lives."

The Hokies dispatched Charleston Southern rather easily. Vassallo scored 14 of his game-high 21 points in the first half in helping Tech take a 40-24 lead.

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AP photo

Tech's Deron Washington goes up for a shot over Charleston Southern's Marquise Duvall on Monday night.

LSU 38 Ohio State 24



AP photos

LSU quarterback Matt Flynn looks on as defensive lineman Ricky Jean-Francois holds up the BCS championship trophy.

BIG EASY BREAKAWAY

LSU starts slow before running away with BCS title

The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Too easy. No. 2 LSU danced, dodged and darted its way into the end zone Monday night, turning the BCS national championship game into a horrible replay for No. 1 Ohio State. It was over early, with Matt Flynn throwing four touchdown passes in a 38-24 win.

Playing at their home-away-from-home in the Big Easy, LSU (12-2) became the first two-loss team to play for the title. Shouts of "SEC! SEC!" bounced around the Superdome as the Tigers won their second BCS crown in five seasons. They are the first school to win a second title since BCS rankings began with the 1998 season.

And in a season of surprises, this was hardly an upset: Ohio State once again fell apart in college football's biggest game. A year after the Buckeyes were routed by Tim

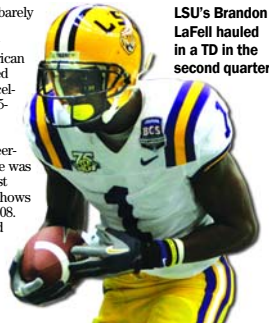
Tebow and Florida 41-14 in the Arizona desert, they barely did better.

Jacob Hester bulled for a short touchdown. Early Doucet wiggled loose for a touchdown and All-American Glenn Dorsey led a unit that outplayed the top-ranked defense in the nation. Ohio State (11-2) had little to celebrate after Chris "Beanie" Wells broke loose for a 65-yard TD run on the fourth play of the game.

Yet while LSU got to hoist the \$30,000 crystal trophy, certainly many fans around the country were peering into their crystal balls, wondering if someone else was worthy of the title. Southern California, Georgia, West Virginia, Kansas and Missouri all put on impressive shows in bowl games, and will be among the favorites in 2008.

The final Associated Press poll was to be released early today.

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LSU's Brandon LaFell hauled in a TD in the second quarter.

Daytona testing begins as teams move to COT full-time

Defending champion Jimmie Johnson posts top speed in opening day

The Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Tanned and relaxed as the sun set over the Caribbean on New Year's Day, crew chief Chad Knaus surveyed his surroundings and uttered the unthinkable: "I can't wait to get back to work."

Knaus didn't have to wait long.

The first session of pre-season testing opened Monday at Daytona International Speedway, and two-time defending champion Jimmie Johnson fell back into familiar form — the Knaus-led team was the fastest of

the 25 cars on the track during the morning session.

Across the garage, drivers and crews were eager to get back on the track. Alan Gustafson had Casey Mears lined up almost 10 minutes before the track opened to ensure they were the first team out there, and Mark Martin was lingering around his race car in his firesuit a full hour before most of the drivers even rolled out of bed.

And then there was Dale Earnhardt Jr., who isn't even participating in this testing session. His next chance to drive his new Hendrick Motorsports car isn't until next week,

but he wasn't content sitting at home while new teammates Johnson, Mears and Jeff Gordon all got practice time this week.

He decided late Sunday evening to fly to Daytona for the opening session and spent time with his new teammates discussing their cars during the lunch break.

"I don't have any teammates at my test next week, and I wanted to make sure if there were some hurdles, I would know about them," he said. "I am just ready for the season to start. You learn the most the first day of testing, and I just wanted to come down and see what was going on."

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NASCAR photo

Jimmie Johnson was the fastest in the first day of testing at Daytona.

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Roger Clemens talks to the media for the first time since the release of the Mitchell Report
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College Football



Former Hawaii head coach June Jones heads to SMU
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Hockey: Colorado @ Detroit
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