

One year of success can be considered a fluke, two years back-to-back provides a little more legitimacy, but do the Wichita State Shockers have what it takes to maintain a presence on the biggest stage on college basketball?

There are those who believe the Shockers are now among the game's elite. Some believe Wichita State now belongs among programs like the Kansas Jayhawks.

As Lee Corso likes to say, no so fast.

The Shockers are having a tremendous run, there is no denying it.



Winning 34 straight is an incredible accomplishment at any level. Doing it in NCAA Div. 1 basketball is a run for the ages.

Still, in the perspective of the game, it's not the longest winning streak ever. Not even close.

From 1971 to 1974, UCLA won 88 straight games, and three national championships among them.

The good news is that Wichita State is being discussed among the great programs of all time that have had great runs, but even today no one is putting UCLA among the elite programs of college basketball despite winning 10 straight national titles.

It takes a bit more than a season or two of success to make the grade.

Mid-majors have come and gone — Butler, VCU, Gonzaga.

In the past two seasons, the Shockers have stepped up to make a name for Wichita State.

4<sup>th</sup>  
& GOAL



EARL WATT

Has there been some history for the Shockers? Sure. Eddie Fogler had a great run there in the mid to late 1980s.

But it has not been sustainable.

Gregg Marshall is 173-70 at the helm of the program, and he's been there since 2007.

What puts a team in the annals of history, however, is not one coach alone.

A team of history has to have a series of coaches that have been able to maintain success.

Take Kansas, for example. The Jayhawks had legendary coaches like Phog Allen, Ted Owens, Larry Brown, Roy Williams and Bill Self.

The success was maintained from one coach to the next, and that is the sign of a program that has reached a separate level.

In only their second season in recent memory competing in the NCAA tournament with a realistic chance of winning games, the Shockers could be building something special, or they could be a flash in the pan.

None of us really knows nor will we until a few years pass.

For one, the Shockers compete in the Missouri Valley Conference, not exactly a premiere league. That doesn't make Wichita State any less impressive, it just means we don't really know how good they are.

However they perform in the tournament will be a shocker for us all. If they lose, there will be those that say they were a flash-in-the-pan. Maybe, maybe not.

If they win the whole thing, there will be those that will be stunned. Maybe they should be, maybe not.

The Shockers are far from being a perennial powerhouse. But we might be watching a powerhouse in its infancy. Or we might be watching a team having a couple of good years.

We just don't know.