

How High Point basketball student broadcasters went viral during March Madness



By **Grace Raynor**

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5



Jimmy Rosselli and Griffin Wright decided they'd do whatever it took to get to the Big South tournament.

When they crunched the numbers, they estimated that between gas, food and a college-budget-friendly Airbnb, a three-day, two-night stay in Johnson City, Tenn., would cost between \$300 and \$500 each. Not ideal.

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But the High Point University student broadcasters didn't want to miss this. At best, the duo would provide the soundtrack for some history. At worst, the 19-year-old Rosselli, who handles play-by-play duties, and the 21-year-old Wright, his best friend and color analyst, would make another memory and pick up some new material for their reels along the way.

Little did they know.

In one of the most exciting conference championship games of March Madness, High Point rallied from 15 points down in the second half to beat Winthrop 81-69 to secure the first NCAA Tournament berth in program history.

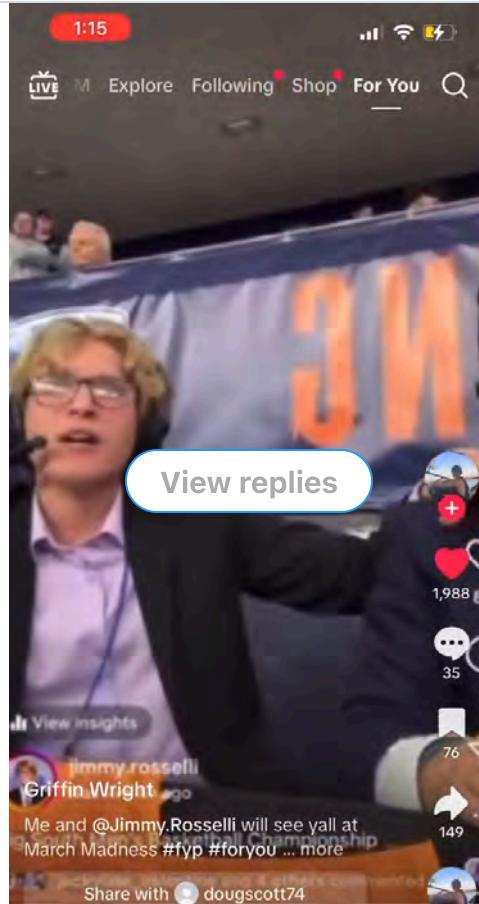
The game was thrilling enough. The call from Roselli and Wright was — to quote the folks at Mid-Major Madness — “absolute electric factory.”

Eyes popping, hearts racing and voices rising, the duo experienced every emotion imaginable during the Panthers’ run — even clutching onto one another courtside on multiple occasions as their excitement grew. And in a viral clip that is equal parts hilarious, endearing and all that is good about March Madness and student media, the two introduced themselves to the 1 million-plus people who have seen it across TikTok, X, Instagram and Facebook.



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Absolute electric factory.



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“For it to go viral is just the craziest thing that’s ever happened to us,” Rosselli said.

“We’re just two idiots who love sports, and we love doing it together,” Wright added. “It’s kind of like ‘Dumb and Dumber’ over here, but it’s a lot of fun.”

Rosselli, a sophomore from Huntington, N.Y., and Wright, a junior from Richmond, Va., decided to film themselves for the championship game after noticing the broadcasts from High Point’s quarterfinal and semifinal games did solid streaming numbers.

they decided to go live on Instagram, both so Rosselli's family and friends could follow along in real time and so the duo could archive the footage.

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When Wright put together a lighthearted [TikTok](#) the morning after they returned to campus — sharing their point of view from the game — he didn't intend for it to reach the masses.

"It was just supposed to be a nice little (thing) for High Point alumni, maybe High Point family members," he said. "Maybe a couple of other people. But it just ended up blowing up."

ESPN's social team, "The Mark Titus Show" and several other media outlets found Wright's post, which perfectly encapsulates the whirlwind the two friends experienced during the second half.

"(Six Flags) just took down the Kingda Ka," Rosselli said of the former fastest and tallest roller coaster in the world. "I think we might have rebuilt it."

When the Panthers went down by 15 points, the video shows Rosselli and Wright grimacing, almost in pain from what they were witnessing.

"(High Point has) one of the best benches in the nation. And they need to start showing why," Rosselli opined on air.

"They can go on a 10-0 run very quickly," Wright followed up. "But with 15 minutes left in this game and you're down by 15, you need it to come fast."

It did.

Guard Bobby Pettiford kicked things off with a 3-pointer before forward Terry Anderson barreled through the paint for a layup to start chipping away. Rosselli and

guard Trae Benham drilled a logo 3 to tie the game.

“BENHAM FROM WAY OUT” Rosselli yelled. “TRAE BENHAM, OH MY GOODNESS.”

When Benham then drove the length of the court and made a layup (and got fouled) moments later, Rosselli leaned back in his seat while Wright jumped up out of his, the two grabbing each other’s suit jackets for moral support.

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“TRAE BENHAM, YOU ANIMAL,” Rosselli said. “AND ONE.”

By the end of the clip, Rosselli is almost out of breath. He’s panting, Wright’s tongue is out and the two pals can hardly contain their joy.

Following the win, they celebrated the best way they knew how — with chicken nuggets, french fries and donuts.

“After the game, he was like, ‘All this yelling got me hungry,’ ” Wright said of Rosselli, laughing. “I was like, ‘Yeah, you’re right.’ So we had to get McDonald’s. And McDonald’s had a Krispy Kreme in it. So we had a good little postgame lunch.”

As High Point (29-5) enters the NCAA Tournament this week with the No. 13-seeded Panthers set to take on No. 4 seed Purdue on Thursday in Providence, R.I., Rosselli and Wright will be on the call again.



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between studying for a Spanish test and attending various club meetings last week, he called three lacrosse games and a baseball game, all before Selection Sunday.

Wright, who played high school basketball in Richmond, can remember spending his childhood filling out brackets with his father, hoping someday he'd get the chance to see a March Madness game in person.

"I think it really hasn't hit yet for me," he said. "But when I get there, it's definitely going to be a roller coaster of emotions because of everything that got me here."

Pettiford, the team's third-leading scorer, recognized Wright last week as "the dude" on the video that now has High Point's campus in central North Carolina buzzing.

This time, the school is helping the duo finance the trip. Rosselli and Wright traveled with the Panthers on the charter flight and will be staying at the team hotel in Providence.

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Mark it down as an unforgettable experience for two aspiring broadcasters who had no idea March could be this sweet. Rosselli, though, may want to pack extra clothes for the Panthers' trip to the Big Dance.

"It was funny, we were in the car ride back (to High Point) and he was like, 'Griff, I think you wrinkled my shirt permanently,' " Wright recalled, laughing about the way they clung onto each other for dear life.



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(Photo of Griffin Wright and Jimmy Rosselli: Chris Jones / C. Jones Photography)

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Grace Raynor is a staff writer for The Athletic covering recruiting and southeastern college football. A native of western North Carolina, she graduated from the University of North Carolina. Follow Grace on Twitter [@gmraynor](#)

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