

A slam dunk for women's sports: Caitlin Clark could be a game-changer for the WNBA. It's official. Though their individual statistics were exceptional, their teams needed otherworldly performances to overcome the headwinds that UConn (for the men) and South Carolina (for the women) posed. It reached its peak during the Final Four, when an average of 14.2 million viewers watched Iowa defeat UConn to reach their second consecutive National Championship game. It was even higher in the National Championship game, when an average of 18.7 million viewers tuned in to watch South Carolina defeat Iowa, denying Clark a national championship. To put these numbers into perspective, UConn versus Purdue in the men's National Championship game drew an average of 14.8 million viewers, nearly 4 million fewer than the women's final game. This was 1.9 million more viewers than Iowa's win over LSU in the Elite Eight. Caitlin Clark will now call the Indiana Fever her WNBA professional basketball home. The big question now is, will her unprecedented effect on women's college basketball be replicated in the WNBA? By comparison, both games featured the National Players of Year (Clark and Zach Edey), and both saw them lose to better teams.