Experience

The University of Connecticut men’s basketball team did a great thing for college basketball on Monday evening. They won the National Collegiate Athletic Association National Championship, defeating the University of Kentucky 64-60, becoming the first No. 7 seed to capture the title.

Huskies point guard Shabazz Napier bucked the rising trend of leaving school early to cash in with the National Basketball Association, and it paid off in full. Napier guided his team to the ultimate prize, cementing his legacy and that of fairly new coach Kevin Ollie.

Ollie is no stranger to the bright lights, having played in the NBA for more than 10 years with a plethora of teams. Ollie replaced legendary Connecticut coach Jim Calhoun, whom Ollie also played for. He spent years as a journeyman guard, most notably backing up Philadelphia 76ers legend Allen Iverson, and came close to a championship before falling to the Los Angeles Lakers, led by Shaquille O’Neal and Kobe Bryant.

The experience of having an NBA veteran — primarily a bench player, yet productive and reliable — and a senior point guard leader with a ton of talent has proved to be priceless. It was a recipe for success from the day it began, and it all came to fruition Monday night.

These two factors really seem to have enabled the Huskies to capture a title. While I don’t believe that you need to be a former pro or a senior to win, I firmly believe that it helps. Experience over no experience is always going to be a major contributing factor between wins and losses in my book.

Freshman-laden Kentucky was not able to overcome the experience and leadership of the newly crowned 2014 college basketball champions. While the one and done mentality is becoming more relevant every year, it was nice to see a senior rewarded.

BASEBALL

Renegades fall to West Valley

Ohlone College hurler Jaramy Jacobs fires a strike to catcher Josh Egan during a 7-6 conference loss to the West Valley College Vikings on Tuesday on the Fremont campus.

Vikings end Ohlone’s three-game winning streak, 7-6

Riding a three-game winning streak, the Ohlone College baseball team had reason to be confident.

The visiting West Valley College Vikings put a damper on that confidence, though, leaving Fremont with a 7-6 Coast Conference triumph on Tuesday.

The Renegades are now 22-7 overall and 11-6 in conference competition.

West Valley improved to 17-12 overall and 9-7 in conference competition, keeping them mathematically alive in the postseason hunt.

Next up for Ohlone is another conference home game against the visiting Gavilan College.

Gavilan comes in to the contest 11-18 overall and 5-12 in conference play.

“Losses are tough to deal with, but it is a lot easier when we all keep each other up and positive,” catcher Josh Egan said.

“We play close games. We win, we lose it doesn’t matter as long as we do what we know we are capable of and stick together like the team that we are.”

Renegade Brock Pradere makes it safely back to first during a 7-6 loss at home to West Valley on Tuesday.