NCAA

FROM PAGE B5

Clemson (44-16) has never won a national championship, or finished as runner-up, in 46 previous appearances.

The curse of the No. 1 national seed was finally broken last year when Tennessee won the national championship. Before that, the only No. 1 to win it all was Miami in 1999.

WELCOME TO THE PARTY

Big South Tournament champion USC Upstate, a full Division I member since 2011, is making its tournament debut. The Spartans are second in the nation in scoring at 9.7 runs per game, and Johnny Sweeney is third in RBIs (81) and Scott Campbell is 17th in batting average (.400). They open at No. 11 national seed Clemson, just over an hour southwest of their Spartanburg, South Carolina, campus.

The Oxford Regional, hosted by Mississippi, gets the nod.

No. 10 national seed after 10 hosts won regionals.

winning three games in the SEC Tournament to reach the final, where it lost 3-2 to Vanderbilt. They expect to get back No. 3 starter Mason Nichols and right fielder Ryan Moerman from iniury.

Their opponent, Murray State (39-13), is in the tournament for the first time since 2003 after winning the Missouri Valley Tournament. The Racers had a three-run lead against the Rebels in Oxford on March 5 before losing 8-7 in 10 innings.

Georgia Tech (40-17), the No. 2 regional seed, is the first ACC regular-season champion since 1999 to not host. The Yellow Jackets are matched against Western Kentucky (46-12), which set a school record for wins and has the Conference USA player and newcomer of the year in Ryan Wideman and pitcher of the year in Drew Whalen.

NO GUARANTEES

Regional hosts have **TOUGHEST REGIONAL** advanced to super regionals 66.8% of the time (267 of 400) since the tournament went to its current The Rebels earned the format in 1999. Last year,

Vanderbilt earns No. 1 seed in NCAA baseball tournament

BY ERIC OLSON ASSOCIATED PRESS

OMAHA, Neb. — Vanderbilt, which gave up just three runs over three games in the SEC Tournament, was awarded the No. 1 overall seed in the NCAA Tournament among a record 13 teams from the conference to be selected to the 64-team field.

The tournament opens Friday with 16 double-elimination regionals. Winners advance to eight bestof-three super regionals. Those winners move on to the College World Series in Omaha beginning June 13.

Vanderbilt has won eight straight games and 13 of its past 16 to earn the No. 1 seed for the second time, and first since 2007.

"It's amazing, it's cool, it's great, I love it," shortstop Jonathan Vastine said. "The team was excited about it. After today, that No. 1 seed kind of goes out the door because anything can happen."

The Commodores, who play Wright State in the opener of the Nashville Regional, are in the tournament for the 19th straight time for the longest active streak.

"We understand we on Monday and was have a goal at the end of the year to get to the middle of the country," pitcher JD Thompson said, referring to Omaha. "You can't de-value anybody coming into a regional like this. It's all good teams, so you respect everybody. If we play good baseball and keep the trend of what we're doing right now, then we have a good chance."

The national seeds following Vanderbilt (42-16) are Texas (42-12), Arkansas (43-13), Auburn (38-18), North Carolina (42-12), LSU (43-14), Georgia

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John Amis/Associated Press

Vanderbilt's Riley Nelson during an NCAA baseball game against Air Force, Feb. 18, in Nashville, Tenn.

(42-15) and Oregon State 14), Mississippi (40-19), (41-12-1). Those eight teams would be in line to host super regionals if they win their regionals.

16: Florida State (38- 14).

Clemson (44-16), Oregon (42-14), Coastal Carolina (48-11), Tennessee (43-16), UCLA (42-16) and Seeds Nos. 9 through Southern Mississippi (44-



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